

to find work. I have spoken to countless constituents who want to work and are actively looking for employment, but they cannot find jobs. Cutting off their only means of support before the holidays would be an unconscionable dereliction of our responsibilities as members of Congress.

Businesses stand to benefit from a two-year extension of the Research and Development Tax Credit, incentives for clean energy production, and a new accelerated depreciation provision, which will allow a 100 percent write off of capital expenditures in 2011 and 50 percent in 2012. These incentives will ease the tax burden on Rhode Island companies seeking to expand their operations and grow their business, providing an extra boost to our local economy.

For Rhode Island families, this proposal includes a two-year increase of the full Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit. Together, these provisions will provide ongoing tax cuts to 12 million lower income families. In addition, it fully extends the American Opportunity Tax Credit for two years to ensure more people can afford higher education.

Finally, this bill establishes a year-long tax holiday, providing \$112 billion in relief by cutting the Social Security payroll tax by two percent. Hard working Rhode Islanders could use a little extra income in their pockets—money that will ultimately be spent and pumped back into the economy to create more jobs. This temporary measure will have no negative impact on Social Security. That said, I will not allow this measure to be used as a springboard toward a permanent reduction of Social Security tax revenues that threatens the program's solvency and breaks the promise we have made to our seniors, veterans and disabled Americans.

Madam Speaker, this compromise is neither a perfect nor permanent solution to our economic challenges, but the cost of inaction is something I'm not willing to pass along to my constituents. If a better deal were possible, I would take it. In fact, I was proud to vote for middle class tax relief just two weeks ago, but my Republican colleagues rejected this common sense bill and it failed to pass the Senate. So now we are faced with a choice—accept this compromise or continue playing politics. The time for politics is over. We have less than two weeks before everybody's tax burden increases. I urge my colleagues to act before our time is up.

DIANE WATSON

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus, it is with great pleasure and pride that I extend my best wishes and congratulations to Congresswoman DIANE WATSON, as she prepares to retire from the United States Congress.

A former elementary school teacher and school psychologist, Congresswoman WATSON has lectured at both California State Universities at Los Angeles and Long Beach. In 1975, she became the first African-American woman to be elected to the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education. She

led efforts to expand school integration and improve academic standards.

For almost 20 years, Congresswoman WATSON served in the California State Senate where she was the first African-American woman to serve in that body. She became a statewide and national advocate for health care, consumer protection, women, and children. During her tenure in Sacramento, she served as chair of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and as a member of the Judiciary Committee.

Congresswoman WATSON retired from the State Senate in 1999 when she was appointed by President William Jefferson Clinton to serve as the United States Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia. As Ambassador to Micronesia, she represented our country in a magnificent way and has throughout her career demonstrated her mastery of foreign policy. She is truly an international leader. Dr. WATSON served in this capacity until 2001 when she returned to California to run for Congress in a special election after the death of Congressman Julian Dixon.

An exceptional public servant, Congresswoman WATSON has demonstrated a remarkable commitment to improving the human condition, throughout her long and distinguished career. A commonsense legislator and a passionate advocate for justice, she has masterfully used her vote and voice in the United States House of Representatives.

The Congressional Black Caucus honors and salutes Congresswoman WATSON for her legacy of service to the residents of California's 33rd Congressional District and to the global community. We will miss her in the halls of Congress and in the ranks of the CBC. We wish her well as she opens the next chapter of her life, we celebrate her leadership, and thank her for her friendship.

HONORING THE SERVICE AND
DEDICATION OF CAROLINE DIAZ-
BARRIGA

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Caroline Diaz-Barriga for her contributions to the Sixth Congressional District of Tennessee. As any member of Congress knows, our legislative achievements and successful constituent services programs would not be possible without a cadre of great staff working behind the scenes. Throughout my time in Congress, I have been fortunate to have many bright, able staff members with an interest in serving their country by working in this body. Today, I'd like to single out those who are serving my constituents as my tenure comes to a close.

Caroline has served as my field representative for Sumner and Robertson counties since joining my office in 2002. She had previously worked for my colleague Congressman Bob Clement when Robertson County was a part of his district. After he left the House to pursue other endeavors and Robertson County was added to my district, Caroline was a natural choice to run my new offices in Gallatin and Springfield. Her presence there has allowed me to better serve my constituents in the

northwestern part of my district over these last nine years. She is an integral player in both counties, attending city council sessions, civic club meetings, and Chamber of Commerce lunches.

