

COMMENDING MEHDI MORSHED
FOR HIS SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBU-
TIONS TO THE STATE OF CALI-
FORNIA

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, as the Chair of the California Democratic Congressional Delegation, I rise today to recognize and commend the great work of Mehdi Morshed, who at the end of March is retiring from California High-Speed Rail Authority. For over 40 years, Mehdi has worked on transportation policy in various capacities in California and is widely considered a leading expert. I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Mehdi for over thirty years.

Mehdi Morshed was educated at the University of Washington in Seattle as a civil engineer and he received a master's degree in transportation engineering from the University of California, Berkeley.

Since then, he has worked to make sure that Californians have safe and accessible transportation. He worked for the California Department of Transportation in various capacities, including planning, design and construction of bridges.

He then served as the lead transportation policy staffer in the California State Senate for over 20 years. During his time at the State Senate, Mehdi was responsible for developing and enacting some of California's most ground-breaking transportation laws, policies and programs, including vehicle safety and emission standards, as well as assisting with the establishment of the California High-Speed Rail Authority, the California Transportation Commission and other local and regional commissions, transportation districts and agencies.

At the end of this month, Mehdi will be retiring as the Executive Director of the California High-Speed Rail Authority, a position he has held since 1998. His dedication to high-speed rail in California has resulted in the project evolving from a planning concept to a fully developed project with an 800-mile system that will link Los Angeles and the Bay Area through Central Valley, with links to Sacramento and San Diego. Mehdi was at the helm of the Authority when State proposition 1A was passed by voters in November 2008, which is a \$9 billion bond measure for the State's high-speed train system. Mehdi's ability to successfully develop California's high-speed rail system has led to California receiving \$2.5 billion in Recovery Act funding.

Madam Speaker, Mehdi Morshed has played a major role in developing and implementing California's transportation policies for over 40 years. I can assure you that his leadership will be missed in California, and his transportation projects throughout the State will be a lasting reminder of his years of service to the people of California.

OLDE DOMINION AGRICULTURAL
COMPLEX

HON. THOMAS S. P. PERRIELLO

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. PERRIELLO. Madam Speaker, today, I want to celebrate a vision of the future that is deeply rooted in our past.

It is fitting that the vision is being realized in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, which for centuries served as an economic engine for the Commonwealth of Virginia. That economic engine was fueled by farmers.

Agriculture remains the largest industry in Pittsylvania County and the largest industry in the commonwealth. And today, we break ground on the Olde Dominion Agricultural Complex, located just outside Chatham, Virginia. What will be built on this broken ground, however, will not just be the facilities, but a future for agriculture in this region. It will be a future built on innovation and education, recreation and community connection.

The Olde Dominion Agricultural Complex will house a number of professional agricultural leadership organizations and will offer the local agricultural industry a centralized location in which to learn best practices in operations, equipment, crops, soils, animals, forestry, and renewable systems. The complex will also serve as an opportunity for local producers to enter and grow new markets. These anticipated areas of growth include aquaculture, bioenergy production, and cattle markets.

I am particularly bullish on the opportunities our farmers can seize in the area of domestic energy production. Until now, this region has been locked out of the energy market. Farmers were forced simply to be consumers of energy. We are coming to understand, however, that farmers can be producers of energy—that agricultural regions can be energy regions. Crops we grow above ground can be just as valuable as fuel buried below. In Gretna, Virginia, Piedmont BioProducts has built a refinery that turns crops into oil. And in Chatham, the Van Der Hydes are turning waste into electricity, turning a liability into an income stream that may help them survive low dairy prices.

The complex will not only serve agriculturalists, but will engage the entire local and regional community. The resources and information offered through programs will be designed to meet a variety of interests ranging from those of homeowners to backyard gardeners to children interested in attending 4-H camp. Its arena will ensure that the complex becomes a regular gathering place for the community where citizens can enjoy a vast array of shows and concerts. Whether showcasing farm equipment and livestock or entertaining with country music, the Olde Dominion Agricultural Complex will be a unique asset in Pittsylvania County. It will offer the local community endless opportunities to prosper the local economy through advances in its agriculture industry and increased tourism to the region.

