

Before his passing, Fred said of Carolyn, "She was invaluable. Couldn't ask for a better supporter and a partner and a helper and sustainer."

Fred's daughter Rebecca was one of my House Pages and is now a member of my staff, and her sister, Joy, interned for me in 1996. I know the pain myself of losing a father at about their age, but they should have much comfort in knowing how loved and admired their dad was by everyone and how proud he was of their own accomplishments.

Fred was very devoted to his family, and he will be greatly missed by Carolyn, Joy, and Rebecca, as well as his daughter, Katherine; grandchildren Drew and Caroline; mother, Harriet; and sister, Jane.

Madam Speaker, I urge my Colleagues and other readers of the RECORD to join me in celebrating the extraordinary life of Major General Fred Forster. His life and accomplishments are without comparison, and he will forever be an example to all those who knew him.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 14, 2010

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today our national debt is \$13,848,017,156,749.09.

On January 6th, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$3,209,591,410,455.20 so far this Congress.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF CLEVELANDPEOPLE.COM

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 14, 2010

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the developers and sponsors of ClevelandPeople.com on their recognition at the American Nationalities Movement's Christmas Luncheon. ClevelandPeople.com was selected for this honor because of the website's crucial role in supporting the social life and cultural richness of the city.

Founded in 1959 by Ralph Perk, the American Nationalities Movement consists of representatives of over 50 nationalities in the Cleveland area that come together to celebrate their unique heritages. Each year during its Christmas Luncheon, it recognizes individuals and groups that have contributed to supporting ethnic groups and celebrating diversity.

Debbie, Dan, and Pat Hanson formed ClevelandPeople.com in 2001 when they decided to condense information about local cultural events and support services onto a few web pages. Over the past nine years, it has

grown into a social hub connecting 64 different groups and receiving thousands of views each day. The website's developers explain that supporting Cleveland's distinct ethnic communities is important not only for maintaining the cultural wealth of the city, but for ensuring its economic prosperity. Cleveland has always been strengthened by its diversity.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in congratulating ClevelandPeople.com on their recognition at the American Nationalities Movement's Christmas Luncheon. Their creative and spirit and their devotion for their community continues to support for the cultural diversity that makes this city great.

HONORING CHARLES MENG OF NAPA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 14, 2010

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Charles Meng, who is being honored this evening on the occasion of his retirement after 20 years of service on the Napa Valley College Board of Trustees. Mr. Meng is retiring from the board to serve as a commissioner on the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Charles has dedicated his life to serving his country and his community. He graduated from West Point in 1957 and was a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He went on to serve as a senior engineer manager in the U.S. Navy's nuclear submarine program. He is completing his fifth four-year term on the Napa Valley College Board of Trustees and was also elected to the Association of Community Colleges Trustees Board in 2004. He has served on many community college accreditation teams and is an expert on community college governance. Charles was the NVC Board's representative on a number of critical college committees, including the Technology Plan Development, Napa River Flood Control project and Mare Island Naval Shipyard closure. He was also on the committees to hire three college presidents.

As the current president and longest serving member of the board, Charles is admired and respected by the entire campus as well as the community at large. An engineer by trade, he is known as a highly intelligent, focused and analytical leader. He is a consensus builder but will not budge on his commitment to preserving access to higher education for all. One of the ways he has demonstrated this commitment is by serving on my service academy review panel, interviewing young people from my district seeking nomination to our Nation's service academies. As a West Point graduate himself, Mr. Meng's insights and experiences serving our country were invaluable in this process. Due to his guidance and support, many were able to fulfill their dream of serving our country as he has.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, it is appropriate at this time that we thank Mr. Charles Meng for the incredible work he has done on behalf of the students of Napa Valley College and for the work he will undoubtedly continue

to do. Napa Valley College is a premier institution for higher learning and will remain that way due in large part to his efforts. I join his family and everyone in the Napa Valley College Community in wishing him continued success and fulfillment.

THE PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PENSION TRANSPARENCY ACT (H.R. 6484)

HON. DEVIN NUNES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 14, 2010

Mr. NUNES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the Public Employee Pension Transparency Act, H.R. 6484, which I introduced on December 2, 2010, with the Gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. RYAN, and the Gentleman from California, Mr. ISSA. This legislation is designed to enhance the soundness of State and local employee pension benefit plans by providing them the incentives necessary for State and local governments to provide the American people with meaningful disclosure of the value of these plans' assets and liabilities.

