

in the number of cases recommended by Mr. Olsen raise serious questions about whether pressure from the president and other administration officials led him to inflate the number of detainees recommended for trial.

3. MISLEADING CONGRESS ABOUT THE TRANSFER OF UIGHUR DETAINEES TO THE UNITED STATES

It has become clear that the administration was directing Mr. Olsen to intentionally withhold information from members of Congress and he willingly complied with their inappropriate direction. According to Newsweek The Washington Post and The National Journal, the administration was planning a secret transfer and settlement of at least two Uighur detainees to northern Virginia in April 2009. Each of these reports indicates the degree to which the White House attempted to hide this effort from the Congress and the public.

According to a May 2009, article in Newsweek, White House officials are alleged to have been particularly concerned about Republican members of Congress being made aware of the secret transfer. Newsweek reported, "As part of their efforts to shut down the Guantanamo Bay detention center, Obama Administration officials were poised in late April to make a bold, stealthy move: they instructed the U.S. Marshals Service to prepare an aircraft and a Special Ops group to fly two Chinese Uighurs, and up to five more on subsequent flights, from Gitmo to northern Virginia for resettlement. In a conference call overseen by the National Security Council, Justice and Pentagon officials had been warned that any public statements about Gitmo transfers would inflame congressional Republicans, according to a law-enforcement official who asked not to be named discussing internal deliberations." (This operation appears similar to the administration's secret transfer of Somali terrorist Ahmed Abdulkadir Warsame to New York City for civilian trial on July 5 after spending two months on a U.S. Navy ship).

It has recently come to my attention that I was misled about the status of the transfer of the Uighur detainees in April 2009. This information confirms the Newsweek report that career federal employees were explicitly directed to hide this information from members of Congress, especially Republican members.

During an April 22, 2009, meeting in my office with members of the Guantanamo Bay Detainee Review Task Force, including Mr. Olsen, I inquired about the status of the potential transfer of Uighur detainees to the United States. Mr. Olsen indicated that a decision had not yet been reached on the transfer of the detainees. None of the other career or political officials in the meeting countered Mr. Olsen's assertion.

That is why I was deeply concerned to learn in an April 2011, Washington Post article, that the final decision on the transfer of the Uighur detainees had been made during a White House meeting eight days before my meeting with Mr. Olsen. According to The Washington Post article, "The first concrete step toward closing the detention center was agreed upon during an April 14, 2009, session at the White House. 'It was to be a stealth move . . . They were going to show up here, and we were going to announce it,' said one senior official, describing the swift, secretive operation that was designed by the administration to preempt any political outcry that could prevent the transfer."

Following the publication of this article in April, I personally called Mr. Olsen to ask whether he was aware at the time of my meeting with him on April 22, 2009, that a decision had already been made on the transfer of the detainees. He told me that he had been aware of the decision prior to our meeting.

I believe that I was intentionally misled by Mr. Olsen and other administration officials during my April 22 meeting with the task force. I also am concerned that the attorney general did not acknowledge that a decision had been made when he appeared before the House Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations subcommittee the following day. That is why I was surprised when my office was notified by a career federal employee that the administration was misleading the Congress and planned to secretly transfer the detainees around May 1, 2009.

As Newsweek reported, "Then on May 1, Virginia GOP Rep. Frank Wolf got tipped off. Furious, he fired off a public letter to President Obama, charging that the release of the Uighurs—Muslim separatists opposed to the Chinese government—could 'directly threaten the security of the American people.' White House officials were not happy . . . The flight never took off."

HONORING ROBERT THORSEN
UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. DANIEL E. LUNGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 15, 2011

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to highlight the career of Robert Thorsen, on the occasion of his retirement, on July 4th, 2011, and to thank him for his more than twenty-three years of distinguished service and dedication to the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Thorsen helped guide the House community from mainframe computers to the House Cloud of today. He was responsible for re-establishing the House Information Resources (HIR) Technology Call Center, TCC, and he helped expand the TCC into a 24/7, 365-days-a-year operation. In the past several years, Bob has worked with the HIR Technology Support Escalations Team to provide high-quality support to all House offices. He has also been involved in continuity and contingency planning efforts for the House.

Beyond his work at the House, Mr. Thorsen served in the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserve. He was recalled to active duty in 1990, serving in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait during operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm and Desert Calm. He retired from the reserves in 2002 with the rank of Lt. Colonel.

Mr. Thorsen's knowledge, experience, dedication and consistently outstanding performance have set an example for superior customer service. These traits have also earned Mr. Thorsen the respect of his co-workers and colleagues.

