

from a time when suffrage was denied to whole classes of our population based on race, gender, religion, national origin, and property. Ex-felons who have been lawfully released from prisons have paid their debts to society. To continue denying them the ability to reclaim rights as citizens resurrects historic unenlightened practices of our society. Ultimately, I believe that we fail not only ex-offenders by denying them the right to vote, but the rest of a society that has struggled throughout its history to be legitimate and inclusive. Just like poll taxes and literacy tests, it is long past time that these restrictions be relegated to unenlightened history.

CONGRATULATING BRIGADIER
GENERAL RICHARD A. HERSACK
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RE-
TIREMENT

HON. STEVE AUSTRIA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 16, 2011

Mr. AUSTRIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Brigadier General Richard A. Hersack for his outstanding service to our Nation on the occasion of his retirement.

On behalf of the people of Ohio's Seventh Congressional District, I am honored to congratulate Brigadier General Hersack upon his retirement as Command Surgeon of the Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio.

His 28 years of dedicated service to the citizens of our Nation and our community is both admirable and commendable. Hersack received his commission in 1983 upon his graduation from the St. Louis University School of Medicine. As Command Surgeon, he was the principal medical adviser to the AFMC Commander, promoting the health and well-being of 84,000 military and civilian personnel. He is responsible for the medical policy implementation and treatment execution at eight medical treatment facilities and the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine, totaling more than 435,000 beneficiaries. Additionally, he oversees operational medicine research, development, education and training programs conducted at the Air Force Research Laboratory's 711th Human Performance Wing.

Over the course of his distinguished career, he served at Wilford Hall Medical Center as the Arthur B. Tarrow Chairman, Department of Anesthesia. General Hersack was one of the original developers of the Mobile Field Surgical Team and the Critical Care Transport Team. He deployed in response to the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, and operations Joint Endeavor and Assured Response.

General Hersack also commanded the 51st Medical Group, 51st Fighter Wing at Osan Air Base in South Korea. Prior to his most recent assignment, he served as Chief of the Medical Readiness Policy and Operations for the Air Force Surgeon General, overseeing all Air Force Medical operations and deployments worldwide. General Hersack is also a Chief Flight Surgeon with more than 900 flying hours, and 25 combat missions in the C-130 aircraft.

For his many years of service to our Nation, I join the people of Ohio's Seventh Congress-

sional District in extending our best wishes upon his retirement and ongoing success in all future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 16, 2011

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, on June 15, 2011, I inadvertently missed rollcall No. 424 and 425 and would have voted "no" on both rollcall votes.

SALUTING SERVICE ACADEMY
STUDENTS—CONNER WILLCOX

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 16, 2011

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary group of young men and women who have been chosen as future leaders in our armed forces by the prestigious United States service academies. It is a privilege to send such a fine group from the third district of Texas to pursue a world-class education and serve our Nation.

As we keep them and their families in our prayers, may we never forget the sacrifices they are preparing to make while defending our freedoms all across the globe. I am so proud of each one. God bless them and God bless America.

Today I salute Conner Willcox, a United States Merchant Marine Academy appointee. Conner is a graduate from McKinney Boyd High School where he played football as a starting inside linebacker, lacrosse where he served as captain his senior year, and also participated in wrestling. Conner was actively involved in the National Honor Society, Peer Assistance and Leadership, Saint Gabriel Church Youth Group and as a lifeguard. Conner wants to attend an academy because of the structure and tradition of excellence offered. It is his dream to be a leader in the military in order to protect the country and preserve the liberties we all enjoy. Conner comes from a military family as his grandfather flew 136 missions in Southeast Asia including more than 100 over North Vietnam and his brother is a Cadet First Class at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE
DEREK M. HODGE VIRGIN IS-
LANDS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF
2011

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 16, 2011

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Derek M. Hodge U.S. Virgin Islands Public-Private Investment Act. This legislation would create an innovative pilot program to leverage private pension assets to raise approximately \$250 million a year

dedicated to the infrastructure of the U.S. Virgin Islands, while simultaneously raising an additional \$500 million a year for the U.S. Treasury.

