

HONORING THE FISHER HOUSE
AND THE REPUBLICAN CLUB OF
CENTRAL PASCO COUNTY, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 23, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Republican Club of Central Pasco County for their support of the Fisher House at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital in Tampa, Florida.

Military families are the first line of support for our servicemen and women: they sit up at night waiting for their phone call and they send them comforts from home to sustain them while they fight for our freedom a half a world away.

Some families are called on to support and encourage their loved ones long after they've returned from the battles of war. For them, the Fisher House often becomes their "home away from home".

Since it opened its doors in 2007, the Fisher House in Tampa has hosted more than 1,200 people. The 16,000-square-foot house can accommodate up to 21 families at a time, and averages 35 guests per night. The average length of stay is two months, but two families have been there since the house opened.

Nationwide, the Fisher House program has made available nearly three million days of lodging since the program originated in 1990. They are operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs and rely on donations to the Fisher House Foundation so that no family has to pay to stay at any Fisher House.

The Republican Club of Central Pasco County, Florida, continually supports the Fisher House Foundation and our military men and women. This weekend, they will host the 2nd biennial event, "A Night for Heroes" in support of the Fisher House Foundation.

Madam Speaker, just as our military men and women believe it is their duty to serve our Nation; it is our duty to support them. The Republican Club of Central Pasco County has truly answered the call. On behalf of this Congress, I thank them for their unyielding commitment to this most important cause.

**COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION
ACT OF 2010**

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE COURTNEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 22, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the bill (H.R. 3619) to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal year 2010, and for other purposes:

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Chair, I want to applaud my friend, Chairman JIM OBERSTAR,

and his committee for putting together a strong bill that invests in the needs of our Coast Guard. This bill makes many key investments in the ability of our Coast Guard to protect our nation, guard our waterways, and make sure it is "always ready" to respond.

However, I rise today in reluctant opposition to this bill because of the very significant changes it makes to the admissions process for the United States Coast Guard Academy.

As many of my colleagues know, the Coast Guard Academy is located in my district, in New London, Connecticut. Established at Fort Trumbull in 1910 first as the School of Instruction to the U.S. Revenue Cutter Academy and then as the U.S. Coast Guard Academy after the consolidation of the Life Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service in 1915, the Academy has been a part of New London at its present site since 1932. Over its last century in New London, the Academy has helped to train, educate and shape generations of young leaders of the Coast Guard.

Today, the Coast Guard Academy is a highly competitive educational institution. Called "the best kept secret in higher education" by the Princeton Review, it is a challenging school that attracts driven, committed leaders who go on to serve our nation in the many diverse roles played by our Coast Guard today. In fact, the number of applicants who said that they were not seeking admission to one of the other service academies—that the Coast Guard Academy was their first choice—rose from 61 percent of the class of 2009 to 66 percent of the class of 2011.

As of July 2009, the Coast Guard Academy had 973 cadets enrolled representing 43 states and 15 foreign nations. For the newest class, the class of 2013, 1,672 completed the application process, 411 were offered appointments to the Academy, and 288 cadets—17 percent of those who applied—were sworn in. Nearly 80 percent of Academy graduates go on to graduate programs, with most paid for by the Coast Guard, and 85 percent of graduates choose to serve beyond their required five-year commitment.

The Academy is particularly proud of its high recruitment of women cadets. Of the total corps of cadets, 27 percent are women: 23 percent female in the class of 2010, 30 percent in the class of 2011, 28 percent in the class of 2012, and 29 percent in the class of 2013. Its success in this area sets the Coast Guard Academy apart from other service academies, and is worthy of recognition.

However, there are two areas in which both the Congress and the Coast Guard Academy agree that there is some work to do—the recruitment of underrepresented minorities in the cadet corps, as well as a lack of geographical diversity. I absolutely believe that, as a publicly funded institution, the Coast Guard Academy should represent a cross-section of our society, reflecting the racial, gender and geographic composition of our nation. Any young person, regardless of race, gender or geographic location, should have the opportunity to serve our nation as an officer in the Coast Guard.

