

PAs are very important for veterans living in rural areas, like those living in my congressional district. Veterans that live in underserved areas made the same sacrifices as their urban and suburban counterparts. With a disproportionate number of these brave men and women being cared for by PAs, it is critical that we establish a system that will best serve the needs of those veterans so as not to compromise their care.

Considering the fact that nearly 40 percent of all VA PAs are projected to retire in the next five years, the VA is in danger of losing its PA workforce unless some attention is paid to this critical group.

My bill will allow the Director of PA Services to become an integral component within the VA system, to proactively solve the many issues facing PAs, and give PAs a fair and long overdue voice within the VA.

Madam Speaker, this commonsense legislation promotes quality medical care for our veterans and I am proud to introduce it again this Congress. This bill (H.R. 2790) passed the House in the 110th Congress, but stalled in the Senate. I look forward to working with my Congressional colleagues to once again bring this measure to the floor so our nation's heroes have access to the care they need and deserve.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE
200TH ANNIVERSARY OF
TUSCARAWAS COUNTY

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, Tuscarawas County is celebrating the 200th anniversary of its organization; and

Whereas, Tuscarawas County has contributed greatly to the history and culture of eastern Ohio and its residents should take pride in the accomplishments of the county and look forward to its future; and

Whereas, the residents of Tuscarawas County will celebrate the county's 200th anniversary with a Bicentennial Parade, fireworks show, music by local school and adult performers, and exhibits commemorating the history and culture of Tuscarawas County; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that along with the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend the residents of Tuscarawas County, past and present, for their contribution to the state of Ohio over the last 200 years, congratulate them on the bicentennial of the county, and wish them well in the festivities planned to commemorate this once in a lifetime event.

INTRODUCTION OF DOMESTIC
TUNA CANNING BILL

HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to clarify existing tariff law and protect our domestic tuna canning industry. Bumble Bee Foods operates the only

tuna cannery remaining in the United States in Santa Fe Springs, CA in my 38th Congressional District. This cannery relies on imported tuna loins from Asia to manufacture canned tuna in the U.S.

For 75 years, Congress and the administration have implemented a \$10 per loin ton (less than 1%) duty rate on tuna loins while having a 12.5% duty rate on canned tuna. The difference in these duty rates is to encourage companies like Bumble Bee to can tuna in the United States. Given our current economic situation, it is of maximum importance to help maintain and create jobs in the United States.

Bumble Bee imported tuna loins in plastic bags sealed with metal clips and paid the lesser duty rate. At the direction of the Food and Drug Administration in 2000, Bumble Bee stopped this practice and instead began packaging loins with a heat seal to improve product quality and safety.

Upon inspection of the heat sealed bags in August 2006, the local Customs Service at the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach concluded that the new bags were airtight and imposed increased duties of 12.5%. This is contradictory to Congress' intent and the historical application of customs regulations that put a lower tariff rate on imported tuna loins to promote the domestic tuna canning industry. The fact that current imports of loins are in heat sealed plastic bags to more effectively prevent contamination of frozen tuna loins should not change the underlying classification of the product.

The bill I am introducing today will clarify the previously long standing customs regulations and allow tuna companies to continue to safely import tuna loins at a lower duty rate to can in the U.S. The bill requires Customs to adopt a clear test to determine whether a container is "airtight" that is based on universal standards, promotes health and safety, and comports with the intent of the tariff legislation. Under such a test, heat sealed loin bags would not be subject to the higher duty rate paid by canned tuna imports.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this bill which will clarify Congress' intent to protect the domestic canning industry by maintaining a lower duty rate on imported tuna loins.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. JEFF FORTENBERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on member requests, I am submitting the following information regarding an earmark I received as part of H.R. 1105, the FY09 Omnibus Appropriations Bill:

Requesting Member: Congressman JEFF FORTENBERRY

Bill Number: H.R. 1105, FY09 Omnibus Appropriations Bill

Account: Corps of Engineers—Construction Project Name: Antelope Creek Flood Damage Reduction Project

Amount: \$4,620,000

Name and Address of Requesting Entity: Lower Platte South Natural Resources District located at 3125 Portia Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68521.

