

(Mr. SHERMAN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING THE LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF DR. JOHN DIAMANDIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary life and accomplishments of my dear friend, Dr. Themistocles "John" Diamandis, endearingly known as Dr. D.

Dr. D was born on April 11, 1929, in Tarpon Springs General Hospital in Tarpon Springs, Florida. It was a foreshadowing that Dr. D started off life in that tiny, 12-bed hospital. He started off his medical career in 1961 at Tarpon Springs General Hospital, where he was one of three doctors on staff. He spent the next 47 years as a dedicated general practitioner there.

He earned a pharmacy degree from the University of Florida in 1951. Prior to medical school, he worked as a pharmacist at Webb's City in St. Petersburg, Florida. He earned a medical degree from the University of Miami in 1958. While in medical school he worked at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and served his country in the Army during the Korean war.

A proud member of the Tarpon Springs community Dr. D cared for generations of Tarponites, including the pioneers of the Tarpon Springs sponge industry.

He started his career with his assistant, Cally Catroulis, who remained with him, amazingly, for 47 years, until his retirement. He opted not to hire nurses, preferring to spend as much time himself with each patient by taking, for instance, each blood pressure reading himself. While he often ran late having meaningful discussions with his patients, I can attest to that, others were happy to wait their turn for him, knowing that they would be the subject of his extra care and attention.

Dr. D was always on call for his patients, day or night. He is known for making late night and weekend house calls. Before going to bed each night, he would check in on his patients at home or at the hospital, amazingly. He never failed to treat a sick person, and never asked if they had insurance. Sometimes he was paid only with a hot meal or a Greek pastry after a house call.

As a matter of fact, Dr. D was a mentor to my brother, Dr. Emanuel Bilirakis.

In addition to his tireless dedication to his patients, Dr. D has been an activist in his community, frequently speaking out on local, State and Federal issues, on issues near and dear to his heart such as affordable health care, lower taxes, and improved infrastructure. He also remained active in his church, St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, and also various civic organizations such as AHEPA.

Madam Speaker, Dr. D is a rare breed of physician and humanitarian. Many describe him as an old fashioned doctor, but his practice embodied all that was and is still good in medicine, the strength and importance of the relationship between a primary care doctor and his or her patients.

That tiny hospital where he was born and started his medical career was the same one he retired from this past September of 2008. Now known as Helen Ellis Memorial Hospital, it has grown to a 168-bed facility with 356 staff physicians, a legacy of Dr. D.

Madam Speaker, I can only think of one word to describe Dr. D—axios.

I yield back the balance of my time.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 11 of rule X, clause 11 of rule I, and the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence:

Mr. ROGERS, Michigan

WHO'S GOING TO SPEND THE MONEY?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, we took up the issue of the Troubled Asset Recovery, whatever TARP stands for. \$350 billion has been thrown, as one man wished it to be, as he directed.

There's another \$350 billion that has been allocated. Now, the question is, who's going to spend it?

Now, I've got a bill that I filed, it was, I think, the first bill laid down over here on the Clerk's desk the minute after we were sworn in, and it's a bill to allow the people that earned the money to spend it. The Treasury Secretary would have to put it in the general revenue and use that to cover any shortfalls from withholding not coming in.

This isn't some rebate where we spend millions to let people know you may get a rebate check, and then millions to process it, and then by and by, pie in the sky, they get a rebate check down the road for \$300, \$600. This is real money we're talking about, in the account, in the hands of those who earned it as soon as they get their pay-

check. If we pass this bill next Thursday that I've proposed, people on their Friday paychecks could have all of their Federal withholding in that check, all of their FICA withholding in that check.

So anybody that's working, performing services, including self-employed, they have a 2-month tax holiday. That money is immediately in their hands, in the economy, not some bureaucrat in Washington who is so arrogant that he thinks you couldn't possibly know where to spend that money to help the economy and help yourself.

So, we've asked, we surveyed people who have e-mailed in and asked, what would you—look at the withholding and see what, tell us what you would use your money for. Number 1 answer? Pay off credit cards, catch up on loans, including the mortgage.

Well, Paulson's out there spending hundreds of billions of dollars to try to loosen up lending so people can refinance and borrow more money to catch up on the mortgage they got behind on in the last year, many, back when gas prices were \$4 a gallon. Let them catch up with their own money. They don't need another loan.

Others said they'd go out to eat. They'd stop, they'd use it for entertainment. Others said they'd invest it in their small business to develop it. Others said they'd invest it in the stock markets. That would help the market.

Ten percent of those said they'd use it to buy a new home. That would help them with their down payment. There's so much in the withholding. Others said they'd use it to buy a car. Some said they'd put it in savings. But that would give banks more money to make more loans, so that would be a good thing as well.

Some got very specific. They said they'd buy farm supplies, help with their college education this year. Some said they'd buy insulation for their home to help on the energy bill. One said he'd buy a stove and an oven. Another said he'd use—well, there were many who said they'd repair and remodel their home. Others said they'd pay for medical procedures that they need. How about that? It's not some guy in Washington paying. It's the people that earned the money that would get to spend it.

Another was going to put on a new roof for his home so his family would be dryer and warmer. The people that earned the money know what to do with it.

It is the height of arrogance that in this body, we'd say, no, no, no, GOHMERT's got this bill, H.R. 143, that lets the people that earned it have a 2-month tax holiday. We can't do that. We can't let that come to the floor for a vote.

I proposed this amendment yesterday. Got shut out. They didn't want it on the floor. Probably pass. People would be afraid to vote against the people. And that's what that vote is.