In her many years in public service, Caroline has helped countless constituents who have come to my office for assistance. She has warmly received individuals, families and business owners looking for assistance with a federal agency. She has ensured hundreds of residents received the Social Security and veterans benefits they deserve. She has heard the concerns and touched the lives of many families in need of help, and she has always kept me informed of the needs of my constituents. At times, she has found herself playing unusual roles, especially during the too-frequent tornado outbreaks that have occurred in Middle Tennessee. When a tornado struck Gallatin in 2006, Caroline's office in the basement of the Sumner County Courthouse became a place of refuge as residents huddled together to comfort each other and share cell phones to check on loved ones' safety.

Madam Speaker, working with Caroline these past eight years has been a pleasure. No matter what challenges are thrown her way, she always manages to maintain a cheerful, positive attitude. She is a dedicated public servant, a great help to me and a pillar of the community.

Caroline, thank you for all of your help over the years. I wish you, David and your family all the best.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS ON FEDERAL LANDS ACT OF 2010

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce a bill that will significantly improve traffic safety and mobility in our national parks and other public recreational lands through increased funding and expanded authorities. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, the Transportation Infrastructure Improvements on Federal Lands Act of 2010.

Our national parks contain some of the most important and valuable historic, cultural, and natural treasures in our country. Millions of visitors flock to these parks every year. Yet safe access to and movement around these sites are compromised by severe and chronic underfunding and irrational provisions in current law.

The state of park transportation systems is deplorable. A recent assessment by the National Park Service, NPS, found that 90 percent of the park roads are in poor or fair condition. This compares with 14 percent for major rural roads in the overall federal-aid highways system. One person is killed or injured on a park road every 4.5 hours. If the National Park System were a State, it would rank 13th highest for road fatalities and injuries among all the States.

The NPS received \$240 million in FY2010 through the Park Roads and Parkways program to build, repair, and rehabilitate roads and bridges, less than a third of what the NPS

estimates it needs to provide safe and efficient access for visitors. My legislation would double the annual funding to accelerate the retirement of the growing road repair backlog now estimated at \$4.9 billion.

The poor state of park roads is not caused by insufficient funding alone. Under current law, Federal highway funds can be used for reconstruction and rehabilitation, but not for regular maintenance that would help extend the life of the roadway and preserve taxpayers' investment. Consequently, maintenance of roads and bridges is deferred until they have deteriorated to the point where they qualify for major rehabilitation or reconstruction, at far greater expense. Visitors are put at risk when they try to drive around potholes that pock our park roads. My legislation would make regular maintenance of park roads eligible for federal highway funding.

As our national parks become increasingly crowded, alternative transportation systems are being relied upon to a much greater extent to help move visitors around. Unfortunately, that program is also severely underfunded. A third major focus of my bill would raise the annual funding level for the Federal public lands transit program from the current \$24 million to \$100 million, with 60 percent of it being targeted for qualified projects in national parks.

Visitors from throughout our country and around the world are discovering the natural, cultural, and historic wonders that are embodied in our national parks. Their experience should not be diminished, and their safety certainly should not be placed at risk, while they visit our national parks. I urge you to join me in sponsoring this legislation to improve visitor safety and enjoyment of our parks through improved maintenance and management of its transportation systems.

SUPPORTING A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION TO THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a cosponsor and strong supporter of H. Res. 1765 because this resolution affirms the imperative for a negotiated solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Palestinian efforts to pursue declarations or recognitions of statehood outside of the peace process are unacceptable. This threatens compromise and a peaceful solution.

I thank Chairman BERMAN for offering this important resolution and my colleagues in the House for calling on Palestinian leaders to cease all efforts at circumventing the negotiation process. Only through this direct Israel-Palestinian dialogue can we move forward to compromise and lasting peace. Unilateral declarations do not support this process, but rather threaten peace and deepen conflicts.

It is time to focus on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Any attempts to bypass negotiations threaten the security and survival of the State of Israel, and the creation of a viable and democratic Palestinian state.

