

a bill that will bring parity to Transportation Security Administration (TSA) employees and ensures security. This legislation would provide the same rights to all TSA employees, including the Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) (i.e., screeners), as those already enjoyed by employees at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and numerous front-line security agencies throughout the country, including state law enforcement agencies.

In the 110th Congress, The Committee on Homeland Security worked to give a broad range of rights to the Transportation Security Administration workforce in H.R. 1, Implementing the Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007. Basic workplace protections and collective bargaining rights were a key part of this effort. While the House passed these important measures and the Senate followed suit, to avoid a veto from the Bush Administration, these protections were stripped from the conference report. This bill renews and improves upon this effort by increasing the quality of the entire TSA workforce and not just a smaller part of it. This bill will increase security by improving workforce morale and employee retention, and will put workers in a position to expose security gaps and put TSA on par with other DHS components.

In 2001, when TSA was created, Congress provided discretionary authority allowing TSA to create different classes of employees, each with different rights and protections. Specifically, the 107th Congress and President Bush gave the TSA Administrator the discretionary authority to set up two different TSAs. One group of TSA employees would be given one set of rights and the other group, the TSOs (i.e., screeners), could be treated differently, with respect to conditions and benefits of employment, discipline, compensation, leave, and other basic employment rights.

Under then TSA Administrator, Admiral James Loy, the Bush Administration exercised discretionary authority to create two classes of TSA employees by denying the TSOs certain employment rights. While this discretionary authority helped quickly establish and stand-up TSA, as intended by the 107th Congress and the Bush Administration, it was, and continues to be the impetus for low employee morale and diminished transportation security.

From survey results to testimony over the past several years, we have seen that the TSA workforce is frustrated by the lack of recognition and rewards for performance and promotion practices, confused by different policies and procedures on leave, training, and other administrative matters.

On March 5, 2009, a House Homeland Security Subcommittee received testimony from employee representatives of the workforce. All of TSA operates under a separate personnel system than other DHS components. Further, the ISO workforce is not allowed to collectively bargain in contrast with the CBP workforce and others across the Federal government, including state law enforcement. These discrepancies and differences lead to confusion, frustration and further erode morale.

The time for personnel experiments is now over. The employees of TSA deserve to be treated like their fellow employees in the DHS and across the Federal government—fairly

and equitably. Providing basic employment protections and rights is critical to instill confidence in the workforce. The time for two classes of TSA employees is over—this bill eliminates this dichotomy.

This legislation brings parity to the TSA workforce. The bill affords the workforce the same rights and protections their colleagues across the Federal government and the Department enjoy under Title 5 of the United States Code and other civil service laws such as provisions of the Federal Labor Standards Act, Equal Pay Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act and the Rehabilitation Act, among others.

The legislation aims to transition the 60,000 plus TSA workforce in a responsible way from its current and varied personnel systems to that of Title 5. It provides the Secretary and Assistant Secretary the discretion on how and when to move to the new system, although not later than 60 days after the date of enactment. It also provides a window for the transition to allow for consultation with employee representatives and communication with the workforce. Further, it ensures that no employee will lose any pay, accrued leave or health benefit that is currently afforded to them.

To truly provide comprehensive transportation security, it must start with those who provide the security—in this case all TSA employees, including the TSOs. We must set up a system where all TSA employees are protected, otherwise we will have a system that treats colleagues differently and remains inefficient to the extent of hindering transportation security. In the end, by creating one TSA as a part of a one DHS the American public truly receives national security.

We look forward to working with our colleagues to put the TSA workforce in a system that has stood the test of time and shown itself to be fair and equitable.

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RECOGNIZING THE NORTHLAND  
HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL TEAM

**HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 2, 2009*

Mr. TIBERI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Northland High School in Columbus, Ohio. Northland High School is in my congressional district, and as a Northland graduate, I am proud to recognize a school that not only excels in academics but also distinguishes itself on the basketball court. The Northland High School basketball team recently won the 2009 Ohio Division I Boys Basketball Championship. In the championship game, Northland defeated Cincinnati Princeton 60 to 58.

The basketball team is an outstanding example of hard work, determination and perseverance. They had 27 wins and only one loss in the 2008–2009 season, and have earned the first boys basketball title in school history.

