

Act, because I will be in Florida attending the memorial service for my friend, David I. "Dave" Bitner. David Bitner was a great Florida statesman, my esteemed colleague in the Florida legislature, and my personal friend for over 20 years. I was saddened by Dave's death on September 8, 2011, which came soon after his diagnosis with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease). Although I wish to cast my vote in favor of H.R. 2587, my long-time friendship with Dave and his wife, Wendy, requires me to attend the memorial service in Dave's honor.

I support the Protecting Jobs from Government Interference Act, and I voted in favor of H. Res. 372, the rule for H.R. 2587, in the Rules Committee hearing held on July 26, 2011. (Rules Committee Record Vote No. 121.) I strongly believe in the right of American business owners to make decisions regarding where and when to conduct business, and the right of states to determine the best labor policies for their citizens. I oppose excessive governmental regulation and interference by federal executive agencies that do not have the authority to supplant the best operational judgment of businesses in their employment, production, location, and other investment decisions. Recently, the National Labor Relations Board has taken unprecedented, protectionist actions on behalf of labor unions that fly in the face of federalism, and this cannot be allowed to continue. I am proud to represent the constituents of the 8th Congressional District of Florida, which is a right-to-work state, and I will continue to oppose efforts to impede American private enterprise, capitalism, and economic freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I would have voted "yea" in favor of H.R. 2587, had I been present, rather than in Florida for the memorial service for my friend, David Bitner, in support of his wife, Wendy.

HONORING LT. COL. ANTHONY
SHAFFER, SENIOR INTEL-
LIGENCE OFFICER, UNITED
STATES ARMY RESERVE (RE-
TIRED)

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to rise today to honor Lt. Col. Tony Shaffer, Military Intelligence Corps, for his twenty-five years of service as a field intelligence operative and more than three decades of service to the nation in both the Army National Guard and Army Reserve.

Col. Shaffer's extensive career started in January 1981, while still in high school, when he enlisted in the Ohio Army National Guard.

He went on to graduate from Wright State University in 1986. And this year, 2011, Col. Shaffer was chosen as their College of Liberal Arts Alumnus of the Year.

Col. Shaffer's storied career has been distinguished by his willingness and ability to work at the cutting edge of our nation's intelligence community. He has successfully endeavored to adapt new technology and use these capabilities to ensure the protection of the American people. It is likely that most of Lt. Col. Shaffer's work will never be fully rec-

ognized—but I can assure you it is appreciated by me and the American people.

During his initial years of service, he deployed to Germany during REFORGER 85 to conduct anti-terrorism operations against the Red Army Faction, RAF, and other German based terrorism groups. He was also assigned to the Army's New York City Resident Office during a critical period when foreign terrorists were targeting the United States.

In 1988 he attended training at "The Farm" where he graduated first in his class of the Military Operations Training Course, MOTC, at Camp Perry, VA.

He was promoted to Captain in 1990 and was brought to active duty by the Army for the first Gulf War in 1991 where he worked to develop a key classified program named STARWATCHER B. After the conclusion of the first Gulf War, he was appointed to serve as the chief of the Army's global clandestine HUMINT collection program, and ran specific the Special Access Program, SAP, operation, unclassified nickname: CAROLINA MORNING, which netted highly significant information that was critical to the national leadership during the 1990s.

He was the senior HUMINT advisor to the J2/Senior Intelligence Officer of Joint Inter-agency Task Force East, JIATF-E. JIATF-E conducted counter-drug operations in the Transit Zone between Columbia and the United States southern border. During this tour he was successful in integrating highly specialized hybrid technology/human intelligence operations to obtain high value intelligence information to support the operational forces.

In 1995, Tony transitioned to Defense Intelligence Agency, DIA, as part of the consolidation of all Service, Army, Navy, Air Force, and USMC, controlled HUMINT into the Department of Defense.

He created and directed Task Force STRATUS IVY—a one-of-a-kind special mission task force that harnessed the skills of officers from the National Security Agency, NSA, Army Intelligence and Defense Intelligence Agency that conducted direct support to Department of Defense, Special Operations Command and other non-DoD agencies.

After his promotion to Major, due to his highly sought after skills, he was assigned to serve at both the HUMINT Support Element, HSE, at both Special Operations Command, SOCOM, and the Joint Special Operations Command, JSOC. He also served as a team leader of classified element that provided direct support to the Director of Operations of Defense HUMINT Service, DHS.

During this period of his career he participated in multiple highly classified operations—the most notable, a project known as ABLE DANGER—the controversial counterterrorism operation that was designed to detect, degrade and counter Al Qaeda capabilities that was successful in detecting Al Qaeda cells operating within the United States before the 9/11 attacks.

He had two peacetime overseas deployments—the first to Thailand where he was attached to the III Marine Expeditionary Force, MEF, to attend Exercise COBRA GOLD 1991; the second to New Zealand with attachment to the New Zealand Defense Force for Joint Warrior Interoperability Demonstration in mid 2001.

