

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING SHAWN NELSON ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE CITY OF TEMECULA

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 24, 2011

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the honorable public service of Shawn Nelson as he retires as City Manager of the City of Temecula, California.

Joining the City of Temecula in 1999, Mr. Nelson has been instrumental in improving the structure and services of the community. During his time, the City has grown quickly adding 32,000 new residents. Because of this, he has supported efficient community development, economic expansion, and job growth, making Temecula one of the most vibrant communities in the region. Mr. Nelson has worked tirelessly to improve infrastructure and has helped to encourage private investment in community projects.

Mr. Nelson has a long history of public service. Prior to his role in Temecula, he graduated from California State University, San Bernardino, in 1994 with a Masters of Public Administration. He has served as the Deputy City Manager of the City of Corona, was the Director of Community Services for the City of Temecula, the Parks Director for 29 Palms Park & Recreation District, the Recreation Supervisor for the 29 Palms Park & Recreation District, and the Recreation Leader of the Yucca Valley Park and Recreation District. His work has illustrated his dedication to the communities that he has served.

It is an honor to recognize Mr. Nelson on the occasion of his retirement after three decades of contributions to California communities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to please join me in recognizing Mr. Shawn Nelson's dedicated service to the City of Temecula and the state of California.

KEEP PAYMENT OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR AMERICA'S SENIORS

HON. LARRY KISSELL

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 24, 2011

Mr. KISSELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring before the House some serious concerns I have regarding the impact of certain paperwork reduction measures that are being considered by various agencies of the federal government and the seeming lack of concern on how this changes will affect senior citizens in North Carolina's 8th District.

We are all aware of the need to make government more efficient and reduce the costs of services. The revolution in digital communications offers opportunities to do exactly that.

However, I have noticed a troubling trend. In the rush to achieve these efficiencies, we may be unintentionally harming some of the most vulnerable people in our society by imposing new costs on folks with limited options.

For example, in May, the Social Security Administration implemented the first phase of a plan to eliminate the mailing of Social Security checks to recipients who have not registered for direct deposit of their monthly benefit checks. There are a number of reasons why all citizens don't sign up for direct deposit. Some like to physically take their check to the bank to be sure of the date it was actually deposited. There are others who are honestly skeptical of financial institutions and simply don't trust the direct deposit process. Another category is the so-called "un-banked" and they simply do not own a banking account.

A growing number of citizens, Mr. Speaker, are increasingly concerned about cyber-security and identity theft. They are limiting their use of computer technology for their most sensitive and important financial transactions. And with each week bringing news of data thefts, cyber security breaches and phishing scams, who can blame them?

So in place of their Social Security check, the Social Security Administration has begun to send out a debit card that will allow recipients to access their Social Security benefits electronically. Here's the problem: If you don't have a bank account and you are already skeptical of electronic transactions, how does a debit card work for you? It is very possible that many of the places folks in my district shop simply don't accept electronic payments. And for you to get cash from an ATM to use in those places means you are now paying a fee—after the first free transaction—for the privilege of spending your hard-earned Social Security Benefits.

What are older Americans to do when more of their limited income goes to pay bank fees for use of their debit cards? It would seem to me that instead of creating a more efficient and fiscally responsible government we may instead be shifting costs from the government to people least able to pay for the increased cost of these services. These unfair fees amount to a new tax on consumers.

Another example of the push to go completely electronic is the recent announcement by the Social Security Administration regarding the annual earnings statements. Not only is it an important tool for retirement planning, but it is also a critical way for hard working wage earners to confirm that the government has accurately recorded their earnings. The mailing of these statements is being discontinued. A more limited version of the form will eventually be available online, however, the all-important listing of a citizen's earnings by year will not appear in the online version.

Now why would citizens who are already concerned about cyber-security want to log in with sensitive Social Security information in order to check their records? And for those citizens without a computer or the skills to use one, this new policy simply denies them the

benefits of seeing the annual earnings statement altogether.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the digital revolution holds great promise for our nation. But we need to make sure in our "rush to digitize" that we are not leaving the middle class and vulnerable citizens behind and that the cost efficiencies we are creating are not simply a matter of shifting costs from the government to the people who cannot afford to pay another tax.