They are led by their top scorer, Jared Sullinger, who was recently named the Associated Press “Mr. Basketball” for Ohio, Junior

James “JD” Weatherspoon, Seniors Sam Belisle, Dimonde Hale, Ricky Bennett and Javon Cornley, along with teammates Charles Edgerton, Quentin Henderson, Trey Burke, Lavante Justice, Ke’Chaun Lewis, Jordan Potts, Devon Scott, Jakyl Cornley, and Roberto Pierre.

The team is led by Head Coach J. Satch Sullinger; Assistants Frank Smith, Michael Clouse, Leigh Horston and Jerome White.

It is an honor to represent such a fine group of young people who have a strong dedication to team work and academics. I know each one of them will treasure the memories of their championship season and I commend them, and the Northland community, for this truly great achievement.

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HONORING LEON FLEISHER

**HON. JOHN P. SARBANES**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 2, 2009*

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor pianist and conductor Leon Fleisher on the occasion of his 80th birthday. His musical contributions have touched the people of Maryland for many years, and the story of Leon’s life is a testament to both the inspirational power of music and the indomitable nature of the human spirit. As a young man, Leon was acclaimed as a once-in-a-generation musical talent, and by his mid-twenties, Leon had become one of the world’s most-respected and sought-after piano soloists, creating a number of timeless interpretations of classic works that are admired to this day.

When a rare neurological condition stripped him of the use of his right hand, he refused to allow the condition to limit his work and continued to contribute to classical music. As a conductor and director, Leon inspired and energized other musicians from such distinguished organizations as the Baltimore Symphony, the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Peabody Conservatory, the Royal Conservatory of Toronto, and the Kennedy Center’s Theater Chamber Players. As a teacher, Leon imparted his own knowledge, passion, and skill to many musicians who now carry the weight of his musical legacy. As a performer, Leon performed the definitive left-handed interpretations of numerous works, inspiring many composers to create new works for the previously underutilized left hand.

After years of special treatments, Leon returned to Carnegie Hall in a truly inspiring culmination of years of determined effort. The recipient of countless awards and accolades, Leon Fleisher has been a true gift to the people of the 3rd district of Maryland, and the field of classical music in general. His performances and personal story remain powerful, and on the occasion of his 80th birthday, I thank him for all he has done, and all he will continue to do, to advance both the world of music and the capacity of the human spirit.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HEALTHY WORKFORCE ACT OF 2009, WHICH WOULD AMEND THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986 TO PROVIDE A TAX CREDIT TO EMPLOYERS FOR THE COSTS OF IMPLEMENTING WELLNESS PROGRAMS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

**HON. EARL BLUMENAUER**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to introduce the Healthy Workforce Act of 2009. In order to alleviate our public health crisis, we must make it easier for Americans to make small, easy choices that improve their overall health. With many Americans spending more than half of their day at work, it makes sense to encourage our places of employment to offer the information, opportunities and support they need to make healthy choices.

The Healthy Workforce Act provides companies with an up to fifty percent tax credit for implementing employee wellness programs. These programs can include, but are not limited to, health education or health risk assessments, behavioral change programs that encourage healthy lifestyles, such as classes on nutrition or smoking cessation, and to support environment changes to encourage employee participation. Programs like this have a myriad of positive benefits for personal health, employee productivity, workplace environment and the economy.

There can be no doubt that America is facing a public health crisis: 63 percent of Americans are overweight and 31 percent are obese. Even more alarming, according to the Surgeon General, obesity is responsible for 300,000 deaths per year. This crisis not only impacts the daily lives of many Americans, but the bottom line for American companies. Average employer medical costs increased 72 percent between 2000 and 2006, with some companies spending more than fifty percent of their profits on employee health care expenses. Employers are increasingly bearing the costs of diet-related chronic disease and obesity through employer-provided health care plans and indirectly through higher rates of absenteeism, decreased productivity and higher health care costs. Obesity related health conditions cost employers approximately \$33 billion in health care and other indirect costs.

The Healthy Workforce Act of 2009 will make it easier for companies to encourage their employees to make healthy decisions and in turn, decrease health care costs for employers, employees, and taxpayers.

BIG GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION

**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, yesterday, The Post and Courier, of Charleston, S.C., reviewed the intervention of government in the management of General Motors. I share the editorial opinion that dismissal of business executives is not a proper function of government personnel.

EDITORIAL

President Obama fired General Motors Chief Executive Officer Rick Wagoner over the weekend, ostensibly due to his failure to come up with a "plan" acceptable to the administration. If he hadn't cleaned out his desk and surrendered his key to the executive washroom, he was told there would be no more taxpayer dollars to keep GM afloat.

