

VETERANS HEALTH CARE BUDGET
REFORM AND TRANSPARENCY
ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker. I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1016, "Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009." I would like to thank my colleague, Congressman BOB FILLNER, for introducing this bill, and providing leadership on this important issue.

Today I will defer to Thomas Jefferson who so auspiciously stated, "The care of human life and happiness and not their destruction is the first and only legitimate object of good government." We must call attention as both the House and Senate discuss health care reform. Today, in the midst of two wars and an economic crisis, I know in this 111th Congress and with the 44th President of the United States, our government is now in the position of necessity where we must work to ensure comprehensive health care reform to all citizens.

The Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009 will ensure that one community who gave the ultimate measure for their country will have a quality health care system. I urge members of Congress to put away the partisan bickering and come together to support those who have given their lives for the country they love. There should be no reason why our veterans should not receive the adequate health care they deserve.

For 19 out of the past 22 fiscal years, appropriated funds for medical care were not provided to the Department of Veterans Affairs before the commencement of its new fiscal year, causing the Department great challenges in planning and managing care for enrolled veterans. Appropriation levels for health care programs in the Department have too often proven insufficient over the past decade, requiring the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ration health care and Congress to approve supplemental appropriations. Medical technology available on the battlefields and in U.S. medical facilities are saving the lives of a high percentage of severely wounded soldiers, but they then often face long-term recovery and rehabilitation challenges.

By providing sufficient, timely and predictable funding we would ensure that we meet the vital obligation to provide health care to all veterans. Congress must take action in ensuring our veterans who return home sick, injured, or even healthy will receive the quality health care they deserve. As Congress begins to swiftly act in an unprecedented time, I urge my colleagues to put away partisan bickering and act as a single non-partisan government to ensure our citizens' happiness in a quality health care system.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Mr. LATTA. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on ear-

marks, I am submitting the following information for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 2996, the Fiscal Year 2010 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

Requesting Member: Congressman ROBERT E. LATTA

Bill Number: H.R. 2996, Fiscal Year 2010 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act

Account: EPA; STAG Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Project

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Village of Tiro, Ohio

Address of Requesting Entity: P.O. Box 31, Tiro, OH 44887

Description of Request: \$500,000 for the Village of Tiro Water Distribution System. This project consists of purchasing treated water from the City of Shelby and transporting it to Tiro via 32,500 ft. of water main. 10,700 ft. of water main will be constructed in the Village for distribution of water. A booster pumping station, storage tower, and fire hydrants will be included. The Village of Tiro currently has no municipal water system. Water is collected or hauled into shallow wells or cisterns. The Village has tried for several years to secure a source of water and funding. The current project is the closest this village has come for a safe water supply. I certify that neither I nor my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

TRIBUTE TO FRANCISCO "PACO"
SALDANA

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Mr. CRENSHAW. Madam Speaker. I rise today to congratulate one of my constituents Francisco "Paco" Saldana who as the Director of Guest Services, The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island is the winner of the "Faces of Travel" award granted on an annual basis by the U.S. Travel Association to an employee in the travel business who exemplifies the travel industry and what makes it a unique employment opportunity for 7.7 million Americans.

After months of searching and thousands of votes by industry members, Francisco "Paco" Saldana, a resident of Fernandina Beach, Florida, will be announced as the winner of the "Faces of Travel Contest."

As the winner of this award, Francisco "Paco" Saldana who is a proud employee at the Ritz-Carlton on Amelia Island will help communicate the critical role travel plays in the lives of working Americans across our great country.

Mr. Saldana is the embodiment of the American Dream and what is possible in this great land of opportunity, having emigrated to the United States in 1995 from Mexico City and rising up the ranks at The Ritz-Carlton. Mr. Saldana's dedication to hard work and his positive attitude over the last 14 years have propelled him to become the Director of Guest Services.

Mr. Saldana's work in the travel industry not only had a positive impact on his professional life, but also his personal life. Mr. Saldana met his wife, Christina, who also happened to work

at The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island. They were married in September 2002. Mr. and Mrs. Saldana have three children, Isabella Grace, Nikolas Valentino and Sophia Claire.

