

personal experience shows a more appropriate name would be the Worker Coercion Act."

He talks about the union officials and how they came to the company to try to get them to join the union through what they call Card Check without a secret ballot.

He said, "After this first attempt to organize our shop failed, the UAW changed tactics and sent in a whole new crew. At that point, it became clear to all of us that the UAW was going to do whatever was necessary to get the required number of signatures.

"The entire time they were constantly badgering us to sign the cards. I refused to sign the card every time they asked, and I know that many of my colleagues shared my sentiment. But none of that mattered to the UAW, because the pressure did not let up.

"In fact, one day, an official approached me again claiming 50 percent of the plant had signed, so now I was going to have to sign the card to 'get my information in the system.' I signed the card because I thought I had to."

□ 1630

I didn't learn until later that even then, I should not have been forced to sign the card.

In the end, the UAW did succeed in organizing our plant, but I thought they succeeded only because of their confrontational tactics and not because the majority of our workers wanted UAW representation.

So immediately, after the union came in, I began a decertification effort. The only reason I was able to fight back was because other Dana Corporation employees in Ohio appealed to the National Labor Relations Board after facing aggression from the UAW, and the NLRB decided that workers should be allowed to seek decertification.

Of course, the UAW responded to my effort by increasing the pressure, and even started visiting me at my home, and my coworkers. Despite their intimidation, my coworkers and I voted to decertify the UAW 45 days after the Card Check drive in a secret ballot. I believe the results of the secret ballot election showed the true free choice of my coworkers regarding UAW representation. We didn't want the UAW representation that was foisted on us through Card Check.

At the end of the day, the voice of the worker needs to be considered. Union officials say they speak for the workers, and they say passage of the Card Check bill is needed to give workers a free choice. But the only way to give workers a free choice is the way we vote in this country, and that's to give them a secret ballot. If they want to join the union, they should be able to join the union through a secret ballot. But if they don't want to join the union, they should not be coerced into joining the union by signing a card. They should have the right, as every

American citizen does, to a secret vote on whether or not they want to be employed in a union shop. Now, if they don't want to do that, they shouldn't have to vote for it.

And that's exactly what the gentleman went through and all of his coworkers. And after they went through it and were forced to join the union, they found out they could have a secret ballot, they did a secret ballot, and they threw the union out.

I'm not an anti-union person, but there ought to be a free choice for people to join the union or not to join it, and they should not be coerced by Card Check.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHRISTINE SARBANES

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

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Christine Sarbanes and offer my heartfelt condolences to former Senator Sarbanes and our colleague, JOHN SARBANES, and the entire Sarbanes family. They have lost a cherished loved one, and our State of Maryland has lost a good, kind and gracious friend.

Christine Sarbanes was a dedicated wife and loving mother who worked tirelessly with her husband to serve their beloved State of Maryland. She was an educator, improving the lives of her students with her incredible enthusiasm and her intellect, which she brought to the classroom every single day. Christine Sarbanes believed with every fiber of her body and her being that we all have the potential to be great, and she channeled her passion into a career in education which touched the lives of thousands of Marylanders.

I will always remember Christine Sarbanes as a pillar of strength and the embodiment of grace. She accompanied her husband and family on countless Labor Day, Memorial Day and Fourth of July parades that she faithfully participated in as the spouse of a Member of Congress. Charming her way through the crowd, stopping to share her special concern with young people in our great State, she had a special eye for young people, and young people came to her and understood that this was a special person who cared about them. Whether it was in Baltimore at a bull roast or a crab feast in Crisfield or a folk festival in Takoma Park, Christine Sarbanes felt at home, and she made all the people she touched feel special. Her loss is felt not only by her family and friends, but by the thousands of lives in Maryland and around the country that she touched and the countless others she inspired.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring the life of Christine Sarbanes. Her kindness and legacy of public service serves as an example to all of us, and she will be deeply missed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes. (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

VETERANS' HEALTHCARE FACILITIES/COMMEMORATING EARTH HOUR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today deeply concerned about yesterday's reports regarding nearly 10,000 of our Nation's veterans who may have been exposed to HIV and other communicable diseases at Veteran's Administration hospitals. Like those veterans and their families, I'm shocked and appalled that this could have happened. Our veterans deserve better.