Description: The Antelope Creek Flood Damage Reduction Project is a critical element of a flood control, transportation and community revitalization project known as the Antelope Valley Project. The project is being constructed in central Lincoln adjacent to the University of Nebraska Lincoln main campus to improve flood control, transportation networks and community well-being in the city's downtown area.

A CALL FOR CONGRESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to a cost-of-living increase for Members of Congress. Across our country, the faltering economy is closing businesses and leaving many without jobs. Our national debt is climbing to levels that future generations will be responsible for. I believe it is past time for Congress to be responsible. One action we can take is to cancel the automatic pay increase.

Without a direct yes-or-no vote on this provision, we add to the impression that too many people have of Congress. If Congress is to vote itself a raise in pay, it should be done in full view.

This process should be reformed. Members of Congress should not be able to receive an automatic cost-of-living increase. Each of us should be on the record with the citizens of our districts whether we believe an increase to our own salary is justified. In this time of increased economic hardship, I am going on the record in firm opposition to this increase in pay. Since I was not allowed to directly vote yes or no, this forum has become my only recourse. We will not have the transparent process promised to my fellow Americans until we cease this automatic system. I only wish I could do more to right this injustice to the American taxpayer. We have a long way to go in gaining the people's trust. Ending this unfair practice would help.

2009 ACADEMY NOMINEES

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Madam Speaker, every year more high school seniors from the 11th Congressional District trade in varsity jackets for Navy pea coats, Air Force flight suits, and Army brass buckles than most other districts in the country. But this is nothing new. Our area has repeatedly sent an above average contingent of its sons and daughters to the nation's military academies for decades.

This should not come as a surprise. The educational excellence of our area's schools is well known and has long been a magnet for families looking for the best environment in which to raise their children. Our graduates are skilled not only in mathematics, science, and social studies, but also have solid backgrounds in sports, debate teams, and other

extracurricular activities. This diverse upbringing has caught the eye of military academy leaders, as many of them now know our towns and schools by name.

Since the 1830s, Members of Congress have enjoyed meeting, talking with, and nominating those superb young people to our military academies. But how did this process evolve? In 1843, when West Point was the sole academy, Congress ratified the nominating process and became directly involved in the makeup of our military's leadership. The procedure, still used today, is a further check and balance in our democracy. It was originally designed to weaken and divide political coloration in the officer corps, provide geographical balance to our armed services, and to make the officer corps more resilient to the unfettered nepotism that had handicapped European armies.

In 1854, Representative Gerritt Smith of New York added a new component to the academy nomination process, the academy review board. This was the first time a Member of Congress appointed prominent citizens from his district to screen applicants and assist with the serious duty of nominating candidates for academy admission. Today, I am honored to continue this wise tradition in my service to the 11th Congressional District.

The Academy Review Board is composed of six local citizens, several of whom are distinguished veterans, who have shown exemplary service to New Jersey, their communities, and to the continued excellence of education in our area. Members of the board come from diverse backgrounds and professions, but they all share a common dedication that the best qualified and motivated graduates attend our academies. And, as true for most volunteer groups, their service goes largely unnoticed.

I would like to recognize these men and women and thank them publicly for participating in this important panel. Serving as board member requires hard work and an objective mind. They have the responsibility of interviewing over 50 outstanding high school seniors every year in the academy review process.

The nomination process follows a general timetable. Interested high school seniors mail personal information directly to the Military Academy, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy. Information includes academic achievement, college entry test scores, and other relevant activities. At this time, they also inform my office of their desire to be nominated.

The academies then assess the applicants, rank them based on the data supplied, and return the files to my office with their notations. In late November, our Academy Review Board interviews all of the applicants over the course of 2 days. They assess a student's qualifications and analyze character, desire to serve, and other talents that may be hidden on paper.

This year the board interviewed 38 applicants. Nominations included ten to the Naval Academy, eight to the Military Academy, five to the Merchant Marine Academy, and five to the Air Force Academy; the Coast Guard Academy does not use the Congressional nomination process. The recommendations are then forwarded to the academies by January 31, where admissions staff reviewed files

and notified applicants and my office of their final decision on admittance.