But I just submit, Madam Speaker, if this continues, and I keep being shut out on getting this idea from the people for the people by the people, and the votes keep being that we can't bring a bill like that to the floor for a vote, it may be, come November of 2010 that the voters will say, we want to elect somebody that will do what needs doing and not helping their cronies.

Oh, yes, we heard, well, the leadership over here in the House has the idea for this great TARP money. We're going to use it for infrastructure. Oh, yeah. Well, apparently the bill being proposed only has 5 or 6 percent for infrastructure.

You let people have their own money, you let them spend it where they need spending, the money will be in the economy, the economy will increase, and everybody will be better off and the people will have heard from us as they wanted.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. KUCINICH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

VACATING 5-MINUTE SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous 5-minute Special Order in favor of Mr. POE of Texas is vacated.

There was no objection.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A further message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

LAST STAND FOR RAMOS AND COMPEAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, in the dusty, arid plains of West Texas, where the tumbleweeds blow across the prairies, there's a small town called Fabens. Fabens, Texas, a population of about 8,000, mostly lower-income individuals, but they're doing what they can to eke out an income out of the land that they work.

On February 17, 2005, almost 4 years ago, these events took place. A drug dealer by the name of Aldrete Davila came across from Mexico, which is six miles from Fabens, Texas, right here on the map. He's driving a van. He has about \$750,000 worth of narcotics in that van. And of course, he's smuggling drugs into America; something that occurs along the entire Texas/Mexico border.

He's confronted by one of our first responders, Border Security Agent Jose Compean. Border Agent Jose Compean does his job, and he gives chase to this drug smuggler in the van. Aldrete, the smuggler, turns his van around, tries to head back to Mexico with his cancer that he's going to try to sell in the United States. He abandons his vehicle. He gets down in the river bed between Mexico and Texas in the Rio Grande Valley, and he has a fight with Jose Compean.

Another border agent by the name of Ignacio Ramos shows up and meets the call for help to stop this drug trafficker into the United States. Meanwhile, a fight ensues between the drug dealer and Border Agent Compean, and Compean is left in the river bed, bleeding, while the drug dealer runs back to Mexico.

Ignacio Ramos, border agent, sees what's taking place. He sees the drug dealer, in his opinion, with a weapon, keeps turning back like this, and he fires his weapon.

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And the drug dealer disappears.

Unbeknownst to all of us, there was another vehicle on the other side of the border, waiting to pick him up and take him back to wherever he came from.

Jose Compean and Ignacio Ramos, border agents, at the time they pick up the shells that are fired, they don't immediately report the events, and nothing occurs until the following takes place:

The drug dealer goes back to Mexico. It turns out that he was wounded. He was shot in the buttocks. Without being too graphic, the bullet went in one cheek and came out the other cheek as if he were pointing his weapon when he got shot.

But be that as it may, in some way, the U.S. Government gets involved. It goes to Mexico. It finds the drug dealer and says, "Looky here. Have we got a deal for you. All you've got to do is come back to America and testify against those two border agents for a civil rights violation," or whatever we charged them with, "and we will treat you for your wounds, and we will give you a pass to go back and forth across the border, and we will not prosecute you for bringing drugs into the United States."

So, months later, that immunity deal is struck, and the border trespasser—smuggler—gets a deal, a backroom deal, a deal to testify. In my experience as a former judge and prosecutor, unfortunately, when you make a deal with a criminal, you usually get the testimony you want.

What happened was they were waiting to bring these two border agents to trial on numerous charges, but remember, all they did was fail to report the fact that they fired their weapons. Normally, under Border Patrol policy, that is an administrative punishment. You get days off—5 days from what I under-

stand. They could have been fired for that, but they were not. They were prosecuted in Federal court for numerous violations, mainly for shooting the drug smuggler. Of course, they both never knew they shot the drug smuggler until they were told by our government.

In any event, unbeknownst to us, the trial gets postponed. We don't know why the trial is postponed. It's not tried right away, but it gets postponed. The reason it got postponed, which we all learned much, much later, was that, while the drug smuggler was out on his get-out-of-jail-free card, thanks to our government, he was still smuggling drugs into the United States.

In October of 2005, lo and behold, Aldrete brings another load of narcotics into the United States. At first, our government denied that they knew anything about that, but I ended up receiving a copy of the DEA report, which showed specifically that Aldrete was bringing in drugs while he was out on this get-out-of-jail-free card.

So the trial takes place after it is postponed. In March of 2006, these two border agents are tried. They are convicted. The jury never knows that the star witness—the government's bought-and-paid-for witness—brought in another load of drugs. The U.S. Attorney's Office convinced that judge from keeping that testimony from the jury.

Now, the main witness the government had against the two Border Patrol Agents was this witness, the drug smuggler who was given a deal to testify.

Now I ask you, Madam Speaker: If you were on a jury and you had to decide if a person was telling the truth, wouldn't you want to know that, while they were waiting to testify after they were given immunity, they were still bringing drugs into the United States? Wouldn't you want to know that to judge whether or not this witness is telling you the truth or not?

I think, probably, you would want to know that, and I think that's probably the reason the government kept that testimony from the jury, because they didn't want the jury to know the truth about their witness.

In any event, the witness testifies. The border agents are convicted; they are found guilty, and are sent to the Federal penitentiary for 11 and 12 years. Under Federal law, they will serve most of that time.

This case sort of disappeared from the radar until people started talking. The news media even brought this case up. A reporter by the name of Sara Carter has been following this case since the trial. Thanks to her and to other people in our national media, this is still being discussed by not only Members of Congress but by the public throughout the country.

Since I, really, have almost no life, I read the 3,000-page transcript of the trial, so I know what the jury heard. I read it. In September of 2006, long after