In my ongoing discussions with the leadership of the Coast Guard Academy, they have made clear that some of their top priorities include increasing diversity, both of underrepresented minorities and geographical regions, and spreading the word about the excellent education it has to offer to a wider audience. While involving Members of Congress in the application process may be one of the answers to these challenges, there are likely other ways to achieve these goals that should be considered as well before taking this step.

For example, the Academy has significantly increased its efforts to get the word out about their unique institution and what they have to offer to underrepresented minority and geographic populations. For example, they are specifically directing recruitment efforts through mailings, advertising on online college search websites, and ramping up efforts to get recruiters in cities and regions with high minority populations, as well as those states and regions not typically represented at the Academy.

There is some indication that these efforts are paying off. For instance, compared to last year, inquiries to the Academy by minority students are up 40 percent to 1,800. And, online applications from minority students are up 34 percent to 317.

In addition, the Coast Guard Academy recently released a comprehensive Strategic Plan focusing on diversity, leadership, and character development. This plan outlines a clear goal of achieving 20–25 percent representation by underrepresented minorities by 2015, and in faculty and staff by 2020. This plan is getting off the ground now.

Even without congressional nominations, there is much each of us can do to contribute to the makeup of the Academy. For example, we can all include Coast Guard Academy admissions information our offices distribute related to service academy nominations, and direct interested constituents to the institution. And, we can ensure that our websites include information about the Academy. Earlier this year, a survey of congressional websites showed that over half made no mention of the Coast Guard Academy and did not post a link or other information about the institution. In March, I circulated a "Dear Colleague" letter urging that Members make sure their websites reflect this important information—and I will continue to work with my colleagues to encourage them to do so.

I strongly believe that any change to the application process or the character of the institution must be carefully considered, hand in hand with the Academy, before moving forward. The manager's amendment to this bill included a provision to require the Government Accountability Office, GAO, to evaluate the Coast Guard Academy's efforts to improve minority and geographic diversity. While I strongly support this review and look forward to its findings, I am disappointed that this

kind of evaluation was not done first before pursuing changes to the existing admissions process.

To this end, I reluctantly oppose the Coast Guard authorization bill, and hope to continue to work with my colleagues in the House and Senate, as well as the leadership of the Academy, to address these concerns.

**SOLAR TECHNOLOGY ROADMAP
ACT**

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 22, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the bill (H.R. 3585) to guide and provide for United States research, development, and demonstration of solar energy technologies, and for other purposes:

Mr. WU. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of H.R. 3585, the Solar Technology Road-Map Act. I want to commend Chairman GORDON for his efforts to bring this bill to the floor, and Ms. GIFFORDS for her continued leadership on solar technology.

H.R. 3585 provides funding for solar technology research, development and demonstration activities. It also creates a committee to develop a road map that will assess the near-, mid- and long-term needs for solar research. This assessment will become the basis for future investments in solar energy by the Department of Energy.

My district is a great example of the potential for solar energy. Not because of the amount of sun it receives, but because of the number of jobs it has created. Solar World, a solar panel manufacturer, has its U.S. headquarters located in Hillsboro, Oregon and employs 1,000 people building solar panels and produces enough PV panels to supply the entire North and South American markets. With our state's unemployment rate hovering above 11 percent, this company's investment in our state during these difficult times is welcome news. It is my hope that a continued investment in solar energy will result in thousands of more jobs in the coming years.

We have been working to diversify our energy portfolio to create and develop renewable energy sources and reduce our dependence on foreign fossil fuels. This bill will create further research opportunities for solar technology and will create a plan that will guide our future investments in solar energy.

This bill will help build upon the success of previous investments. It is about economic competitiveness and job creation as much as it is about clean renewable energy and less dependence on imported fuels. Again I thank Chairman GORDON and Ms. GIFFORDS for their leadership.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 23, 2009

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, I was unable to be present for several votes taken on

the House floor yesterday afternoon, Thursday, October 22, 2009, due to illness. As a result, I missed rollcall votes No. 801 through No. 811. Had I been present: on rollcall vote No. 801 I would have voted "no"; on rollcall vote No. 802 I would have voted "aye"; on rollcall vote No. 803 I would have voted "aye"; on rollcall vote No. 804 I would have voted "aye"; on rollcall vote No. 805 I would have voted "aye"; on rollcall vote No. 806 I would have voted "aye"; on rollcall vote No. 807 I would have voted "aye"; on rollcall vote No. 808 I would have voted "aye"; on rollcall vote No. 809 I would have voted "aye"; on rollcall vote No. 810 I would have voted "aye"; and on rollcall vote No. 811 I would have voted "aye."