As these highly motivated and talented young men and women go through the academy nominating process, never let us forget the sacrifice they are preparing to make. This holds especially true at a time when our nation is fighting the war against terrorism. The current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan serve as constant reminder that wars are fought by the young. And, while our military missions are both important and sometimes dangerous, it is reassuring to know that we continue to put America's best and brightest in command.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2009—11TH
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT NEW JERSEY
AIR FORCE ACADEMY

Nicholas A. Davis, Sparta, Sparta H.S.
Joseph W. Geib, Oak Ridge, Jefferson H.S.
Richard B. T. Margerison, Long Valley,
West Morris Central H.S.
Matthew D. Nafie, Basking Ridge, Ridge
H.S.

MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

Ian M. Bland, Somerville, Somerville H.S.
Dalton R. Harbula, Parsippany, Parsippany
Hills H.S.
Yehudi Maldonado, Morristown, Morris-
town H.S.
Kevin M. McCormick, Lake Hopatcong,
Pope John XXIII H.S.
Ryan J. McCoy, Flanders, Roxbury H.S.
Andrew M. Seals, Long Valley, West Mor-
ris Central H.S.

MILITARY ACADEMY

Alex P. Filauero, Denville, Morristown
Beard.
John G. French, Jr., Denville, Morris
Catholic H.S.
Steven T. Godine, Whippany, Hanover
Park H.S.
Christopher A. Johnson, Chester, Home
Schooled.
Matthew D. Parsons, Green Pond, Morris
Knolls H.S.
Stephen E. Rogacki, North Caldwell, Seton
Hall Prep.
Luke T. Suczewski, Chatham, Delbarton
School.
Russell J. Tepper, Flanders, Mt. Olive H.S.

NAVAL ACADEMY

Kristen A. Asdal, Chester, West Morris
Mendham H.S.
Zachary GP Beecher, Randolph, Randolph
H.S.
William B. Brundage, New Vernon, Pingry.
Douglas F. Chesnulovitch, Sparta, Sparta
H.S.
Aaron Z. DeWitt, Califon, West Morris
Mendham H.S.
Robert F. Eckert, Parsippany, Parsippany
H.S.
Michael C. Jones, Basking Ridge, Ridge
H.S.
Jacob B. Levin, Madison, Madison H.S.
Marykate B. Moore, Chatham, Villa Walsh
Academy.
Jack A. Morado, West Caldwell, St. Bene-
dict's Prep.

A PROCLAMATION CONGRATU-
LATING MARTHA MILLER ON
ACHIEVING HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, Martha Miller will soon celebrate her 100th birthday; and

Whereas, she has been able to drive a car and maintain a home through her 97th year; and

Whereas, Martha Miller has volunteered as a poll worker through her 94th year; therefore, be it

Resolved that along with her friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I congratulate Martha Miller on achieving her 100th birthday, and for her contributions to her community and country.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CAN DO
BILL

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Communities in Action Neighborhood and Opportunity bill, also known as the CAN DO bill. The Department of Justice reports that, on average, 45 people are shot and killed daily in America. Annually, there are 16,000–17,000 gun deaths in America.

The Communities in Action Neighborhood Defense and Opportunity Act is a comprehensive, community-based approach designed to address the issue gun violence. The bill calls for a four-pronged strategy in addressing gun violence in our nation's most crime-infested neighborhoods, including aggressive law enforcement, increased access to mental health and psychological counseling, additional employment training and job placement, and increased educational and recreational services for at-risk youth.

Madam Speaker, the issue of gun violence affects all Americans, white, black, Latino, Native American, and Asian. And gun violence pervades in all of our communities: urban, suburban, and rural. This issue is not a black or white issue, and it is not an urban or rural issue. This is an American issue that we must address with all of the resources we have at our disposal.

The research confirms that in order to effectively combat the causes of youth gun violence, there must be a holistic approach that provides not only aggressive law enforcement, but also provides at-risk youth with constructive alternatives to their dangerous lifestyles and gives them access to critical social services and programs.

This bill is unique in that it brings together the entire community to provide alternatives to youth by establishing partnerships between public and private agencies, businesses, community-based nonprofits, churches, schools, and universities. There is an 'all hands on' approach in order to get all of the stakeholders involved and provide a comprehensive and effective strategy that families and communities can support and get behind.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support the CAN DO bill and help end the destruction that is tearing apart so many of our communities. Americans of conscious must come together to stop the senseless death of "The Daily 45." When will we say "enough is enough, stop the killing!"