On behalf of the entire House community, we extend congratulations to Robert (Bob) Thorsen for his many years of dedication, outstanding contributions and service to the House.

We wish him many wonderful years in fulfilling his retirement dreams.

RETIREMENT OF ARLENE REYES UNPINGCO FROM THE GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 15, 2011

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Arlene Reyes Unpingco, for her years of support to the education system on Guam. Mrs. Unpingco is retiring as Deputy Superintendent of Educational Support and Community Learning for the Guam Department of Education (GDOE) after 25 years of service to the people of Guam.

Mrs. Unpingco began her career at GDOE immediately after receiving her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Education, majoring in Elementary and Special Education, from the University of Guam in 1986. In 2000, Mrs. Unpingco received her Master's Degree in Education, with specialization in Administration & Supervision, again from the University of Guam. Mrs. Unpingco began her career as an elementary and middle school teacher on Guam. She later was promoted to serve as an Assistant Principal, and eventually, School Principal in several local schools. In 2008, Mrs. Unpingco's contributions to the classroom and through education administration were recognized as she was appointed to the role of Deputy Superintendent of Educational Support and Community Learning. In her years of service, her commitment to our students and leadership in administration has helped to strengthen our island's education system in many far reaching ways.

Mrs. Unpingco was born and raised in the central village of Tamuning, Guam, on September 15, 1956. She is married to the Honorable Steven Sablan Unpingco, retired Superior Court Judge and resides, with her family, on the shores of beautiful Pago Bay, Chalan Pago. She is blessed with five children: Jan, Jason, Jossalyn, Steven, and Michael; and four grandchildren: Brandon, Jaylene, Jenna, and Kailani.

It is on the occasion of Mrs. Unpingco's retirement from the Government of Guam's Department of Education that I join the people of Guam in acknowledging her service and dedication to our island's public schools and the education of Guam's children. I wish her the best in her retirement and in her future endeavors.

IN HONOR OF CONGRESSMAN FRANK MASCARA

HON. JASON ALTMIRE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 15, 2011

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to former Congressman Frank R. Mascara, who passed away Sunday, July 10 at the age of 81. Born in Belle Vernon, Pennsylvania, Congressman Mascara proudly served southwestern Pennsylvania for over 30 years, first at the county level, then for four terms in the United States House of Representatives.

A first-generation Italian-American, Mascara embodied the humble, hardworking nature of his immigrant parents and his constituents

throughout his political career. Known as the “Dean of Washington County politics,” Mascara fought successfully for projects to spur economic development in his district, including the Mon-Fayette Expressway and the Southpointe development project, which is now home to 150 businesses.

Congressman Mascara served in the Army and worked as an insurance salesman and an accountant before he entered politics as Washington County Controller in 1973. From there, he served as county commissioner as well as a trustee of his alma mater, California University of Pennsylvania. In 2009, he received his university’s Lifetime Achievement Award, becoming only the third alumnus to receive such an honor.

Although he was sent to Washington as a leader of his district, he never lost touch with the blue collar, middle-class values of his western Pennsylvania home of Charleroi. He famously spurned fancy Capitol Hill restaurants for cheaper eateries, always aware that he was spending the taxpayers’ money through his salary. While in Congress, he continued to live in the same house in Charleroi that he purchased for \$7,500.

Congressman Mascara had a calm, good-natured manner, but he fought vigorously in Congress for his district. For a time, the Southpointe development project that he championed was popularly known as “Frank’s Folly.” However, looking back on the project at the end of his career, despite difficulties getting it off the ground, he believed it to be his greatest political achievement. Through his blue-collar attitude and political wit, Mascara was a strong and effective advocate for his constituents.

Frank Mascara is survived by his wife Dolores, two sons, Frank and Jon, a daughter, Karen, and a brother, John. He will be remembered as a dedicated family man and a hard-working, down-to-earth public servant. He will be deeply missed by his family, his fellow Pennsylvanians, and his former colleagues here in Congress.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 8, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2354) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chair, I strongly oppose H.R. 2354, which underfunds important clean energy priorities at a cost to the American public’s health and welfare. Fiscal discipline is an important goal, and I support efforts to think critically about how to put the nation on a sound fiscal path. However this bill fails to accomplish that. This appropriations bill cuts funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy development programs that help American homeowners save money on their utility bills. At the same time, the bill increases

funding for fossil fuel technologies, which have no need of tax incentives or financial support, and which increase the level of harmful air and water pollution.