Of course, the complex is not just sprouting from the earth uncultivated. It is the carefully tended fruit of the labor and vision of the Olde Dominion Agricultural Foundation. The foundation deserves great credit for making this a reality. The facility will allow the foundation to

further its goal "to provide extensive educational opportunities to area agricultural producers and individuals involved in agricultural-related activities" and will help the foundation realize its vision "in establishing an environment of excellence in the integration of agricultural, economic, and social systems."

It is only fitting that this complex be built in the county that ranked first in Virginia for flue-cured tobacco sales. However, the county's agricultural contributions do not stop there. Pittsylvania County has also been ranked fifth in Virginia for both corn silage and all hay production. Cattle, beef cows, and milk cows have placed Pittsylvania County in the top six producers in the commonwealth. Equine, swine, sheep, goats, horticulture, and viticulture groups are also growing industries. Additionally, Pittsylvania County benefits from the support of the surrounding counties of Bedford, Henry, Franklin, Halifax, and Campbell, which also have a high percentage of land invested in agriculture.

The Commonwealth of Virginia and Pittsylvania County first prospered because of tobacco farming. Agriculture continues to play a vital role by contributing billions of dollars to our local economy, providing fresh and wholesome products that are part of a healthy diet, and ensuring continued protection of our open spaces. I take great pride in the farming traditions of southern Virginia and believe that our farmers, supported by the community and invested with the latest innovations, can and will take a leading role in a new economic revival. Within our community we have the entrepreneurs, the innovators, the farmers. This complex will harness each of these components to open new markets and spur economic growth. This economic revival will not only keep wealth in our community, but more importantly may help keep our children in our community.

Southern Virginia is fortunate to have the vision of the Olde Dominion Agricultural Foundation and the future promise of the Olde Dominion Agricultural Complex.

Let me close by quoting from one of Virginia's most famous farmers, Thomas Jefferson: "Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interests by the most lasting bands." The Olde Dominion Agricultural Complex will help strengthen those bands.

REINTRODUCTION OF THE "SAKS" BILL

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, every year roughly 36,500 women are violently assaulted in the workplace and yet their only remedy is workers compensation. In an effort to protect the rights of victims of workplace violence, I am reintroducing a bill to protect the civil rights of victims of gender-motivated violence. This legislation is intended to prevent employers from invoking workers compensation when employer negligence results in sexual assault and rape of an employee. This important bill will allow employees to sue their

employers in the case of a gender-motivated crime of violence rather than be subject to the exclusive remedy of workers compensation.

Workers compensation systems were designed to encourage employers to create accident-free workplaces and provide a means for employees injured during the course of employment to receive payment for medical expenses and lost wages. They were not created to shield employers from suit when their own negligence led to violence against employees. When rape occurs on the job, employers should not be able to hide behind a system designed to compensate for job-related accidents. Rape is not an accident and should not be treated as an everyday occurrence on the job. Under my bill victims of gender-motivated violence at work can hold employers liable for negligence through a federal civil rights cause of action that is not subject to state workers compensation law.

This bill will encourage employers to create a job environment free of violent sexual assault and rape, because it is tragic when rape is considered all in a day's work.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT PINE BLUFF'S MEN'S BASKETBALL PROGRAM AND PLAYERS

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff's (UAPB) men's basketball coaches and players for their first ever National College Athletics Association (NCAA) Tournament win in the history of the school's program.

On March 16, 2010, the UAPB Golden Lions defeated the Winthrop Eagles 61–44 at University of Dayton Arena in the opening-round game of the 2010 NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament. The win also marks the first NCAA Tournament win for a team from the Southwestern Athletic Conference in 17 years.

As the No. 16 seed in the South Regional bracket, the UAPB Golden Lions now face Duke University, the No. 1 seed, in Jacksonville, Florida, on March 19.

University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff is an extraordinary institution of higher education and a renowned historically black university. It has a long history of successful alumni and its influence reaches across this country. This basketball team's achievement will bring some much-deserved national attention to the university, its stellar academic record, its dedicated student body, and, of course, its strong athletic program.

I have the privilege of representing UAPB in the U.S. House of Representatives and stand even prouder today on this historic win. I wish them the best of luck on their Friday game against Duke.

