

Citigroup, for example, was one of the big culprits that caused the financial meltdown; yet, they got paid \$25 billion from the public Treasury. But Ohio, where foreclosures are raging, got nothing. Instead, out-of-State megabanks are buying up Ohio banks, while more Ohio homeowners get boot-ed out of their homes.

Last year, in my home County of Lucas, another 4,100 homes were fore-closed. That's a minimum of 10,000, 10,000 more people who were not helped by Treasury's failed TARP program. Ohio's families alone need \$20 billion to stop the real estate hemorrhage which is less than what Citibank received, and would go to real people, not ersatz and paper trades on Wall Street.

In Toledo, Ohio, you can now buy a home for \$4,500, but last fall, rather than local homeowners being refinanced in this Wall Street bailout bill, one California investor figured it out. He bought 137 foreclosed properties in Toledo at auction, an auction sponsored by the very Wall Street banks that caused the trouble in the first place. Houses are being auctioned at prices so low we could have put the original occupants back in. Even cities would be able to bid on these homes on behalf of their local homeowners, their property owners, but they've not yet received any funds from the \$4 billion neighborhood stabilization program that we were told was supposed to keep local neighborhoods whole.

But the Wall Street banks are clean-ing up. They get the bailout money. They don't have to manage those prop-erties. They auction them to outsiders and then they're just waiting for their taxes to be filed for 2008 at the IRS to get all those losses booked and get more back from the people of the United States.

Something is very wrong and unco-ordinated with the manner in which the Federal Government is allowing equity to be bled from local homeowners and from our communities at large and awarded to Wall Street whole.

Wall Street banks that hold or sell mortgages on these foreclosed prop-erties are not managing their property holdings. These holdings are then fre-quently stripped of copper, electrical wiring and other materials, further de-valuing adjacent properties and deci-mating entire neighborhoods.

The \$300 billion FHA program de-signed to help modify troubled mort-gage loans is as ineffective as the Wall Street bailout. The program has re-ceived fewer than 200 applications na-tionwide since taking effect October 1 and not a single loan has been modi-fied.

A bank's receipt of TARP funds should be conditioned on them lending money and engaging in mortgage work-outs to ensure the program at least starts to work somewhat. Many banks and servicers are still reluctant to structure manageable workouts with their customers. Among them are JP Morgan Chase, Wells Fargo and

Wilshire, who have received \$65 billion among them in Treasury funds.

What's fair about that? May the 111th Congress pass more than just hollow legislation. Let's pass a measure wor-thy of the oath we took yesterday to protect our Republic from all enemies, foreign and domestic.

Jesse James robbed banks because he said that's where the money is. Well, Wall Street just robbed the biggest bank of them all, the public Treasury. It's time for Congress to blink and do what's right in the 111th Congress of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-tleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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HONORING THE LIFE OF FORMER SENATOR CLAIBORNE PELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-tleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KEN-NEDY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY. Today, Madam Speaker, I join my colleague Congress-man LANGEVIN in this tribute to Sen-ator Pell, the great statesman from Rhode Island. His name is well-known throughout this country, associated most notably with the Pell Grant, the grant that allows millions of young people in this country opportunity to get a higher education.

But Madam Speaker, we wanted to pay tribute to Senator Pell not only for what he did to open the doors for millions in this country for economic and educational opportunity, we want-ed to pay tribute to him for all that he's done as a five-term Senator from Rhode Island and one of the most dis-tinguished Senators ever to serve not only Rhode Island but this country.

He was the author of the Humanities Act, National Endowment for the Hu-manities, which allows the arts to be accessible to the average person as well.

He was really the founder and the person who really began the belief that we ought to work cooperatively around the world in terms of foreign policy. As the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, he was the one who led in diplomacy.

And my friends, he was far ahead of his time as an environmentalist as well.

Madam Speaker, we could talk about his policies and what they meant to our country, but to know him as a per-son is to really say the most about Senator Pell. He was the most self-ef-facing, genteel, kind-hearted man that you could ever know. And in a world of rough-and-tumble politics, it's hard to find a genuine person such as that. And for that reason, on a personal level I

was honored to know him and serve with him and today join my colleague, JIM LANGEVIN, in paying tribute to him.

Senator Pell left an extraordinary legacy that is appreciated by so many people around the world.

He spent his life in service to our country from his start in 1960 as a U.S. Senator from Rhode Island to his retirement in 1997, and in the years beyond in which he remained active in our State.

Our Nation has lost one of its most visionary and thoughtful legislative leaders, and his hall-mark, the Pell Grant, exemplifies his efforts to promote education and opportunity for all Americans. So many families, though they may not know his name, were touched by the work and generous spirit of Senator Pell.

There are so many areas in which he led our country to the forefront such as oceanog-raphy, foreign policy, and college tuition as-sistance. His commitment to public service and his notable contributions to Rhode Island and our Nation continue to inspire people of all generations.

The magnitude and depth of his accomplish-ments may never be known because he let others take the credit and acclaim. His style was understated yet magnanimous and his work ushered in many essential policies that have shaped our world today.

Earlier this week, President Clinton, Vice President-elect Biden, Senator KENNEDY, Sen-ator REED and many of his other friends from around the globe paid tribute to his work and celebrated his life.

He will be truly missed and my sympathies and prayers are with his family. He leaves be-hind his wife of 64 years, wonderful Nuala O'Donnell Pell; his son, Christopher T.H. Pell, of Newport; a daughter, Dallas Pell, of New York City; as well as five grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

But those of us who will miss him extends much farther. It is our country's sorrow to lose such a giant of the Senate and the Nation.