Just after the 9/11 attacks, in December 2001, he was returned to active duty for a 30-

month period, during which he commanded a DIA operating base and had two successful combat tours to Afghanistan.

He commanded Field Operating Base, FOB, Alpha, a joint DIA/CIA brigade equivalent unit conducting classified collection and special operations support regarding terrorists just after the 9/11 attacks.

During his two undercover combat tours in Afghanistan, he participated in the search for senior Al Qaeda leadership in Afghanistan and is credited for helping to break the back of the Taliban's first attempt to return to power in Afghanistan.

Col. Shaffer received the Bronze Star Medal, BSM, for performance as an Operations Officer of the HUMINT Support Detachment in Afghanistan supporting CJTF 180 and CJTF 121.

After promotion to lieutenant colonel in 2005, he was attached to Navy's premier counterterrorism think-tank, DEEP BLUE at the Pentagon where he worked on key situational awareness and counterterrorism technology and tools.

In 2005 to 2006, Tony worked with the U.S. Congress and testified on multiple issues that relate to the 9/11 terrorist attacks and intelligence failures.

In 2006 he was assigned to and commanded the Special Troops Battalion, STB, of the 9th Theater Support Command, Ft. Belvoir, VA.

He was then, in 2007, selected to serve as the G6/Senior Information Officer, Anti-Terrorism Officer and Public Affairs Officer of the 94th Division, Force Sustainment, Ft. Lee, VA—the 94th Division was re-activated in 2008 and was one of Gen George Patton's key divisions that participated in the Battle of the Bulge, Ardennes, in 1944–45. He remained with the 94th Division until he reached his mandatory retirement date, MRD, in July of 2011.

He continues to serve this great nation through his work at the Center for Advanced Defense Studies where, as a Senior Fellow, he continues to influence national defense strategy and policy through research and advocacy of critical national security issues.

Over these three decades Lt. Col. Shaffer has served with distinction and unmatched willingness to conduct high risk operations, while always recognizing the ethical and moral responsibility of his office.

Lt. Col. Shaffer's keen operational judgment and dynamic leadership has contributed substantially to the development of critical national level intelligence capabilities—many of which remain in operation today. His influence over national defense and security is indelible and significant—his service has constantly worked to identify threats and then develop capability to protect the American people. He consistently worked to influence national intelligence policy and capabilities to insure the security of the American people and has done so in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Army.

On behalf of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I would like to recognize Col. Shaffer's outstanding accomplishments, courageous attitude and past and present devotion to this nation. I wish to congratulate him, his wife Rina, and sons Alexander and Ryan on the completion of long and distinguished career.

HONORING MACK STRONG AND
ZOE HIGHEAGLE-STRONG

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a husband-and-wife team filled with love, faith, and determination. I'm proud to call them constituents and friends and I'm honored to be able to recognize their efforts on this floor today.

Mack Strong and Zoe Higheagle-Strong will be honored on Saturday evening, September 17 by the Association of Washington Generals as the Washingtonians of the Year. Mack and Zoe earned the honor by founding and leading the TEAM-WORKS Academy, a program that "develops strong minds, strong bodies, and strong character in underserved youth." Founded in 2002 by Mack and Zoe, TEAM-WORKS Academy grew out of many years of dedicated community service and a strong belief in the validity of their vision for the future. I am thankful that Mack, a graduate of the University of Georgia and a longtime fullback of the Seattle Seahawks, put down roots in the community. His selfless and tireless work on behalf of at-risk youth in my District and beyond is an inspiration. And his wonderful wife Zoe, a member of the Nez Perce tribe and the Executive Director of TEAM-WORKS, is an inspiration to us all. The tandem of Mack and Zoe in the Puget Sound region represent an unstoppable force in the betterment of our communities, schools, and families.

It is clear that TEAM-WORKS is having a positive effect on the young people it directly serves. Over and over again, I hear stories and see the results of improved performance in the classroom and on the field of play. Mack, an accomplished athlete, believes that the link between consistent physical activity and school performance in our young people is a strong one. I couldn't agree more. I think the tactics of TEAM-WORKS should be replicated across this Nation. Mack and Zoe are doing remarkable things. Reading and math scores are up. Relationships at home have never been better. TEAM-WORKS is a god-send and Mack and Zoe show no signs of slowing down.

Again, Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking Mack and Zoe for their efforts and congratulate them on their well deserved honor. They truly represent the best of the State of Washington. In addition, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Association of Washington Generals for recognizing their efforts and providing Mack and Zoe with the kind of official recognition too many of our best community leaders go without.

IN SUPPORT OF THE WORKERS OF
THE UNITED STATES POSTAL
SERVICE

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 14, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the 685,000 workers of the United States Postal Service (USPS), who face a

devastating future which may close thousands of post offices, eliminate hundreds of mail processing facilities, lay off 120,000 of their colleagues, cut their pay, and end their collective bargaining rights.

