

that Colombia is meeting its commitments. We are eager to see Congress move the Colombia trade agreement forward as soon as possible (. . .).—USTR Ron Kirk, June 13, 2011.

April 22 Milestones: U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk sent a letter to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Senate Finance and House Ways and Means Committees “indicating that Colombia has taken the necessary steps, consistent with the April 22 milestones outlined in the Action Plan, to move to the next stage in the process.”—USTR Ron Kirk, May 4, 2011.

COLOMBIA IS ON THE RIGHT TRACK: PROMOTING AND PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS AND THE RESPECT TO HUMAN RIGHTS

“On September 8, 2011, the Department of State determined and certified to Congress that the Colombian Government is meeting statutory criteria related to human rights.”—U.S. State Department, September 15, 2011.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) Committee that has monitored Colombia since 1985, excluded Colombia in June 2010 and again this year from the list of countries that need special monitoring.—ILO, June 2011.

For the first time in more than a decade, Colombia has been selected as a titular member of the ILO Governing Body for the 2011-2014 term. Colombia was elected with 96 percent of votes from the tripartite delegations of 182 countries around the world.—ILO, June 2011.

COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT AND LABOR UNIONS: WORKING HAND IN HAND

An effective Three-Party Agreement was signed by the Colombian Government, labor unions and employers to strengthen democracy and advance the social dialogue on labor issues. The Agreement, which was originally signed in June 2006, was updated in May 2011 to reaffirm all three parties’ commitment to reestablishing a social dialogue to generate solutions on labor-related issues and address conflicts and differences.—May 2011.

The Colombian Government and Colombian Federation of Educators—Fecode, which represents 250,000 educators—signed an historic agreement on May 4, 2011 that will improve working conditions and the quality of life for the nation’s educators. “We achieved very important points and discussed important topics such as the teachers’ status. As teachers, we have welcomed this agreement.”—Senén Niño, President of Fecode. June 15, 2011.

TRADE UNIONS AND NGO EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR ACTION PLAN AND PROGRESSIVE AGENDA

On the Progressive Agenda: “The General Labor Confederation (CGT) salutes the achievements of the Administration of President Juan Manuel Santos during his first year in office. The Administration has enacted a series of policies of enormous value to workers and all Colombians.”—CGT, August 11, 2011.

On the Progressive Agenda: “The agenda that is being constructed at this moment is the result of a constant battle and the work of the Colombian union movement with the support of international unions. The measures contained in the agreement signed by Presidents Santos and Obama last week, the recommendations of the High Level Mission of the OIT that visited us in February, and President Santos’ programs on labor are all measures that the union movement has advocated for years.”—Luciano Sanin, Director of the National Union School (ENS), April 2011.

On the Action Plan: “It is a step in the right direction that the President (Santos) deepened the agreement so that the topics of union liberty, human rights and guarantees for workers are included in the FTA.”—Julio Roberto Gomez, General Secretary of the CGT, April 8, 2011.

A VIEW FROM OUTSIDE: “COLOMBIA’S PROGRESS DESERVES SUPPORT”

“The best way to encourage Mr. Santos to take further steps to end impunity and protect activists, political candidates and indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities is to approve the FTA.” (. . .) “Democrats should join in ratifying the Colombia pact, and they should credit progress on human rights.”—Mark Schneider, Senior Vice President, International Crisis Group and Former Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, September 18, 2011.

“We commend President Juan Manuel Santos’s commitment to compensate the victims of violence and return confiscated land to poor farmers. And we applaud efforts to reduce homicides of union members, which Colombia reports have declined by nearly 90% since 2002. These are significant steps. The FTA will further Colombia’s progress by providing clear protections for fundamental labor rights.”—Sens. John Kerry (D-MA) and Max Baucus (D-MT), Wall Street Journal Op-ed, April 4, 2011.

“A Gain for Workers.” In an article on labor cooperatives, Revista Semana highlighted that the new decree that tackles illegal forms of labor intermediation “is very good news for the working class (. . .) 300,000 jobs will be formalized (. . .) several companies are already adjusting to the new standard. Carrefour added 600 employees to its payroll, representing additional annual costs of about 5,000 million pesos (US\$2.5 million). Exito has hired 2,500 packers, as part of a plan that includes the direct hiring of 6,250 employees this year. This will cost Exito about 70,000 million pesos per year (US\$35 million).”—Revista Semana, June 18, 2011. The Colombian news weekly Revista Semana was awarded in 2009 by the Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA) with the Charles A. Perlik, Jr. Award for Excellence in the Field of Print Journalism throughout the hemisphere.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 12, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today our national debt is \$14,863,312,407,851.35.