In short, the bill would allow taxpayers a onetime transfer of existing IRA, 401k, and other tax deferred investments—up to a total limit of \$50 billion—into a special fund with no tax or penalties at the time of the initial transfer. The transferred funds would receive "Roth" like treatment at retirement if taxes are paid as follows:

For the first ten years, a 1.5 percent tax would be collected by the U.S. Treasury and divided 1.0 percent to the U.S. Treasury and 0.5 percent to the Virgin Islands.

During the second ten years, a 1.0 percent tax would be divided equally between the U.S. Treasury and the Virgin Islands.

After twenty years, a 1 percent tax would be continually collected only for the benefit of the U.S. Treasury.

The tax funds allocated to the Virgin Islands would be deposited in an escrow account. The Department of Interior would approve the release of the escrowed funds to pay for projects set out under an approved reconstruction plan.

Under my bill, the Virgin Islands would receive a twenty-year dedicated source of revenue that would enable it to build a modern infrastructure to move the islands toward self-sufficiency and reduce unemployment.

Mr. Speaker, the Virgin Islands has neither the tax base nor will it receive sufficient federal assistance to make the necessary investments in basic infrastructure like water, sewer, storm-water, roads, telecommunications, and electric grid. The current infrastructure is not "hardened" against frequent tropic storms, and therefore must be repaired often—further exacerbating the unwillingness of the private sector to invest in basic industries on the islands. These investments would substantially mitigate the federal government's cost for rebuilding after tropical storms and are essential to job creation and providing basic services to the citizens of the Virgin Islands.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation I introduce today is named in honor of former Virgin Islands Lieutenant Governor and former President of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands, Derek M. Hodge, who recently passed away. Derek was the driving force behind this bill and he dedicated the last several years of his towards its passage because of what it would mean for his beloved Virgin Islands. There would not be a more fitting tribute to his life's work than the enactment of this bill into law.

In these days of budget cuts and growing unwillingness to fund for essential infrastructure, my bill will ensure the necessary investment in the Virgin Islands through a wholly voluntary funding source—a win for the citizens of the U.S. Virgin Islands and the American taxpayers.

COMMEMORATION OF
LYMPHEDEMA AWARENESS DAY

HON. DAVID P. ROE

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 16, 2011

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, today I hope to raise awareness of lymphedema, a

debilitating disease for which no cure has yet been developed.

Lymphedema is a blockage of lymph vessels that causes an accumulation of fluid, protein, and other cellular waste. This results in a swelling of the body in places where the blockage occurs. Though lymphedema can be passed down genetically, it most frequently occurs after surgical procedures to remove damaged lymph nodes or vessels. Often it is a tragic side-effect to cancer treatments, the highest risk occurring in breast and prostate cancer patients.

Doctors can screen for lymphedema using a number of diagnostic tools, and early detection is important to minimize the effects of this disease. Lymphedema, sadly, is not curable, but it is treatable through compression, specially designed exercises, or, in some cases, surgery.

One of my constituents, Jennifer Onks Hovatter of Johnson City, lost her husband Thomas to complications arising from lymphedema in 2007. Every year on June 18th—the day that Thomas passed away—Jennifer holds the Thomas Hovatter Lymphedema Awareness Day in memory of her husband.

I hope others will join me in tying a turquois ribbon around their tree the weekend of June 17–19, and help Jennifer bring awareness to this chronic, debilitating disease.

HONORING CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 16, 2011

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor California State University, Fresno as the University celebrates its Centennial Anniversary Year.

Starting from humble beginnings as the Fresno Normal School, CSU, Fresno has evolved into an acclaimed university. Serving a culturally diverse student body, Fresno State has pledged to be a university accessible to students from all backgrounds with the desire to attain higher education. It is this commitment to serving all students which makes this university indispensable to the Central Valley.

Fresno State attracts both national and international attention for its many academic programs. Among the nationally acclaimed programs is the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology. CSU, Fresno operates the first commercially bonded winery on any U.S. university campus, and student-produced wines have won hundreds of awards, bringing much needed interest to the Central Valley. In addition, the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology is also working to solve many of the most pressing issues in agriculture. The college has become a pioneer in water-saving irrigation techniques and equipment that has been utilized.