Energy efficiency and renewable energy programs offer the best chance that our nation has to become more energy independent and reduce climate-change inducing pollutants. Yet this bill cuts total funding for the Department of Energy’s Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy by 27 percent and cuts Advanced Research Projects Agency—Energy by 44 percent compared to FY11. These clean energy programs have helped drive strong growth in solar and wind generation over the past decade, while reducing the costs of these technologies significantly. ARPA-E’s support for path-breaking advanced technologies could hold the key to our energy future. In the long run, these cuts will mean less innovation, dirtier energy, and fewer clean energy jobs. This is absolutely the wrong way to drive American leadership and energy independence.

Two programs that have been improving our energy security while helping households to keep down their utilities bills are the Weatherization Assistance Program, WAP, and the State Energy Program, SEP. These programs target residential buildings, reducing the burden on low-income families by an average of 35 percent of utility bills and supporting local economies. The State Energy Program encourages innovative technologies and leverages Federal funds; since 2006, the State of Oregon has leveraged approximately \$27 in non-federal funds for every \$1 of SEP funds spent. These programs have demonstrated success, yet H.R. 2354 severely cuts funding. In Oregon alone, these cuts would mean that an estimated 374 families would no longer be eligible for weatherization assistance. For these reasons, I support the amendment offered by Representatives TONKO and BASS that would increase WAP and SEP funding by \$141.3 million and \$25 million, respectively.

In addition to handicapping energy innovation, the bill also includes a very damaging policy rider that would undermine the Clean Water Act. This rider would prevent the Army Corps of Engineers from restoring Clean Water Act protections to many rivers, streams and wetlands that supply drinking water and prevent flooding. Over 100 million Americans get their drinking water from public supplies provided in whole or in part from waters that are at risk of losing Clean Water Act safeguards. The recent flood events around the country have demonstrated some of the problems with wetlands losses, and these would be made even worse by blocking the Army Corps’ ability to protect these waters.

Amendments passed on the Floor during debate mostly made this bad bill even worse. For example, I voted against an amendment by Rep. BURGESS that would prevent important new efficiency standards for light bulbs from going into effect. These standards, passed as part of the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act, are supported by industry and consumer groups as well as efficiency advocates. They would mean \$100 in savings for the average American family per year. I’m disappointed in the passage of this amendment to prevent DOE from enforcing these standards.

Now is the time to be putting America on track toward a clean energy future, and working to reduce the damage to our water and air

quality that harm public health. I support policies to create a green energy economy, to reduce dependence on foreign oil, to support advanced technologies and cost-saving energy-efficient systems for homes and businesses, and to protect the health and well-being of the nation’s health and environment. Unfortunately, this appropriations bill is detrimental to all of those goals.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 15, 2011

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker on rollcall No. 44 I was detained off the House floor during this 2 minute vote series and was unable to cast my vote before the vote was closed. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

HONORING LUCIO E. PEREZ, OF NAPA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 15, 2011

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of community member Lucio E. Perez for being named Agriculturalist of the Year by the Napa County Farm Bureau.

Mr. Perez comes from a long history of working with Napa’s bountiful soil. His grandfather, Mr. Lucio D. Perez, emigrated from Mexico and settled in the Napa Valley in the early 1930s and worked as an agricultural laborer. In 1935, the L. Perez & Sons Family Estates began growing wine grapes. The business was passed to his son Ezequiel, and later to his grandson Lucio, or as he is known throughout the valley, “Cio.”

He attended St. Helena High School and later studied at Stanford University before transferring to the University of California—Davis, where he graduated with a degree in Enology & Viticulture. His first job outside of the family farm was with Beringer Brothers; assisting with the development of new vineyards, fertilizer, and pest management problems. Mr. Perez continues to manage L. Perez & Sons Vineyards, and also farms acreage in Conn Valley, Carneros and St. Helena. He produces zinfandel, chardonnay and, cabernet—reflecting the diverse terroirs of the Napa Valley appellations.

His passion for sustainable agriculture and protecting farmlands led him to work with the Napa County Farm Bureau in 1988, where he has served on the Board of Directors and as President. He has also participated on the California Farm Bureau Federation—Grape Advisory Committee, the Tax and Land Use Committee, and Finance Committee. Don Lucio Perez, his grandfather, founded a non-profit by the name of Comite Mexicano de Beneficiencia, where Mr. Perez has been an active member and past treasurer.

Being recognized as Agriculturalist of the Year by the Napa County Farm Bureau is an astounding achievement for someone who has dedicated their life to protecting and defending agriculture.