On January 6, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$4,224,886,661,557.55 since then. This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE, AND MEDICAID

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 12, 2011

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on the Joint Select Committee on

Deficit Reduction to not make cuts to vital safety net programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.

52.5 Million people received Social Security in 2009 alone—and 3 million seniors live below the \$11,000 federal poverty level.

Today, 40 million Americans are enrolled in Medicare.

More than 48 million people rely on Medicaid services.

Unfortunately, Republicans want to turn back the clock and place increasing costly burdens on the backs of America’s seniors and their families.

We must not ask seniors to sacrifice benefits before asking the wealthiest few and major companies to pay their fair share.

Seniors have health care security and a greater financial security because of these services—we must ensure their protection and avoid cuts that will negatively impact job creation.

We must lower our long-term deficit and work together to find a better solution so that America’s beneficiaries are not at risk.

TO COMMEMORATE THE GRAND OPENING OF OTTO BOCK POLYURETHANE TECHNOLOGIES IN ROCHESTER HILLS, MI

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 12, 2011

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the grand opening of Otto Bock Polyurethane Technologies in Rochester Hills, Michigan. Otto Bock is world-renowned and award-winning for its work in the field of prosthetics and orthotics. The story of the Otto Bock family of companies is a striking example of how innovation and technology can be transferred across discrete industries to create synergies for new products and processes.

Founded in 1919 in Berlin, Germany and named for its founder, Otto Bock has stayed true to its origins as an innovator and manufacturer of prosthetic devices. The perpetual process of innovating and improving prostheses combined with the challenge presented by the physical needs of returning war veterans, pushed Bock to use new materials and processes to increase production of improved prostheses. Traditionally an artisan-based process, Bock sought to move the industry toward a component-based manufacturing system. He was a forerunner in the use of aluminum parts and in 1950, he applied the first plastics to prosthetic production, some of which are still used today. Recognizing the vast potential of this new material, Max Näder, Bock’s son-in-law, founded the Otto Bock Kunststoff in 1953. Today, the company is an important technology partner for Otto Bock HealthCare as well as a successful developer

and supplier of plastics for the automobile industry. The third pillar of the company group Otto Bock is Sycor. Formerly part of the computer department of Otto Bock, the information and communication technology company develops customized solutions for company networks.

Otto Bock's Rochester Hills facility will focus on advanced products and manufacturing of technologies of noise-reducing NVH Foam Parts for automotive engines and will eventually bring nearly \$14 million in capital investments and 100 jobs to our community.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to welcome the entire Otto Bock family to Michigan's 9th Congressional District and I am honored to recognize Otto Bock Polyurethane Technologies and the dedicated individuals who work to maintain its mission of innovation. I know that the leadership of Otto Bock will find some of the best engineers and skilled workers in the world here to further its work in advanced technology and manufacturing. I look forward to Otto Bock maintaining its strong tradition of innovation, excellence and good corporate citizenship in our communities for many decades to come.

MS. RITA LACEY

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 12, 2011

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Rita Lacey of Close the Loop, for her excellent work as an entrepreneur. Ms. Lacey has managed to merge business and the phrase "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" through her business, Close the Loop LLC.

Close the Loop LLC began in 2000. Ms. Lacey started a new venture with no background in sales or accounting. Its aim was to help United States manufacturers of recycled products build the demand for their products made from recycled materials. By 2008, Close the Loop had shipped more than 7 million pounds of rubber mulch and more than 130,000 pounds of plastic fencing.

In 2009, a time of economic downturn led Ms. Lacey's company to get more socially involved in the community. Close the Loop organized free community events such as "Give and Take Days," during which community members donated items they no longer needed and took items they could use. Ms. Lacey has passed her business knowledge to others by offering free workshops and classes at Careerlink in Tannersville and the Monroe County Chamber of Commerce. She shows unemployed and underemployed people how they can start their own business while on a limited budget. I commend Ms. Lacey for all she has done as an entrepreneur and a philanthropist.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the efforts that Rita Lacey has made. It is citizens such as Ms. Lacey that make Northeastern Pennsylvania a wonderful place to live and work. In these struggling times, it is wonderful to see all of the positive work Ms. Lacey is doing to promote her community.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MR.
RICHARD "FOZ" RYAN

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 12, 2011

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of Mr. Richard "Foz" Ryan, teacher, coach and community servant, who passed away this week on Monday, October 10, 2011.