SUPPORT OF: H.R. 1511, THE "TORTURE VICTIMS RELIEF REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009"

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I support H.R. 1511, the "Torture Victims Relief Reauthorization Act of 2009." This bill was sponsored by Representative CHRISTOPHER SMITH of New Jersey. The bill's purpose is to amend the Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998 to authorize appropriations for FY2010-FY2011 which will provide assistance for domestic and foreign programs and centers for the treatment of victims of torture. I support this bill and I urge my colleagues to support this bill as it provides needed rehabilitation treatment to those who have been impacted by the effects of torture.

H.R. 1511, the Torture Victims Relief Reauthorization Act of 2009, authorizes appropriations for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to provide grants to programs in the United States to cover the costs of services provided by domestic treatment centers in the rehabilitation of victims of torture (including treatment of the physical and psychological effects of torture). It will also allow the centers to provide social and legal services as well as research and training of health care providers outside of treatment centers or programs to enable them to provide such services. It authorizes the President to provide grants to treatment centers and programs in foreign countries that carry out projects and activities specifically designed to treat victims of torture for the physical and psychological effects of torture. In addition, it provides grants to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture.

This bill is not only important, it is necessary. The Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal and the myriad of consequential allegations of prisoner abuse across both Iraq and Afghanistan have cast a heavy shadow over our role in Iraq and our country as a whole. Under the Bush Administration, evidence indicates that torture was conducted on prisoners which included methods such as: waterboarding, weeklong sleep deprivation, forced nudity, use of painful positions, bellyslap and the exploitation of prisoner's fears of animals or insects. President Obama has since denounced these inhumane integration practices and has vowed that the United States does not condone torture. H.R. 1511 supports the President's vow by providing treatment to victims which is designed to enable the victim to step back from the trauma, learn to identify and accept it and gradually become reintegrated into society and/or the working world. This treatment will also serve a social purpose in that it will enable the victim to restore ties that were severed by an array of clinical symptoms caused by being tortured.

In the wake of the Abu Ghraib scandal, the U.S. has gone to great pains to persuade the world that U.S. policy does not condone torture. If Congress enacts this legislation, it

would reaffirm America's commitment to a world without torture and show the rest of the world that the U.S. is committed to rehabilitating those who have suffered at the hands of torture.

We as a nation must set a clear example that we do not support torture, nor do we condone such practices. For the benefit of our troops, for the good of Iraq, for the good of America, and for the safety of the World, we must heal the wounds caused by torture to those victims domestic and foreign. A strong bipartisan message of support needs to be displayed by this body to right the wrongs and send a message to the world that America is committed to ending what President Obama called a "dark and painful chapter in our history," by providing treatment to the victims of torture. I invite my colleagues to stand with me today and support this important legislation.

TAX AND CAP A JOB KILLER

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Mr. MICA. Madam Speaker, the U.S. House of Representatives today passed H.R. 2454, the so-called Cap and Trade bill. I noted in opposition to that measure and offer the following statement.

The Cap and Tax bill could not come at a worse time and could be a job killer. The 1,200 page measure will impose a national tax on ALL energy and lead to higher energy prices for ALL American households. Most families cannot afford the estimated \$1,400 yearly increase in energy costs. With the economy struggling, this bill, with its increased expense to industry, will cause additional unemployment by sending jobs overseas where doing business is cheaper. This bill also further expands the role of government by imposing new restrictions and requirements on everything from light bulbs to water dispensers.

As the Republican Leader of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I want to point out that Transportation accounts for 30% of greenhouse gas emissions. This legislation contains significant provisions in the committee's jurisdiction, yet we held no hearings on this massive tax increase, and willingly surrendered our responsibility to consider any amendments to try to improve the bill.

According to the Heritage Foundation, by 2035 this Cap and Trade bill would: reduce aggregate gross GDP by \$9.4 trillion (or reduce Florida gross state product by \$28 billion); raise electricity rates 90 percent; raise gasoline prices by 58 percent; raise residential natural gas prices by 55 percent; and Increase inflation-adjusted federal debt by 26 percent, or \$28,728 additional federal debt per person.

For this any significant other reasons I voted against passage or H.R. 2454.