With 64 bachelor's, 44 master's and three doctoral subject areas, CSU, Fresno has come a long way. The University has contributed much to the economic, civic and social well-being of our community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring California State University, Fresno on its Centennial Anniversary.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chair, I rise today in strong opposition to the misguided Fiscal Year 2012 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. This bill puts the economic recovery at risk by cutting funding to the Commodities Futures Trading Commission, which will prevent the CFTC from implementing important reforms in the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act. The bill also slashes critical food security programs aimed at protecting our most vulnerable citizens, children and seniors. The bill also cuts important food safety programs at the Food and Drug Administration.

The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act took the important step of bringing the vast majority of over-the-counter derivatives out of the shadows and onto regulated exchanges and clearinghouses, where the risk will be borne by the counterparties and the markets they trade on—not the taxpayer. Astonishingly, rather than providing the Commodities Future Trading Commission with the resources necessary to implement this critical reform, the new majority is proposing to slash CFTC funding by 44 percent below President Obama's request—and \$30 million below current levels. This is like telling a cop he's got seven times more territory to patrol but less money to do it with. Unable to repeal the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform law, the Republicans are now clearly trying to starve it to death—which is a prescription for continued pain at the pump as speculators run amok in our futures markets and gouge hard-working consumers. This is a step in the wrong direction and ignores the mistakes of the past.

The cuts to food safety net programs in this legislation are devastating at a time when millions of Americans are unable to purchase food. The cuts also target the most vulnerable in our society. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children is cut by \$650 million in this bill. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimates that the cuts in this bill would force WIC to turn away 200,000 to 350,000 eligible low-income women and young children next year. The bill would force WIC to turn away 3,200 to 5,600 eligible low-income women and

young children in Maryland. The USDA says WIC has saved more than 200,000 babies from dying at birth. Economists estimate that every \$1 invested in WIC saves between \$1.77 and \$3.13 in health care costs in the first 60 days after an infant's birth by reducing the instance of low-birthweight babies and improving child immunization rates. The bill also cuts food aid for low-income seniors through cuts to the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and assistance to food banks through the Emergency Food Assistance Program. According to the USDA's Economic Research Service, 50.2 million Americans lived in food-insecure households in 2009, including 17.2 million children.

The bill slashes the Food and Drug Administration by \$572 million. These cuts are 21 percent below the President's request and \$285 million or 12 percent below current funding levels. These cuts will prevent FDA from improving food safety efforts and increase the risk of food-borne illnesses. The CDC estimates that 48 million Americans get sick from contaminated food, 325,000 people are hospitalized, and 5,000 of these people die every year. E. coli outbreaks in Europe recently killed 31 people and made more than 3,000 people sick. Outbreaks like this remind us of the importance of strong food safety regulations.

I will monitor the progress of this bill in the Senate and conference. I am hopeful that future changes and improvements will give me a chance to vote on a more acceptable alternative.

HONORING DIANE HARGRAVE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 16, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Diane Hargrave of Saint Joseph, Missouri. Diane is active in the community through her work and has been chosen to receive the YWCA Women of Excellence Award for Woman in Support Services.

Within her 23 years of service to the Northwest Missouri Psychiatric Rehabilitation Center, Diane has continually excelled at a complex set of responsibilities. She has assisted with five successful federal and state inspections, and has served several facility leaders on her journey to her current title as Assistant to the Chief Operating Officer. Diane holds the complete history of the facility in her hands, and has been praised for her assistance through a major leadership reorganization. Her knowledge of the facility has been instrumental for hospital leadership navigating service delivery in the complicated public mental health care setting. Diane has guided coworkers to top administrative leadership positions, while helping NMPRC maintain rigorous accreditation—and all with humor and generosity.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing Diane Hargrave. She has made an amazing impact on countless individuals in the St. Joseph Community. I am honored to represent her in the United States Congress.