

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3288, CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2010

SPEECH OF

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 10, 2009

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, this week, as world leaders convene in Copenhagen, Denmark, for the United Nations Climate Change Conference, the House of Representatives has taken an important, if incremental, step to improve our Nation's ability to strategically respond and adapt to an unpredictable climate by authorizing a study which advances the idea of creating a Federal National Climate Service.

H.R. 3288, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010, directs the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, to enter into a contract with the National Academy of Public Administration to investigate the effectiveness and efficiency of alternative organizational frameworks for the establishment of a National Climate Service within NOAA.

I would like to commend my colleague from Wisconsin and the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Congressman DAVID OBEY, and the rest of the conferees, for their recognition that the establishment of a National Climate Service within NOAA is absolutely critical at this time. The American public will need climate information, products and services in order to plan for and adapt to climate variability, and it is essential that the Federal Government have in place an organizational architecture that is science-based, reliable, and responsive to address this need.

Most important, this study will provide another opportunity to comparatively evaluate and assess the merits of a public-private approach for a National Climate Service. Last June, I introduced H.R. 2685, the Climate and Ocean Research and Coordination Act of 2009, to establish, in part, a National Climate Enterprise comprised of federal and non-federal partners which would have NOAA function as the operational lead. This framework, which would build from and strengthen existing Federal climate research and science capacities within NOAA, NASA, the U.S. Geological Survey, National Science Foundation, and other agencies, would also incorporate the significant contributions of non-Federal climate scientists, researchers and stakeholders to provide to end users on the ground climate information, products and services at variable scales that are credible, reliable and usable.

As NOAA and the National Academy of Public Administration consider alternative frameworks for a National Climate Service, I respectfully urge consideration of the public/private concepts within H.R. 2685, which have been enthusiastically endorsed by the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, UCAR, the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative, and the Coastal States Organization. All

Americans, from the District of Columbia to my congressional district in Guam, should have at their disposal an effective and accessible National Climate Service, and I again commend Chairman OBEY for advancing this idea.

WALL STREET REFORM AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the bill (H.R. 4173) to provide for financial regulatory reform, to protect consumers and investors, to enhance Federal understanding of insurance issues, to regulate the over-the-counter derivatives markets, and for other purposes:

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Chair, I would like to speak about a provision I authored that was included in the manager's amendment. The provision provides that a Nationally Recognized Statistical Rating Organization shall be liable if it is grossly negligent in determining a credit rating. My intention in drafting this provision was only to impose potential liability on ratings provided pursuant to a contract with the issuer of the debt. Nationally Recognized Statistical Rating Organizations that provide ratings solely for the purpose of journalism, without being paid by the issuer, do not face potential liability under this provision.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF COLONEL VENETIA E. BROWN, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 14, 2009

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Colonel Venetia E. Brown for 30 years of exceptional service and dedication to the United States Air Force and enduring contributions to our great Nation. She will retire from active duty on March 31, 2010.

Colonel Brown grew up in Niceville, Florida and entered the United States Air Force in 1980 as a graduate of the distinguished Officers' Training School at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. She has served in a variety of personnel assignments at the unit and headquarters level both stateside and overseas, and has excelled in all leadership positions throughout her career. Her unique leadership and managerial talents were evident early in her career, affirmed by her selection as a captain to organize and direct the wing survival and recovery center, a function normally performed by a colonel. As a testament to her leadership skills, Colonel Brown has been the

commander of a military personnel flight, mission support squadron, and deputy commander of a large support group and has produced outstanding results during inspections as well as motivated her subordinates to achieve their dreams. Additionally, she is a distinguished alumnus of Legislative Liaison, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, directing manpower and personnel legislative matters.

Prior to her current assignment, Colonel Brown served as the Chief, Compensation and Legislation Division, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Headquarters United States Air Force. She developed the first-ever Air Force Bonus Review Board resulting in \$125M savings during fiscal year 2006 and \$1B in out-years. Additionally, Colonel Brown secured \$20.7M from the Air Force Board for compensation legislative initiatives and ramrodded Transformation legislation on civilian pay/hiring flexibility. A powerhouse crusader and remarkable leader, Colonel Brown was consistently given the tough issues and never failed the men and women of the Air Force.