COMMEMORATING THE FIRST BURIALS AT BAKERSFIELD NATIONAL CEMETARY

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to give tribute and honor to the brave men and women of Kern County who have proudly served their country in the United States Armed Forces. As a nation, one of our most vital duties is to ensure we are committed to providing for our military veterans. This includes providing a final resting place for the honored to be recognized. Thus, today, I would like to commemorate the first burials at the new Bakersfield National Cemetery.

The Bakersfield National Cemetery is a 500-acre site located approximately 25 miles outside of Bakersfield nestled in the Tehachapi Mountains. Surrounded by golden scenery, crushed red rock and drought resistant plants, the newly developed cemetery is furnished with a memorial walkway, committal service shelter, internet areas and administrative and maintenance buildings. Upon project completion, the cemetery will be equipped to serve 200,000 Central California veterans, their spouses and children.

The first cremation and casket burials will take place on July 1 and July 2, 2009, respectively. On July 1, the cremated remains of nine soldiers and one spouse from the Bakersfield and surrounding area will be lowered in unison. The casket burial ceremony on July 2 will commemorate the life of Iraqi veteran Army Reserve Maj. Jason E. George, a fallen soldier killed in action.

"A Place of Honor, For Those Who Served With Honor." These patriotic words to be inscribed at Bakersfield's National Cemetery demonstrate the overwhelming pride we have for our soldiers. Veterans in Kern County and surrounding areas take comfort in knowing their undying pledge and sacrifice to protect America's freedom is not forgotten. Having our own national shrine allows us to properly honor the fallen soldiers, veterans from generations past, and soldiers who are currently fighting overseas from the Kern County area.

On behalf of our veterans, I hereby express my high admiration and appreciation for all those who are currently serving our nation and commemorate those who have given the ultimate sacrifice. Let today's ceremony be a perpetual reminder of honor for all of America's men and women of valor.

SUPPORT OF H. CON. RES. 127, "RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NATIONAL CARIBBEAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH"

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support of H. Con. Res 127, which recognizes the significance of National Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

As a child of Jamaican grandparents, I understand the importance of recognizing the influence Caribbean cultures continues to have on all facets of these United States. Growing up, my grandmother who hails from Jamaica, instilled in me a strong appreciation for her Caribbean values. As a result of my upbringing, I have adopted a strong work ethic and tremendous pride in my heritage. As a parent, I have passed on these same values to my own children, so they will develop a sense of pride in their Caribbean heritage and acknowledge the many roles Caribbean people play in shaping this nation. I wholeheartedly support this resolution that commemorates Caribbean heritage, history, culture and contributions to the United States.

In her 1970 autobiography, Shirley Chisom, the first black woman elected to Congress, credited her success to the education she received while attending school in Barbados. She wrote, "Years later I would know what an important gift my parents had given me by seeing to it that I had my early education in the strict, traditional, British-style schools of Barbados. If I speak and write easily now, that early education is the main reason."

This is a nation built by immigrants. From as early as the 17th century there have been individuals from the Caribbean Islands, working here in the United States as indentured servants in the colony of Jamestown, Virginia. They worked in fields picking cotton, tobacco and crops just as the slaves did.

Caribbean immigrants have been contributing to the well-being of American society since its founding. Alexander Hamilton, the First Secretary of the Treasury, was from the Caribbean island of St. Kitts. We count among our famous sons and daughters, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Cicely Tyson, W.E.B. Dubois, James Weldon Johnson, Harry Belafonte and Sidney Poitier to name a few.

H. Con. Res. 127 recognizes the significance of Caribbean people and their descendants in the history and culture of the United States. Our nation would not be what it is today without these significant contributions of the Caribbean people and we should honor these accomplishments with the passing of this legislation. The contributions of Caribbean-Americans are a significant part of the history, progress, and heritage of the United States and play an important role in shaping the ethnic and racial diversity of the United States, which ultimately enriches and strengthens our nation.

By passing this legislation we continue to honor the friendship between the United States and Caribbean countries. We are united by our common values and shared history, and we should celebrate the rich Caribbean Heritage and the many ways in which Caribbean Americans have helped shape this nation.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution to pay tribute to the common culture and bonds of friendship that unite the United States and the Caribbean countries.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES R. KIRBY

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the James R. Kirby