A native of East St. Louis, Illinois, Foz Ryan was a competitive athlete who blended his interests in education and sports as a highly successful coach. Foz coached an impressive array of sports over a 36 year career, including basketball, football, cross country, track and volleyball. The lessons learned by his athletes enabled them to achieve success, not only in their athletic pursuits, but in life as well.

Foz never faced a worthy cause he did not champion or an event he could not organize. He became involved with the Special Olympics over 30 years ago and was a dedicated supporter of that organization ever since. While Foz was honored for his years of service to Special Olympics he noted that his true reward came through his interaction with the Special Olympics athletes.

Through his work with the Knights of Columbus and the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Foz organized and initiated a number of community events, including the annual St. Patrick's Day parade in Belleville, Illinois, which was founded through Foz's initiative and which has grown in popularity every year.

Always proud of his Irish ancestry, Foz made several trips to Ireland and worked tirelessly to promote an appreciation for Irish heritage within his community. He was honored as the "Hibernian of the Year" and held every office of his local chapter of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Foz Ryan's lifetime of achievement was accomplished through his roles as a teacher, coach, mentor, volunteer, fund-raiser and community servant. He is now reunited with his wife, Shirley, to whom he was married for 44 years and who preceded him in death in 2000. Foz is survived by three children, Theresa, Timothy and Patrick, and eight grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of Mr. Richard "Foz" Ryan, offering our best wishes to his family and recognizing the indelible mark he left on his community and in the hearts of everyone who knew him.

A GOTHAM HEART—IN HONOR OF
AN AMERICAN HERO, PFC BYRAN
A. DILBERIAN, JR., UNITED
STATES ARMY, 10TH MOUNTAIN
DIVISION, 1ST BATTALION, 32ND
INFANTRY REGIMENT

HON. MICHAEL G. GRIMM

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 12, 2011

Mr. GRIMM. Mr. Speaker, on July 1, 2011 PFC Bryan Dilberian, Jr., while on patrol in Arghandab Valley in Afghanistan, was nearly killed by an Improvised Explosive Device that

took both of Bryan's legs and an arm. His brother in arms, SPC Jimmy Waters died literally in his arms from the same IED explosion.

But, because of his Gotham Heart and extraordinary will to live, and not just live but flourish, he is now walking less than three months from the day he lost his legs. His courage is a lesson to us all in the resilience of the human spirit. PFC Dilberian and his wonderful family make us all proud to be Americans; their faith, courage, and character throughout this trying ordeal is an inspiration, and like all Wounded Warriors, are shining examples for our nation. I submit this poem penned by Mr. Albert Caswell to honor PFC Bryan Dilberian Jr. of The Tenth Mountain Division from Brooklyn, New York and his fallen brother in arms SFC Jimmy Waters.

A GOTHAM HEART

(By Mr. Albert Caswell)

A Gotham Heart!

And from this Gotham City of great consequence!

Has but come such a fine young Man, to all hearts to so enhance!

A Man of such heart and soul, to warm our hearts when they are cold!

Oh yes my Lord, something so special so . . . as but such a sheer work of art, to behold!

One Mountain of a Man! Tenth Mountain . . . "The Chosen" . . . America's Son,

who makes all of us so very proud this one! As One of The Band of Brothers, known as 10th Mountain Men!

Angels put upon this earth, to but protect us all our Lord has sent!

Oh to be A Tenth Mountain Man!

Magnificent . . . Magnificent . . . Magnificent!

And so gallantly off to war, for all of us he so went!

Who upon battlefields of honor bright!

One of Brooklyn's best, who so makes all our hearts ignite!

As so soon Bryan, you began your new fight! While, out on patrol . . . as you so stood at death's door that night!

Losing your two strong legs, and arm of might!

As the tears rolled down your most precious eyes, this sight!

And your Brother In Arms SPC James Waters, almost in your arms so died!

As the Angels cried, The Angels Cried!

As there they found you together side by side . . .

And Bryan, you so said to yourself, I will live! I will not die!

Armed now, with only the kind of courage that makes the Angels cry!

As Bryan you so wiped away all of those tears from your most brilliant eyes!

To so teach as all, how high a heart can rise! All about, what within a Gotham Heart so lies!

Even Batman, doesn't have such a Gotham Heart as comprised!

With such courage and faith, oh how Bryan you make us cry!

As you were off running, for you had mountains to so climb!

In less than three months Bryan, you would walk with your head held high!

Making your wonderful Mother Mary Jane, and your family so cry!

With your heart as big as New York City, full of courage . . . as tall as any building does rise!

Yea, The Beastly Boys ought to write a song about your life . . . Word!

Don't Sleep to Brooklyn, might be one of the lines!