CEOs of other corporations taking federal bailout money surely have taken note. The stock market certainly did when the news hit.

If you are not worried by the Obama administration's audacious grab for the commanding heights of the U.S. economy—the banks, the insurance industry, the giant too-big-to-fail manufacturers—you should be. Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner even suggests that government takeover of private corporations that have not accepted federal loans would be warranted, if considered necessary to rescue the overall economy.

The question boils down to this: Would it have been better to let well-established bankruptcy law apply to GM (and other failing corporate giants) rather than suffer Washington's continued exertions on its behalf.

Or, to put it another way, would you like your next car designed in Washington rather than in Detroit?

EARMARK DECLARATION

**HON. GREG WALDEN**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 2, 2009

Mr. WALDEN. Madam Speaker, consistent with the House Republican Leadership's policy on earmarks, to the best of my knowledge the requests I have detailed below (1) are not directed to an entity or program that will be named after a sitting Member of Congress; and (2) are not intended to be used by an entity to secure funds for other entities unless the use of funding is consistent with the specified purpose of the earmark. As required by earmark standards adopted by the House Republican Conference, I submit the following information on projects I requested and were included in H.R. 1105, The Omnibus Appropriations Act, FY 2009.

Account: USDA—Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service

Project Title: Grass Seed Cropping Systems for Sustainable Agriculture (OR, ID, WA)

Legal Name and Address of Requesting Entity:

Oregon State University, College of Agricultural Sciences, 138 Strand Hall, Corvallis, OR 97731

Project Location: Idaho, Oregon, and Washington

Description of Project: H.R. 1105 appropriates \$313,000 for the Grass Seed Cropping Systems for Sustainable Agriculture project in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. Oregon State University has confirmed in their justification that the appropriated funds for this project will be used cooperatively between research and extension faculty from the three states, scientists from the USDA's National Forage Seed Production Research Center, and USDA's Agriculture Research Service to maintain a sustainable grass seed cropping industry in the Pacific Northwest at a time when the grass seed industry faces some critical environ-

mental and economic challenges including public pressure to phase out open-field burning.

Account: USDA—Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service

Project Title: Northwest Multi-commodity Marketing Special Research Grant

Legal Name and Address of Requesting Entity:

Oregon State University, College of Agricultural Sciences, 138 Strand Hall, Corvallis, OR 97731

Project Location: Oregon

Description of Project: H.R. 1105 appropriates \$244,000 for a special research grant program that enhances competitiveness and expands the economic value-added component in Oregon agricultural products through research and outreach in food processing, product development, business strategy, marketing, and consumer testing. Oregon State University has confirmed in their justification that the appropriated funds for this project will be used to conduct research to support food processing and food product development, investigate consumer perceptions of product quality and value, and evaluate marketing and food industry strategies.

Account: USDA—Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service

Project Title: Organic Cropping Research for the Northwest

Legal Name and Address of Requesting Entity:

Oregon State University, College of Agricultural Sciences, 138 Strand Hall, Corvallis, OR 97731

Project Location: Oregon and Washington

Description of Project: H.R. 1105 appropriates \$140,000 to Organic Cropping Research for the Northwest. Oregon State University has confirmed in their justification that the appropriated funds for this project will be help expand the research, education, and extension activities at Oregon State University with a primary focus on the development and implementation of sustainable organic farming systems for higher rainfall locations in the Cascadia bioregion in the states of Oregon and Washington. Oregon's organic agriculture industry will benefit from research directed at problems facing organic commodities and, ultimately, enhance competitiveness of Oregon's organic agriculture products. In Oregon, 357 certified organic farms generate more than \$52.1 million in organic products from approximately 59,200 certified acres. Oregon's strong agricultural infrastructure and unique climate make Oregon's agriculture uniquely positioned to grow dramatically in its market share of organic dairy and meat, tree fruits, specialty seed, berry crops, and processed and fresh market vegetables.

Account: USDA—Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service

Project Title: Potato Research (OR, ID, WA, and other states)

Legal Name and Address of Requesting Entity:

Oregon State University, College of Agricultural Sciences, 138 Strand Hall, Corvallis, OR 97731

Project Location: Oregon, Idaho, Washington, and other states

Description of Project: H.R. 1105 appropriates \$1,037,000 for a research program which is operated jointly by an entity known as Tri-State, which includes: USDA-ARS, Washington State University, Oregon State University, and the University of Idaho. Oregon State