In her most recent assignment, Colonel Brown served as the Director of the Secretary of the Air Force Personnel Council, Air Force Review Boards Agency, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. Over the past 5 and half years Colonel Brown guided the Secretary of the Air Force's Personnel Council through over 10,000 Board actions. Her excellent decisions ensured due process, equity, consistency, and fairness. Colonel Brown has the distinct honor of being consistently ranked as the number one of five directors in the Air Force Review Boards Agency. She has always upheld the highest standards of professional conduct and her warrior ethos has ensured complete success at every juncture and will be truly missed. I ask my Colleagues to join me in expressing our sincere thanks to Venetia, her spouse Michael, and their son Damone for their unwavering support of our country and the freedom we hold so dear. We congratulate Colonel Brown on the completion of an exemplary active-duty career and wish her well in the next phase of her life.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 14, 2009

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I submit the following:

Project Name: Buses and Bus Facility Improvement, Baldwin County, AL

Requesting Member: Congressman JO BONNER

Bill: Department of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010

Account: Buses & Bus Facilities

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Baldwin County Commission

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Address of Requesting Entity: 312 Courthouse Square, Suite 12, Bay Minette, AL 36507

Description of Request: Provide an earmark of \$275,000 to provide additional buses and security fencing for the Baldwin Rural Area Transportation System (BRATS). Two additional buses will help meet the growing demand of BRATS that currently provides public transit services in Alabama's largest county covering 1,500 square miles. The high cost of living in Baldwin County has also increased the demand for BRATS as area workforce is moving further away from tourist attracting coastal areas. Baldwin County is currently the 65th fastest growing county in the country (U.S. Census Bureau). Approximately, \$200,000 [or 73%] will be used to acquire two new buses; \$50,000 [or 18%] will be used for security fencing; and \$25,000 [or 9%] will be used to provide bike racks for buses. The Baldwin County Commission will provide the required matching funds.

RECOGNIZING THE EXTRAORDINARY PUBLIC SERVICE OF VICKIE WALLING

HON. JOHN S. TANNER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 14, 2009

Mr. TANNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and our colleagues to join me in recognizing and thanking Vickie Walling for her years of distinguished work on Capitol Hill. Vickie is retiring at the end of this year after 35 years of public service to the 8th District of Tennessee and to our country.

Vickie and I are from the same hometown, Union City, though she is fortunate to be a number of years younger. She attended Union City High School and the University of Tennessee-Martin, where, incidentally, she was roommates with another woman many of us greatly respect, UT Lady Vols Head Coach Pat Summitt.

Vickie came to work in the House of Representatives in 1974 and soon after joined the staff of Congressman Ed Jones, my predecessor in representing the 8th District in this chamber. She immediately began to distinguish herself as a dedicated staff member and a leader among her peers on Capitol Hill.

Fortunately, Vickie and other members of Mr. Jones' superb staff agreed to continue their service to the 8th District when Betty Ann and I were honored to come to DC in 1989 following Mr. Jones' retirement. In fact, many of Mr. Jones' former staff members—Kathy Becker, Margaret Black, Betty Hardin, Doug Thompson and Vickie—still serve alongside us to assist and represent West and Middle Tennesseans.

Over the years, Vickie has become a true leader not just within our office but across Capitol Hill. Her dedication, tireless work ethic and keen understanding of legislative issues such as health care, bipartisan welfare reform and strategic demobilization have put her in a class all her own. Vickie has also been instrumental in helping us form and develop the Blue Dog Coalition, having been there when we first began meeting almost 15 years ago. Since then, with Vickie's help, we have been able to grow the Coalition to more than 50

Members, and the Coalition has become an important voice in representing millions of Americans.

Many of us in this chamber and others have sought Vickie's guidance and counsel over the years. Her insight and honesty are invaluable.

I often tell our constituents that serving in elected office is similar to a turtle finding itself on top of a fence post; one simply cannot get there alone. Vickie and the others serving in the 8th District offices are dedicated public servants whose work is crucial to ensuring our constituents are well-represented. Though they may not know her as well as we do, Tennesseans have been very well served by Vickie's many efforts on their behalf.