I firmly believe that a lasting compromise can be reached through direct negotiations

and compromise. That is the way forward for Israelis, Palestinians, and the United States. Secretary of State Clinton had it right when she noted that "it is only a negotiated agreement between the parties that will be sustainable."

That is why I strongly oppose any Palestinian efforts to unilaterally declare statehood and abandon efforts for a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Today, I am pleased that there is bipartisan agreement that the House of Representatives must do everything in our power to reaffirm the need for a peace process and to move these talks forward toward a lasting solution.

CONGRATULATING MIDWAY USA

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating MidwayUSA for receiving the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Earlier this week representatives from MidwayUSA traveled to Washington, DC, to accept the award.

MidwayUSA is a family-owned, catalog/Internet-based retail merchant that offers shooting, reloading, gunsmithing, and hunting products. Retail customers represent 90 percent of the firm's total business at its two Columbia, Missouri locations, with dealers and international customers making up the remaining 10 percent. More than 95,000 different products from more than 700 vendors are distributed by the company, which employs 243 full-time and 100 part-time workers.

Named after Malcolm Baldrige, the 26th Secretary of Commerce, the Baldrige Award was established by Congress in 1987 to enhance the competitiveness and performance of U.S. businesses. The award promotes excellence in organizational performance, recognizes the achievements and results of U.S. organizations, and publicizes successful performance strategies. The award recipients were selected from a field of 70 applicants. All of the applicants were evaluated rigorously by an independent board of examiners in seven areas: leadership; strategic planning; customer focus; measurement, analysis and knowledge management; workforce focus; process management; and results. The evaluation process for each of the recipients included about 1,000 hours of review and an on-site visit by a team of examiners to clarify questions and verify information in the applications. Since 1988, 80 organizations have received Baldrige Awards. I am extremely proud that MidwayUSA has joined this exclusive list.

Small businesses create jobs and spur economic growth, and I am extremely proud that Columbia's MidwayUSA has been recognized for productivity and quality at a time when our economy is struggling. This kind of success is yet another example of the key role that Missouri's small businesses play in the state and national economies.

I would like to take this time to commend MidwayUSA for all their hard work, and I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing MidwayUSA for a job well done.

IN HONOR OF KURT CZARNOWSKI FOR HIS 34 YEARS OF DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVICE WITH THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Kurt Czarnowski in recognition of his 34 years of dedicated public service with the Social Security Administration.

Kurt was raised in the town of Weston, Massachusetts, by his proud parents Edward and Alisca Czarnowski and for the past 27 years, he has lived in Norfolk, Massachusetts, with his wife Anne, their daughter Amy, and son Brian.

Kurt graduated from Hamilton College earning a B.A. degree and then worked as a substitute teacher while pursuing his education, earning a Master's degree in Public Administration at Northeastern University.

Kurt began his Social Security Administration career in 1976 as a Claims Representative in Framingham, Massachusetts. He was selected for the agency's Management Intern Program in 1979 and subsequently worked his way through the management ranks, serving as Programs Analyst, District Manager, Deputy Assistant Regional Commissioner, and Area Director. After holding a number of key positions in the area of public relations, Kurt became the Regional Communications Director in May 2000.

When reflecting on a lifetime of good works, Kurt counts as his greatest achievements his 38 years of marriage to his wife Anne and raising their two children, Amy and Brian, as well as his 34 years of public service with the Social Security Administration.

Madam Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take to the floor of the House today to join with his family, friends and contemporaries to thank Kurt Czarnowski for his dedicated service to the United States of America. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Kurt Czarnowski for his dedicated public service.

HONORING THE SERVICE AND DEDICATION OF JULIE EUBANK

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Julie Eubank for her contributions to the Sixth Congressional District of Tennessee. As any member of Congress knows, our legislative achievements and successful constituent services programs would not be possible without a cadre of great staff working behind the scenes. Throughout my time in Congress, I have been fortunate to have many bright, able staff members with an interest in serving their country by working in this body. Today I would like to single out Julie Eubank, my Chief of Staff in Washington.

Julie attended high school in Smyrna and attended my alma mater, Middle Tennessee State University. She graduated with a degree