Today, I encourage all my colleagues to help me congratulate this deserving team and all of our young men and women in college athletics who represent our Nation's next generation of leaders, many of whom may one day walk these very halls in Congress.

GOOD IDEA FROM KANSAS BENEFITS PUBLIC SAFETY NATION-WIDE

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, sometimes good things come from the darkest, most difficult moments. I rise today to share one such story.

In the summer of 2002, a promising young lady named Ali Kemp came home for the summer after her freshman year at Kansas State University.

Ali had a summer job at a neighborhood pool in Leawood, but one day she didn't come home. Her father, Roger Kemp, found her body in the pump room at the pool; she had been attacked and strangled.

John Walsh of America's Most Wanted, who lost his son Adam at age six to crime, tells us that "closure" is fleeting or non-existent. Mr. Walsh calls Roger Kemp one of his heroes.

Roger Kemp—like John Walsh—has honored his child's memory by working to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

First, the Ali Kemp Foundation has sponsored self-defense training for thousands of women. Some have put their training to use, fending off attacks.

Second, Roger Kemp encouraged law enforcement to try a new idea, to display "wanted" information on billboards. It worked in the Ali Kemp case, producing a tip that led to an arrest in 2004 and later a conviction.

Roger Kemp figured that this tactic could be broadly applied to help law enforcement. He was right. Now, billboards are a tool for police at all levels.

Police in Kansas say billboards are an asset to public safety. The FBI is using donated high-tech digital billboards coast to coast, even in Times Square. U.S. Marshals report dramatic results.

Lamar Advertising in Kansas has teamed up with Crime Stoppers to provide the service free of charge. Bob Fessler with the company said, "It goes back to the old days, to Western days, when they put posters up for wanted people. It's the same concept. We hope something happens quickly."

To that analysis, I would add that effective modern "wanted" billboards are also the legacy of a special man from Kansas who is doing his part to make Kansans safer.

PREVENT ALL CIGARETTE TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 2010

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to S. 1147. While I acknowledge the importance of curbing underage smoking and respect this bill's intent to prevent funding of terrorist groups, I believe the bill threatens the government-to-government relationship with Native American tribes set out by our founders in the U.S. Constitution.

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution gives Congress the authority to regulate commerce with Indian tribes. However, this bill would open the door to allowing States to bring felony charges against tribes and tribal businesses who participate in tribe-to-tribe transactions.

Two of the tribes I have the honor of representing, the Rosebud Sioux and Yankton Sioux, have contacted me with their concerns. They also do not object to this bill and support reducing cigarette trafficking. They simply ask that the bill be amended so that tribal sovereignty, recognized through hundreds of treaties and reaffirmed through executive orders, judicial decisions, and congressional action, not be encroached.

I urge this body to respect tribal sovereignty and it is for this reason I could not support this bill today.

HONORING THE CITY OF MIAMI DEPARTMENT OF FIRE RESCUE'S URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to thank and recognize the City of Miami Department of Fire Rescue's Urban Search and Rescue Team, Florida Task Force 2 ("USAR Team"), for their humanitarian efforts during the Haiti earthquake crisis. I commend them for their immediate response to those affected by the earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010.

The City of Miami Department of Fire Rescue's Urban Search and Rescue Team was deployed to Haiti after the devastating earthquake hit the island approximately 10 miles southwest of Port-au-Prince. The USAR Team conducted successful search and rescue operations while in Haiti.

The USAR Team is capable of conducting the following type of operations: conducting physical search and rescue operations in damaged/collapsed structures, flooded areas, and transportation accident scenes; providing emergency medical care at disaster sites for trapped victims; carrying out reconnaissance duties to assess damage and determine needs in order to provide feedback to all agencies involved; providing disaster communication support using state of the art satellite systems; conducting hazardous materials surveys/evaluations of affected areas; and assisting in stabilizing damaged structures, including sorting and cribbing operations.

Madam Speaker, please join me in applauding and honoring the City of Miami Department of Fire Rescue's Urban Search and Rescue Team, Florida Task Force 2 ("USAR Team") for their unyielding determination and work as first responders to victims of disasters from all hazards. The work of the USAR Team is an important part of South Florida's contribution to the recovery of Haiti. I offer my sincere gratitude for their selfless dedication to this cause.