State and local governments have promised pension benefits to about 20 million active public employees and another seven million retirees and dependents. According to the states, these pension promises are underfunded by about \$1 trillion. However, this enormous number fails to accurately convey the true magnitude of the cost taxpayers will bear to meet these obligations. Moreover, as a result of a lack of transparency and generous accounting standards, the vast majority of the American people are unaware that their State and local governments collectively owe trillions of dollars for generous public employee pension benefits.

Unlike private pension plans, public employee pension plans are allowed to use unreasonably high discount rates to calculate their liabilities. In fact, many use unrealistic expected rates of returns on their plan assets, the value of which is often inflated, to discount their pension liabilities. Many economists maintain that these practices are misguided and hide the fact that State and local government pension plans are collectively underfunded by more than \$3.8 trillion.

The Public Employee Pension Transparency Act would address this serious situation by requiring State and local government pension plans to disclose the true magnitude of their liabilities to the American people. The bill would condition the continuation of specified Federal tax benefits upon State and local governments' decision to file certain information regarding their pension plans with the Secretary of the Treasury. This information, which would reveal the true extent of public pension debt, would be available to the public through a searchable Web site.

Over the course of the past several years, we have seen trillions of taxpayer funds spent to bailout banks, auto companies, Wall Street, homeowners, and others. The American people are infuriated by these bailouts and are insisting that they end. State and local governments, with their trillions of dollars in hidden public employee pension debt, are next in line. It is time for them to reveal the true cost of their pension promises and to take that action

necessary including pension reforms—to meet their obligations. The Public Employee Pension Transparency Act would reaffirm that State and local pension obligations are solely the responsibility of those entities and proclaim that the Federal Government will not provide a bailout. Accordingly, I ask my colleagues to join with me to enact this legislation.

H.R. 4853: THE MIDDLE CLASS TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2010

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 14, 2010

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4853, the Middle Class Tax Relief Act of 2010. This legislation permanently extends the tax cut provisions passed in 2001 and 2003 for individuals with incomes below \$200,000 and \$250,000 for couples. It would permanently extend the 10%, 23% and 28% marginal tax brackets, as well as the 33% bracket as it applies to income of less than \$250,000. It would also continue the maximum \$1,000 child tax credit and the maximum 15% rate on capital gains and dividends where income is less than \$250,000. It would permanently reduce the tax known as the “marriage penalty,” and it includes a 2-year “patch” intended to prevent more than 25 million Americans from being subject to the alternative minimum tax over the next two years. It also permanently extends expensing rules for small businesses.

I am glad to see so much focus on the unemployed and underemployed during debate on the potential extension of the tax cuts. However, the myth that we must pass tax cuts to the wealthy in order to help those without jobs has been disproven several times over. If the concern is about the plight of the 15 million unemployed Americans, the estimated 12 million underemployed, and the estimated 6 million long-term unemployed, we should do the humane and economically efficient thing: extend and expand unemployment assistance.

Instead, the debate is about whether to extend tax cuts to the wealthy. Nearly a quarter of all the income in America today goes to the top 1% of Americans. In recent years, the highest-income Americans have received by far the largest pre-tax raises of any group. They have also had their tax rates drop by far more. Americans have said in polls that they want to see the Bush tax cuts on households making more than \$250,000 per year expire. For the wealthiest 3% of Americans, expiration would simply mean a return to 1990's tax rates if that were to happen. Yet, many of the same advocates for passing a massive tax cut for the wealthy are bemoaning a growing budget deficit.

We must not ask the middle class, the working class, those who are not fortunate enough to make \$200,000 or \$100,000 or even \$20,000 a year, to pay so that the wealthiest Americans can enjoy the lowest income tax rates that any wealthy American has had since the 1960s. We must not tell the poor, the unemployed, and the underemployed, that we cannot help you, because we have decided that the wealthiest Americans need a tax cut more than you need a lift to get you

through these brutal times. Those that need our help must not hear from Congress: go and figure it out for yourselves.