And with that, I would like to yield the floor to my colleague and friend from the Second Congressional Dis-trict, Congressman LANGEVIN.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding, and I am honored to join with him today in paying tribute to our State's former senior Senator, Senator Claiborne Pell, who passed away on the 1st of this year. He was an incredible public serv-ant, and someone who I was proud to call a friend and a mentor. He was one of Rhode Island's greatest statesmen and gentlemen, as I said, who passed away on the first day of 2009.

Born on November 22, 1918 into a prominent and wealthy family, Senator Pell was better known as a champion for the common man and also the "Fa-ther of the Pell Grant Program." After receiving a degree from Princeton Uni-versity, he served in the United States Coast Guard during World War II and later traveled the world as a Foreign Service Officer of the State Depart-ment. In 1960, he was elected to his first of six terms as a United States Senator from Rhode Island. After retir-ing in 1997, he became our State's long-est-serving Senator.

Diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease in 1994, he never let his physical condition diminish his spirit and he remained active in the Rhode Island community and the Democratic Party. In Rhode Island, the Pell name is legendary in politics and synonymous with the best attributes of public service, and his legacy endures.

The esteemed Senator once stated, "The strength of the United States is not the gold at Fort Knox or the weapons of mass destruction that we have, but the sum total of the education and the character of our people." Believing that education was the great equalizer, he created legislation that passed in 1972 establishing the Basic Educational Opportunity Grants—better known now as Pell Grants—that provide financial assistance to students who may not otherwise be able to attend college. It is estimated that a remarkable 54 million students have benefited from these grants.

Due to his love of the arts, he also authored the legislation, as my colleague, Congressman KENNEDY, mentioned, creating the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. He helped shape our country's foreign policy and believed strongly in the power of diplomacy. He stood up to defend rights for all Americans, regardless of race, class or sexual orientation.

Knowing him for more than two decades, I considered Senator Pell a friend and a mentor and had the opportunity of interning in his Washington, DC office during my studies at Rhode Island College. I found it to be one of the most rewarding experiences of my life and the beginning of a career path that led me here to Congress as a representative of Rhode Island's Second Congressional District.

As I began my own career in government, Senator Pell was always there for me, offering advice and support.

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

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

HONORING SENATOR CLAIBORNE PELL

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. In continuing my tribute to Senator Pell, Madam Speaker, Senator Pell was and always will be a role model as I work to serve the people of Rhode Island just as he did, with courage and integrity.

This past Monday, Senator Pell was remembered by his family, colleagues from the Senate, President Clinton, Vice President-elect Biden, and many

others. It was a fitting tribute to his years of public service and his life-long vision for our country.

Madam Speaker, it is an understatement to say that his presence will be forever missed, but his enduring legacy will live on in his many accomplishments that have enhanced our country greatly, and especially the past, present and future students who have achieved a higher education because of Pell Grants. And it will live on in the people of Rhode Island, who have benefited greatly from his life's work.

My thoughts and prayers are with his entire family, especially his beloved wife of 64 years, Nuala Pell, during this very difficult time.

I join with my friend and colleague, Congressman KENNEDY, to say that Senator Pell had a tremendous impact on our careers. And again, we extend both our sincerest condolences to the entire Pell family.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

ISRAEL AND HAMAS CONFLICT

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

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about the devastating situation in Gaza.

Each of us in this Chamber knows what it's like to deal with a terrorist attack on our soil and against our people. Over the last several years, the Israeli people have been constantly bombarded by terrorist attacks on their soil and against their people. Since Israel withdrew from Gaza in late 2005, more than 6,000 rocket and mortar attacks from Hamas and other terrorist groups were fired into their territory.

The Government of Israel has a right and a responsibility to defend and protect its people. To stand idly by while hundreds of bombs explode on Israeli territory would have indeed been an irresponsible position for Israel's government to take, and continuing to do nothing could cause long-term detrimental implications to Israel's security in the region.

So Madam Speaker, critics who have said that Israel responded to Hamas in a disproportionate or indiscriminate way are wrong. Madam Speaker, I ask,

what amount of force would have been necessary to stop the brutal attacks, to put an end to the terrorists' rocket launching pad in Gaza?

Hamas has repeatedly targeted school yards and hospitals filled with children and civilians in Israel. And the militants have been deliberate in operating from places where Gazan civilians have sought shelter, jeopardizing innocent lives in Gaza. Only Hamas is responsible for the massacre of the people in Gaza. Hamas is responsible for this conflict.

Today marks the 12th day of this conflict, and I think we all hope for a cease-fire to take place soon. However, even if the parties can reach an agreement to a cease-fire, it remains to be seen whether it will be durable.

Therefore, I strongly urge support for Israel's right to self-defense and its efforts to protect itself militarily. I also urge the United Nations and our European allies to do the same.

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

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ECONOMY IN AMERICA

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to be here as we start another 2 years in a new Congress, the 111th Congress. It is an humbling honor to get to follow in the footsteps of so many giants.

I come today to talk a bit about the economy and what's been done so far and what is being proposed to be done in the future. Now, there is so much to be learned from people who have been around this place and been on this Earth for many, many decades. A fellow down in Nacogdoches had the wisdom, when he was told by a young reporter on his 95th birthday, "Congratulations on your 95th birthday, I hope you're not offended, but I hope I never turn 95," and the gentleman said, "Well, son, that's because you're not 94." But a man over 90 approached me there and said that he was sick and tired of hearing people say, oh, this is the worst day since the Depression, some people saying it's as bad as the 1930s Depression. And he said, let me tell you about the Depression. I was there. Sometimes we went for 2 days without eating. And I look around nowadays and I see people offended if they don't have three cars in their family. They've got a computer, they've got cell phones, they've got all these things, and they're trying to tell me that this is as bad as the Depression