A couple of weeks ago I had the privilege of meeting with the new VA Secretary, Eric Shinseki, at the North Chicago VA Hospital to discuss improving care for our veterans. We've heard a lot about change in the past several months. Well, we have the duty to change our VA health system so reports of occurrences like we heard earlier this week never happen again. This means taking a serious look at every option to improve our veterans' care.

One option is right in my backyard. It is actually in my good friend from Illinois, Mrs. HALVORSON's district. There's a hospital named Silver Cross that will be moving to a new location in 2012. The facility that they are leaving has an emergency room that was built in 2006 and a specialty care wing that is less than 7 years old.

Instead of being opportunistic and selling the facility to the highest bidder, the hospital formed a Healthy Community Commission, whose focus is to give back to the Will County community. Our veterans are at the top of their list, and I commend them for that.

I look forward to working with Secretary Shinseki, Congresswoman HALVORSON and Members of both sides of the aisle to explore this and other options to make sure that our veterans never again have to put up with inadequate care.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, this Saturday, March 28, 2009, at 8:30 p.m. millions of people around the world will join together to turn off their lights for 1 hour, Earth Hour, to raise awareness about climate change. Communities, individuals, businesses and organizations will turn off non-essential lighting and cast a virtual vote for global education, awareness and action on this important issue.

Earth Hour began in 2007 in Sydney, Australia where more than 2.2 million people turned off their lights. Last year, World Wildlife Fund took Earth Hour global and more than 50 million

people in more than 400 cities, on all seven continents participated, darkening some of the world's most famous skylines and icons, including the Empire State Building, the Golden Gate Bridge, the Coliseum in Rome, and the Sears Tower in Chicago. Even Google's home page went dark for that day.

This year, more than 1,700 cities in some 80 countries already have signed up to participate, with more joining each day. The event itself will begin in Fiji, cascading across the world with Hawaii as the final stop. In my district, three municipalities, Aurora, Naperville and Homer Glen, and numerous businesses have signed up to participate.

We need to start addressing climate change now, and Earth Hour is one of the many steps that we can take to do just that. That's why I introduced House Resolution 268, with my good friend from Georgia, Mr. BARROW, to support these goals and ideas of Earth Hour. The resolution will help increase education, awareness and action on this important environmental issue.

I encourage my colleagues to cosponsor House Resolution 268 and join in this inspiring and historical event.

I will submit an article entitled, "3,000 Vets Face HIV Risk After Unsterile Procedure," from the Associated Press, for the RECORD.

[From the Associated Press, Mar. 24, 2009]

3,000 VETS FACE HIV RISK AFTER UNSTERILE PROCEDURE

A Veterans Affairs hospital here has notified thousands of patients that their colonoscopies were performed with improperly sterilized equipment, officials said Monday.

The hospital urged about 3,260 patients who had colonoscopies between May 2004 and March 12 of this year to get tests for HIV, hepatitis and other diseases.

The VA insisted the risk of infection was minimal, saying the tubing that was improperly cleaned didn't make contact with patients.

It was the second recent announcement of errors during colonoscopies at VA facilities. "The very notion that veterans have to contemplate this new reality now before them and visit special care clinics to undergo blood testing is stomach-turning," U.S. Rep. Kendrick Meek, D-Fla., said in a letter Monday to the VA's inspector general. "This information is shocking."

Meek urged a door-to-door campaign to alert veterans of the error.

"Although there is minimal risk, we feel that even a slight risk is unacceptable to the veterans we care for," said Susan Ward, a spokeswoman for the VA in Miami.

Last month, 6,378 patients at a clinic in Murfreesboro, Tenn., were told they may have been exposed to infectious body fluids during colonoscopies.

The VA said 1,800 veterans treated at an ear, nose and throat clinic in Augusta, Ga., were also alerted they could have been exposed to an infection due to improper disinfection of an instrument, though officials said the risk was "extremely small."