Madam Speaker, please join Betty Ann, our staff, our colleagues and me in expressing gratitude to Vickie Walling for her commitment to service and helping enact effective public policy. We wish Vickie all the best in her retirement and know her daily presence here will be greatly missed.

STATEMENT ON IRANIAN DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT ACT

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 14, 2009

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Iranian Digital Empowerment Act.

In the aftermath of Iran's disputed 2009 presidential elections, millions of Iranians flooded the streets to stand-up to their government and make their voices heard. Empowered by communication services like Twitter and Facebook, Iranians were able to organize and communicate freely outside of the watchful eye of their government in what has become the first popular democratic uprising of the social media age.

The Iranian people are among the most pro-Western people in the Middle East, and despite suffering under a totalitarian regime, their struggle to create a freer and democratic Iran continues to this day. This weekend marked the 6-month anniversary of fraudulent presidential elections. Once again, the Iranian people took to the streets in non-violent protest. The government of Iran has sought to counter the peaceful efforts of the Iranian people, launching unprecedented efforts to block access to Internet technology, infiltrate electronic social networks, and restrict Iranians from communicating freely. Unfortunately, due to outdated language in provisions regarding information services, U.S. sanctions have had the unintended consequence of denying the Iranian people the tools necessary to communicate freely and circumvent government monitors online.

In an effort to assist the Iranian people fighting for a change in leadership, I am introducing the Iranian Digital Empowerment Act. This legislation will clarify that U.S. laws are not intended to prohibit the export of software that would enable the Iranian people to communicate freely by circumventing their government's censorship efforts. U.S. sanctions intended to change the behavior of the Iranian government must not have the effect of stamping out the voice of the Iranian people.

TRIBUTE TO MARTHA TWARKINS

HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 14, 2009

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Martha Twarkins, a Legis Congressional Fellow from the Brookings Institute, a specialist with the United States Forest Service and, for the past year, a dedicated and invaluable member of my staff.

Throughout the year, Ms. Twarkins has contributed her considerable expertise and ability to legislative responsibilities in my office, and I could not be more grateful for or appreciative of her hard work.

Throughout her tenure in my office, Ms. Twarkins has worked diligently to mitigate the effects of the bark beetle epidemic on communities in Colorado and across the western United States. She has also provided oversight and direction to many of my legislative priorities concerning the Forest Service, including securing an additional \$40 million to help with the emergency bark beetle crisis.

She was an important resource on grazing and water rights, and a key advisor in the consideration and proposal of many new wilderness designations to forever protect our most beautiful public lands.

Additionally, Ms. Twarkins was my key liaison to the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming. Ms. Twarkins advised me on the committee's work on issues from fighting climate change in developing countries to creating a roadmap to Copenhagen. I truly appreciate her guidance on this committee.

Ms. Twarkins will always have a special place in my heart. My entire staff joins me in wishing her the best of luck as she resumes her position with the Forest Service, and with all her future endeavors.

BIPARTISAN CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO NATO PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

HON. JOHN S. TANNER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 14, 2009

Mr. TANNER. Madam Speaker, during the period November 8–16, 2009, I led a bipartisan House delegation to NATO Parliamentary Assembly (NATO PA) meetings in Edinburgh, Scotland, and to additional bilateral meetings in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The delegation also conducted bilateral meetings in Edinburgh. Joining me as Ranking Member of the NATO PA delegation was the Hon. JOHN SHIMKUS. The delegation included Representatives JOHN BOOZMAN, JO ANN EMERSON, BARON HILL, CAROLYN MCCARTHY, JEFF MILLER, DENNIS MOORE, MIKE ROSS, DAVID SCOTT, ALBIO SIRE, MIKE TURNER and staff. The NATO PA delegation had a highly successful trip that examined a wide range of political, economic and security issues on NATO's agenda, as well as issues involving U.S. relations with Northern Ireland and Scotland.

The NATO Parliamentary Assembly consists of parliamentarians from all 28 NATO member states. The NATO PA meets twice yearly in