**HONORING THE CITY OF INVERNESS,
CITRUS COUNTY, FLORIDA**

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 23, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the city of Inverness, Florida; they have been designated the "National City of the Year" by the veterans honor organization, the Forty & Eight.

Since 1920, the Forty & Eight organization has worked tirelessly to insure that the legacies of our service members endure alongside the freedom that they fought so selflessly to defend. They are committed to serving our veterans and their families: those who are still with us, those who have gone before us and those whose fate is still yet unknown.

John Kaiserian is the Grand Chef de Train of the Forty & Eight and a member of Voiture 1219 of Citrus County, Florida. He cited several factors which contributed to the City of Inverness receiving top honors on both the state and national level. Among them were the city's numerous parades and ceremonies honoring veterans, monuments that they have erected to honor those killed in combat, the annual Patriotic Evening on July 3rd and the City's very own Liberty Park. He refers to Inverness as Citrus County's "veterans' city".

On September 9, 2009, City Manager Frank DiGiovanni, City Clerk Debbie Davis and Mayor Bob Plaisted traveled to Rochester, New York to proudly accept the award on the city's behalf. They recognized the support of local residents and veterans' organizations that made the award possible. They especially thanked the veterans for all they have given to this country: City Manager, Frank DiGiovanni said, "Loss of life is the ultimate sacrifice and many have given all".

Madam Speaker, the Forty & Eight organization captures the American spirit in communities all across the country. I am honored and very proud to recognize Inverness, Florida as the Forty & Eight "National City of the Year".

**RYAN WHITE HIV/AIDS TREATMENT
EXTENSION ACT OF 2009**

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 23, 2009

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, in 2006, I supported the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act which reauthorized the Ryan White HIV/AIDS program and included important provisions that sunset the program's authorizations. However, the 2009 reauthorization bill, S. 1793, that the House passed on October 21, 2009 repeals all prior sunset provisions. With the current budgetary fiasco facing the federal government, the need for provisions that would sunset program authorizations is more pronounced now than ever. Congress constantly creates new programs with little or no thought to the amount of money that will be needed to finance its eternal life. The thought seems to be that a billion dollars for any specific purpose is so minuscule when compared to the federal deficit that one cannot resist supporting worthy causes and efforts. The problem is that this excuse occurs on a daily basis around here. Collectively, that mentality is what has led us to the insurmountable federal spending levels currently threatening the economy and overall strength of the U.S. dollar.

One simple way to help combat that mentality is the inclusion of provisions that sunset program authorizations. This is a common-sense, prudent and simple step that can be taken regularly to help keep us honest. If a program is worth continuing, its purpose and effectiveness should be defensible in the future. If it is not defensible, then committees can reevaluate and retool its functioning to help restore accountability. Moreover, committee chairmen should wholeheartedly support sunset provisions as their inclusion would more regularly work towards shaping policies under their purview. Some may argue that the programs are too plentiful and the task too overwhelming for Congress to evaluate effectively on a regular basis. This is all the more reason to fight for smaller government, and terminating ineffective and duplicative programs. Congress must put the necessary accountability and oversight measures in place to ensure that American tax dollars are being well spent on worthy, well-functioning priorities.

S. 1793 authorizes the appropriation of about \$2.55 billion for fiscal year 2010, a 14 percent increase from the appropriation the program received in fiscal year 2009 of \$2.213 billion. The bill increases the program's overall authorization levels by an automatic 5 percent each year for total of \$8.44 billion over the 2010-2013 period. In comparison the federal government sought only to increase the defense budget by 3 percent. What is additionally troubling is that there is no Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report available estimating how much this program could cost. Moreover, S. 1793 was considered under a suspension of the House rules, leaving no opportunity for members to amend the bill to address any of these concerns. Therefore, I could not in good conscience support a bill with such a large increase in authorizations coupled with no CBO score or a sunset provision.