How do we make sure of that? One effective method would be through a comprehensive federal policy that will guide federal agencies in making sure that their digital transitions do not disenfranchise key blocks of our citizens. We should seriously consider a tough set of oversight hearings in the U.S. Congress to make sure that digital policies are being implemented fairly and deliberately.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot and we do not want to turn back the clock on the digital revolution. In an era when private sector financial institutions are implementing significant fees on customers who wish to continue to receive paper statements, however, we cannot allow our federal government to follow a similar path. Such discriminatory fees are wrong and we must insure that our government continues to serve all our citizens and does not adopt policies regarding access to information that penalize key segments of our population.

All Americans should be able to benefit from the digital revolution. However, the federal government must assure that its policies treat all Americans equally, with services provided in a manner and method that can be effectively utilized, whether on paper or otherwise. We owe it to all our citizens to insure these basic protections.

HONORING DOCTOR LUIS SERENTILL

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 24, 2011

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Luis H. Serentill, an outstanding physician and person who supports our community and the ideals of freedom and democracy.

Dr. Serentill is a professor of surgery at the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine at Florida International University. Graduated from the Salamanca University School of Medicine in Spain in 1968, and has been practicing in Florida since 1974. During this time he has served as a diplomat to the American Board of Surgery, and was also appointed to the Florida Board of Medicine by Governor Bob Martinez from 1987 to 1991. He has been Chairman of the Department of Surgery at various hospitals in Charlotte County, Florida and President of the Charlotte County Medical Society.

One of Dr. Serentill's proudest moments was when he was able to join the operation

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"Sea Signal" Joint Task Force 160 at Guantanamo Bay in 1994. For his voluntary service to this operation he received a citation from the Commander. It is instances such as these that demonstrate Dr. Serentill's unselfish character and dedication to service.

On July 3, 2011, Dr. Serentill was awarded the Medal of the Order of Dr. Carlos J. Finlay for distinguished services to his profession and services to honor underserved nations. Dr. Serentill has always expressed his belief in the greatness of his adopted homeland, and the opportunities our nation provides. He continues to practice surgery and teach in Miami Dade County, and was recently appointed as the Scientific Director of the XXI International Medical Congress of the Cuban Medical Association.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Dr. Luis H. Serentill for his continued service to the Miami community and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this outstanding individual.

IN HONOR OF PHIL TISI

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 24, 2011

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, our communities thrive when their citizens contribute to the common good and general betterment of their home towns, serving for the love of their community. Phil Tisi is such a man. He has held, with distinction, many positions in the educational field as a leader, an educator, administrator and college adjunct instructor. After serving for 38 years in the school system and in various capacities at the high school and the Ramapo Central School District, he recently retired as Chairman of the Suffern High School Social Studies Department. In addition, for over a decade he has served as Deputy Supervisor, Interim Supervisor, and Assistant to the Supervisor in the Town of Ramapo.

When organizations are successful quite often it's because of one person making a difference, and in many cases in Ramapo that person is Phil Tisi. He has helped many communities and their leaders in the Town of Ramapo, as well as individuals, and non-profit agencies throughout Rockland County.

He is an integral part of successful patriotic and community events and town programs in general. He is especially helpful to veterans organizations, including, and perhaps especially, the Fred Hecht Post of the Jewish War Veterans, who are honoring him.

He has served as Co-Chair of all of their past thirteen concert programs of the Support the Troops and Salute to the Veterans. With his help, more than \$550,000 was raised to ship gift-paks and GI travel/hygiene kits to our troops overseas in the Middle East and our Wounded Warriors in military hospitals. Phil Tisi has been commended 33 times for his good work with veteran groups, civic organizations and government agencies.

He was born in Dobbs Ferry and he and his wife, Alicia Cameron Tisi, a retired Registered Nurse, have three sons and a daughter.

I am proud to join in recognizing Phil Tisi for being an outstanding citizen and civic leader who has worked for his community and for our brave men and women serving in our Armed

Forces. He is a shining example of what a citizen can accomplish for his community.