S. 3307, THE HEALTHY, HUNGER-FREE KIDS ACT OF 2010

HON. HENRY C. “HANK” JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 14, 2010

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. This bill is a good first step in addressing childhood hunger and poor nutrition, which are two of the greatest public health challenges facing the United States today.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation, which passed the Senate unanimously. It contains the most significant improvements in 30 years to the child nutrition programs that serve millions of children across our country. This legislation expands access to healthy foods for kids, makes it easier for low-income kids to enroll in the school meal programs, improves the nutritional quality of school meals, significantly decreases the availability of junk food and sugary beverages from school vending machines, and expands access to after-school meals for low-income kids.

This is a vote that I do not take lightly. While I never questioned the need to improve child nutrition programs across the country, I did question the Senate's choice to pay for this legislation with a reduction in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. SNAP benefits are an essential part of this nation's nutrition safety net. More than 41 million Americans rely upon SNAP benefits monthly to put food on the table. According to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service, Data and Statistics Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Report, released in October 2010, the number of households in my home state of Georgia receiving food stamps jumped from 581,709 total households in July of 2009 to 716,749 households in July of 2010—an increase of 23.2% in just one year. Many SNAP recipients are children or seniors, and I had serious concerns that the SNAP reduction would be a classic case of robbing Peter to pay Paul. I was deeply concerned that reducing SNAP benefits to pay for this bill would hurt the people it was meant to help—children of low-income families striving to make ends meet during this turbulent economy.

After a long thought process, I stand here before you as a strong supporter of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act. As a Member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, I joined a letter to the Obama Administration expressing opposition to reducing SNAP benefits to fund this bill, or any other legislative priority. The President and his Administration share these concerns and have assured Congress that it will work with us to restore this cut and use their current authorities to protect the integrity of SNAP benefits and further improve children's access to nutrition programs.

This bill would be instrumental in helping to address the growing crises of child hunger and also of childhood obesity. In terms of child hunger, last year, more than 1.29 million Georgia students participated in the Free and

Reduced Price Lunch Program. Obesity is a national crisis, but it is of a particular concern in my home state of Georgia which has the second highest prevalence of obese 10–17 year olds in the nation. The provisions in the child nutrition bill that improve nutritional quality of foods served on school campuses throughout the school day and those that strengthen Local School Wellness Policies can help to combat the rise in childhood obesity we see here in Georgia. According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey report released in September 2010, 22.3% of Georgia's children live in poverty—that's more than half a million children under age 18.

I would be remiss if I did not mention two key individuals in my district that have worked hard to combat childhood obesity. Dr. Yvonne Butler founded Healthy Kids Smart Kids. Healthy Kids Smart Kids is an organization that fights childhood obesity and educates adults and children on healthy eating and staying active. She started the first sugar-free school program in Georgia at Browns Mill Elementary School in Lithonia. Ms. Pat “Shy” Haggans is a certified personal trainer and lifestyle coach who founded Generation Next Sports Performance facility in Lithonia where she specializes in getting kids fit to fight obesity. Like Dr. Butler, she has helped hundreds of kids shed pounds through exercise, planning and lifestyle changes to combat childhood obesity. She assists parents as well to ensure that the next generation will be healthier than ours.

It is important to recognize that this bill would not be on the floor now if it were not for Representatives GEORGE MILLER, ROSA DELAUNO, and JAMES MCGOVERN. Their leadership in conducting negotiations with the Obama Administration was key to moving this bill forward.

I strongly support the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which would also help advance the Administration's goal of solving the problem of childhood obesity within a generation, and urge my colleagues to do the same.

IN RECOGNITION OF MS. BARB DEMARCO'S DECADES OF ACTIVISM IN THE WEST BLOOMFIELD COMMUNITY AND HER NINE YEARS OF SERVICE TO ITS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 14, 2010

Mr. PETERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Barb DeMarco, a member of the West Bloomfield School District Board of Education and lifelong local activist, on the occasion of her retirement. As a Member of Congress, it is both my honor and privilege to recognize Ms. DeMarco for her decades of service and work to build a better future for the West Bloomfield community and its youth.

For the past 25 years, Ms. DeMarco has been at the fore of many grassroots initiatives in West Bloomfield to improve the quality of life for its residents. Ms. DeMarco was often the driving force behind many of the millage initiatives that were directed toward acquiring and developing land for use as community