Each day, the USPS processes an average of 584 million pieces of mail and delivers to 146 million addresses. In my home State of California alone, there are a total of 38,000 active and retired letter carriers.

These employees are fixtures within their communities and are some of the most dedicated, hardworking people out there. That is why I have been a strong advocate for letter carriers throughout my career in public service.

The United States Postal Service offers the most affordable postage in the industrialized world, while being able to sustain efficient delivery schedules at no expense to the taxpayer.

Established in 1775, the Postal Service and the thousands of families who depend on it now face an unprecedented crisis.

Since 2006, an unsustainable retiree healthcare system has saddled the USPS with a \$5.5 billion overcharge to be paid in full at the beginning of every year. Based on longterm projections which are routinely called into question, this fund has established an enormous, unused surplus, estimated by the Postal Regulatory Commission and the Inspector General of the Postal Service to be between \$55–75 billion.

No other Federal agency or private business is forced to pre-fund retiree health benefits in this manner. Since it is not funded by taxpayers, this requirement puts the USPS at a distinct competitive disadvantage. Fixing this problem would allow the Postal Service to compete more effectively with the private sector and return to profitability.

Without this mandate, the USPS would have actually been profitable to the tune of \$611 million over the last 4 years, saving its \$15 billion line of credit from the U.S. Treasury to ride out the bad economy. Instead, the entire agency, which has not taken taxpayer funds for 30 years, is facing default. Its line of credit is nearly exhausted.

Mr. Speaker, the real financial struggles at USPS do not stem from the cost of labor, but from the 2006 congressional mandate requiring the USPS to pre-fund future retiree benefits.

Unfortunately, House Republicans are bent on destroying the Postal Service as we know it and using this crisis as an opportunity to weaken collective bargaining rights.

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee conducted a hearing in April entitled: "Are Postal Workforce Costs Sustainable?" Led by Committee Chairman DARRELL ISSA, this hearing was held to investigate a recent agreement between the USPS and the American Postal Workers Union.

Chairman ISSA's decision to hold a hearing to scrutinize and interfere with the collective bargaining process represents a dangerous precedent that could lead to more GOP interference in labor-management agreements.

In June, Chairman ISSA proposed H.R. 2309, the Postal Reform Act of 2011, which would establish a "solvency authority" with the power to unilaterally cut wages, abolish benefits, and end protection against unfair layoffs. It orders \$1 billion worth of post office closures in the first year and another \$1 billion worth of

facility closures in the second year. It also ends Saturday deliveries.

Mr. Speaker, 6-day delivery is an important service that the USPS provides to the American people and is vital to its long-term sustainability. Ending Saturday deliveries reduces incentive for the American people to send mail through USPS and would lead to more jobs lost and larger reductions in service.

If Saturday delivery ends, it is possible that 80,000 full- and part-time jobs could be eliminated. At a time when we are still recovering from the worst economic recession since the Great Depression, now is not the time to put thousands of jobs in jeopardy.

The USPS estimates that cutting deliveries on Saturday will cut costs by 5 percent, but will slash mail delivery by 17 percent. Clearly the money saved by eliminating Saturday delivery is negligible and does not justify the lapse in efficiency and the loss of jobs that would certainly follow.

Reducing mail delivery service to 5 days a week would cause delays in the delivery of mail and would inevitably lead to increased costs due to the overtime Postal Service workers will be forced to endure in order to handle the backlog of mail. It is also vital for seniors who depend on mail-order prescription drugs and small businesses that need Saturday delivery to meet payroll.

Most importantly, ending Saturday service will remove the Postal Service's key strategic advantage over its competitors and result in a massive loss of revenue for the program.

We can't allow House Republicans to pursue an agenda that threatens the wellbeing of thousands of working families in California and across the Nation. They want to turn back the clock on the progress that has been made over the last century to ensure that American workers have the right to organize and demand fair wages and benefits.

We cannot stand by while thousands of American workers lose their jobs, and House Democrats are putting forth solutions that will take immediate steps to end this crisis without cutting jobs or resorting to taxpayer funded bailouts.

Take for instance H.R. 1351, the United States Postal Service Obligation Recalculation and Restoration Act of 2011, which would realign the Postal Service's retiree health prefunding schedule to a larger time period consistent with what the Postal Service can afford. It would do this by first establishing the exact size of the surplus and then transferring it to the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund where it belongs.

Furthermore, when the Post Office Department became the Postal Service in 1971, employees who belonged to the Federal pension fund started contributing to the new Postal Service. For employees who worked for both the Post Office Department and the Postal Service, the Federal and the postal pension funds shared responsibility. However, the Federal fund paid for retirements based on 1971 salaries, not final salaries. In essence, the Federal fund collected full contributions, but paid only partial benefits. The USPS was shortchanged \$75 billion as a result of this error.

H.R. 1351 takes necessary steps to correct this by altering the methodology used to determine the allocation of costs for retirement benefits between the Federal government and the USPS. By making these changes, Congress