PROTECT LIFE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 13, 2011

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 358, the Protect Life Act.

Our first priorities in the House of Representatives must be helping to foster job creation and supporting middle class families. We are now 280 days in this Congress without passing a jobs plan.

Instead, the Republicans have chosen to continue their radical assault on reproductive health care in the guise of preventing the use of federal funds to pay for abortion procedures. These bills and amendments are as unnecessary as they are offensive. Federal law already prohibits the use of federal funds to pay for abortion services except when a woman's life is endangered or she is a victim of rape or incest.

H.R. 358 would impose unprecedented limitations on comprehensive reproductive health services that go far beyond current law.

The bill would force health plans to drop comprehensive coverage in state health insurance exchanges. The bill would allow hospitals to refuse to provide life-saving care to women—even if they are facing an imminent threat of death. Further, the provisions in this bill are so broad that it would allow states to prohibit access to birth control, including providing emergency contraception to sexual-assault survivors.

This bill claims that it would protect life. But the bill could end the lives of women who are in need of life-saving emergency care. Sadly, we have all heard of the stories of women who are faced with the heart-wrecking decision to terminate their pregnancies when they are told that their baby will not survive to term. This bill will prevent women in that difficult situation from receiving needed health care services even if they are facing a life-threatening situation themselves.

This bill goes farther than ever in an extreme attempt to limit health coverage for American women, and make a legal, constitutionally protected medical procedure inaccessible to women.

Instead of debating how to put Americans back to work, we are again spending our time debating a bill that would result in substandard health care for millions of Americans.

I strongly oppose H.R. 358 and urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this dangerous piece of legislation.

IN HONOR OF STEVEN ALTARESCU

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 24, 2011

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the education of our children is one of our most important tasks, preparing them for adulthood. At the

Riverdale Temple the staff has been enormously helped by Rabbinic Intern Steven Altarescu, who has taught 3rd through 5th grades as well as an adult education course on Relationship in the Torah—Love, Sex and Violence; Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Siblings, Lovers, Us and God. The course is so popular that the congregants look forward to him returning next year to teach it.

He lives in Riverdale and is in his fourth year of rabbinical school at the Academy for Jewish Religion, a pluralistic seminary in Riverdale. He has also taught fourth, fifth and second grades at Temple Beth Shalom in neighboring Hastings-on-Hudson for thirteen years.

He is married and the father of two grown daughters, three stepdaughters and one stepson.

Steven brings a passion for Jewish spirituality, prayer and Torah study to our Temple and has contributed to a successful year in ways far beyond his actual responsibilities as our Rabbinic Intern. Steven has participated in worship services, preached, chanted Torah, and—behind the scenes—been the most generous, gracious and always available member of our synagogue staff.

The Riversdale Temple is grateful and proud to publicly acknowledge Steven's many, many contributions to the congregation, and to wish him every success in the rest of his rabbinic education, and in his future service to the Jewish community. I am proud to join the Riverdale Temple in this recognition and in the knowledge that his presence as a member of the rabbinate is a source of strength.

IN HONOR OF ELOUISE COBELL

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 24, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Elouise Cobell who passed away on Sunday, October 16, 2011. This extraordinary individual led a 15 year fight on behalf of nearly 500,000 Native Americans who had their trusts mismanaged by the federal government.

Elouise Cobell filed a lawsuit in 1996 seeking justice for herself and the half million other American Indians who had their assets mismanaged by the U.S. Department of the Interior. After a lengthy battle in the courts, a \$3.4 billion settlement was announced in December 2009.

However, the fight was not over for Elouise Cobell. While a settlement was reached, Congress would still have to authorize payment for the settlement.

I was proud to support the Claims Resolution Act when it came before the House on November 30, 2010. This legislation authorized \$3.4 billion to settle the lawsuit, which became known as Cobell v. Salazar. The Claims Resolution also established a \$60 million education scholarship fund for Native American children. President Obama signed the Claims Resolution Act into law on December 8, 2010. This law came about because of Elouise Cobell's dedication in pursuing justice for the Native American community.

Mr. Speaker, California is home to over 100 federally recognized tribes. These tribes will