The VA hasn't said whether it expects more facilities to announce similar problems, though Meek cautioned the number of affected people "could quickly expand to include a much larger pool of people."

"That, somehow, these standard protocols were not followed will undoubtedly leave our

veterans with serious misgivings about our VA system," he said.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHRISTINE SARBANES

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

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with several of my colleagues from Maryland to honor Mrs. Christine Sarbanes, and the impact her passing will have on the citizens of our great State of Maryland and on our country.

Mrs. Sarbanes is the wife of Senator Paul Sarbanes and the mother of JOHN SARBANES, who is a Member of the House of Representatives. Christine was the quintessential lady, polished, well-educated and warmhearted.

Many times, as lawmakers, our spouses chose to sit on the sidelines, but Christine was very much involved in her husband's career. In fact, political activism brought Senator Sarbanes and Christine together at Oxford in England. A champion for women's rights, she was trying to get women accepted into his all-male debating society.

On the occasions when she would represent her husband at events, Christine was very knowledgeable on the issues. She was a hearty campaigner for her husband, but was even more tenacious when her son, JOHN, campaigned for this seat in the House of Representatives. She shared her love of politics and public service with her three children, and they each have taken her example to serve the greater community. She was the true matriarch of a great and distinguished political family.

In addition to finding time to raise three children and helping her husband's career, she managed a full-time job teaching Latin, Greek, and French at Goucher College and Gilman High School, all located in Baltimore, where she taught for more than 20 years.

In fact, one of my staffers, Walter Gonzalez, had the privilege of studying under her at Gilman. He described her as firm, but effective. She taught his 11th-grade speech class and advised him on his senior class speech. Laughing, he recalled yesterday how she coached him day after day. She would say, "Speed up, slow down, enunciate your words, too loud, emphasize the points." He said Christine was a passionate teacher who communicated her respect for her subjects with grace and humor.

A lifelong lover of libraries and art, Christine also found time to serve on several cultural boards and talked the Walters Art Gallery into eliminating their admission fees. She wanted all people, and especially children, to have the ability to experience culture. But she also wanted them to have basic survival needs. She did this through tireless work with the United Nations children's fund.

Christine enjoyed high regard from important people. But I will always remember how she treated everyday people who crossed her path with dignity and respect.

Maryland has lost a truly admired political presence. And on behalf of the residents of Maryland's Second District and the State of Maryland, I would like to express my sympathies to the Sarbanes family and thank them for sharing a talented and giving woman with our State and our country.

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

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

TARP FUNDS ABROAD

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

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, recently released documents from AIG accounts for some of the more than \$180 billion in aid that AIG has received. And it's revealed that over \$58 billion of that \$180 billion has gone to foreign banks around the world. And \$58 billion have gone to French banks, German banks. French and German banks, respectively, pulled in \$19 billion and \$17 billion of American taxpayer money.

I understand the outrage over bonuses, \$166 million in bonuses, but that's a pittance compared to the \$58 billion that have gone to overseas banks. Societe Generale, based in France, was the top foreign recipient, at \$11.9 billion. Deutsche Bank of Germany received \$11.8 billion of taxpayer money. Barclays, based in England, got \$8.5 billion. BNP Paribas, based in France, got \$5 billion.

The House Oversight Committee also discovered a list of questionable foreign investments conducted by the largest recipients of TARP funds. Citigroup, JP Morgan and Bank of America each received \$25 billion in TARP funds on October 26th of last year. Citigroup then loaned Dubai \$8 billion of American taxpayer money. JP Morgan invested \$1 billion of American taxpayer money in India. And Bank of America gave communist China \$7 billion of the American people's money.

Now, the American people have the right to be outraged at the fact that they are being taxed so that a government-owned, failed company like AIG can give bonuses to the very same executives who brought about the ruin of their company. Mr. Speaker, \$166 million in bonuses is a lot of money. But it's a pittance, again, compared to that \$58 billion that AIG used to bail out the rest of the world.

So while hundreds of thousands of Americans get laid off each month, and