

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I will begin by thanking Congressman AL GREEN and Congressman TED POE for organizing this evening's Special Order in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

As a Senior Member of the Judiciary Committee, I believe we need stronger laws to protect survivors of abuse and their families. In 1994, I was an original co-sponsor of the Violence Against Women's Act (VAWA) which was a landmark piece of legislation that sought to improve the criminal justice system and community-based response to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking in the United States. In addition, we must do more to address the causes of domestic abuse and to aid the victims of this violence.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month serves as an important reminder about this important issue. It is a travesty that domestic violence is one of the most underreported crimes in our country. 1 out of every 4 women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime. This is an epidemic that does not discriminate based on age, race, religion or gender.

Across the country there are non profits, community based organizations, and religious groups that are diligently working to address all the issues that rise from domestic violence. One such organization is the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence and another is in my hometown of Houston, TX, the Houston Area Women's Center.

I sat on the board of the Houston Area Women's Center and I witnessed firsthand the challenges they faced when addressing the needs of men, women, and children who are the victims of violence.

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) 85 percent of all domestic violence victims are women. It is disturbing that every 9 seconds a woman in the United States is assaulted or beaten; more often than not she knows her abuser.

The numbers are alarming, between 2001 and 2005, about 63 percent of nonfatal intimate partner victimization against women occurred at home, 9.4 percent of these attacks were near home and 11.1 percent of the abuse occurred at a friend or neighbor's home.

The aggressors were often intimate partners, relatives, friends, acquaintances and even strangers. Every year nearly 5.3 million women over the age of 18 will be the victims of domestic violence. According to a report by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, this violence will result in nearly 2 million injuries and 1,300 deaths.

HOUSTON TX—A STORY OF ABUSE AND TORTURE

For many years a Houston woman endured abuse at the hands of her husband Gregory.

After gaining the courage to leave him, Gregory continued to stalk and threaten her. Then one afternoon, Gregory kidnapped this mother and for 17 hours she would endure torture. She fought as Gregory strapped her to a bed with extension cords. That night, she survived multiple beatings. This was not the end of her ordeal. Gregory used a lighter and a can of hairspray as an accelerant to burn her breasts and her genitals. All while their one year old sat in the next room. This monster stuffed her mouth with a rag to muffle her screams. Fortunately, she was able to escape. Incidents like this must be prevented. What made an already tragic situation even more so, was once apprehended Gregory was charged with a lesser crime of abuse of a relative. I call for stronger laws to address the pervasive issue of domestic violence.

According to the Houston Area Woman's Center in 2010, 142 women were murdered in Texas by an abusive partner. The youngest of these victims was only 17 years old and the oldest victim was 78. In 2007, the Center served over 2,800 survivors of domestic violence and answered almost 39,000 calls regarding domestic violence.

In the State of Texas, at least 74 percent of Texans know someone who has experience some form of physical, sexual, or verbal abuse. Yet, these incidents remain underreported. It is my hope that Domestic Violence Awareness month will give voice to the victims of violence.

I hope this month more victims will come forward to face their attackers in a court of law. And I hope these brave men and women will find the support they need. Because the effects of domestic abuse exist long after the physical scars have healed. The psychological effects of domestic violence are deep seated. 60 percent of battered women report problems with depression. Additionally, suicide rates amongst victims are sky rocketing and a growing number of victims display symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This is the sort of disorder we normally associate with troops who return home after surviving the horrors of war.

THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Domestic violence affects every member of the family, including the children. These home environments leave children living in constant fear. It is not a surprise that these children, who bear witness to violence at home, are themselves at greater risk for abuse and neglect. Studies show that child abuse occurs in 30 to 60 percent of family violence cases that involve families with children. (J.L. Edleson, "The overlap between child maltreatment and woman battering." Violence Against Women, February, 1999.)

The numbers of children who live in violent homes is alarming. Each year an estimated 3.3 million children are exposed to violence against their mothers or female caretakers by family members. (American Psychological Association, Violence and the Family: Report of the APA Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family, 1996)

These young people suffer both physically and emotionally. A study by Ackerman and Piker found that families under stress produce children under stress. If a spouse is being abused and there are children present, the children are undeniably influenced by the abuse. These children are affected in ways similar to children who have experienced physical abuse. They are often unable to establish nurturing bonds with either parent.

We must do more to protect victims of violence. As you know a child who experiences abuse or neglect is more likely to have developmental delays and impaired language or cognitive skills; to be identified as a "problem" child (with attention difficulties or challenging behaviors); to be arrested for delinquency, adult criminality, and violent criminal behavior; to experience depression, anxiety, or other mental health problems as adults; engage in more health-risk behaviors as adults; and have poorer health outcomes as adults.

These children through no fault of their own are undergoing a trauma. As a result they are more likely to develop social, emotional, psychological and or behavioral problems than those who are not. Recent research indicates that children who witness domestic violence show more anxiety, low self esteem, depression, anger and temperament problems than children who do not witness violence in the home.

The trauma experienced by children can show up in emotional, behavioral, social and physical disturbances that effect their development and can continue well into their adulthood. It is well documented that children who witness violence in the home grow up to repeat the same patterns as adults and men who have witnessed their parents' domestic violence are three times as likely to abuse their own wives. The National Institute for Justice reports that being abused as a child increases the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 53 percent and as an adult by 38 percent.

IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY

Domestic violence has a negative impact on both families and the economy. The victims of domestic violence lose about 8 million paid work days per year in the United States alone. This is the equivalent of 32,000 full-time jobs. These instances of violence cannot continue. The first step towards remedying the issue is to raise awareness. I stand here today in support of the victims of domestic violence.

However, we must remember that government alone is not the only answer to improving the lives of survivors and victims of domestic violence in our nation. Partnerships between schools, businesses, parents, and other community entities are useful tools to address the issues that arise from domestic violence. We must support actions that enrich our communities and to ensure that the victims and survivors have the support they need.

Again, I am honored to be a part of this effort, and applaud all my colleagues who are involved in supporting Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

HONORING THE BRAVE FIREFIGHTERS WHO SAVED MAGNOLIA AND ALL THOSE WHO SUPPORTED THEM

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the brave men and women who answered the call when wildfires roared. Having survived Hurricanes Rita and Ike, my district and the people of Southeast Texas know and understand the devastation Hurricanes bring. This September we dealt with a very different kind of disaster in the form of massive wildfires.

Luckily for us, our September miracle was granted Labor Day weekend as fire crews from across Texas and in fact the entire country came to Magnolia to battle a three county blaze that threatened to consume well over ten-thousand homes and businesses in Magnolia as well as thousands more in neighboring Grimes and Waller Counties.

Having been out on the line with them to see for myself how the fire lines came right up to families' back porches—yet they saved home after home—it is impossible for me not to be in awe of these heroes. Their skill and dedication saved the town of Magnolia and I can't wait to join them this Saturday in Unity Park to honor their success and hard work.

Magnolia Volunteer Fire Chief Gary Vincent united over a hundred different fire fighting agencies by his side and with the help of our dedicated Sheriff Tommy Gage, his deputies, our constables, our police departments, our Fire Marshall Jimmy Williams, school districts, the Texas Forest Service and many others stepped up. California's Interagency Incident Management Team not only took our thanks back to the Golden State, they take back the model for how communities and first responders unite with charities from the United Way, Red Cross, local food banks, churches, YMCAs and Chambers of Commerce to provide a response that firefighters across this nation will be talking about for years to come.

If a firefighter was thirsty, three volunteers would rush over with water and there were likely two more behind carrying hot meals just in case that firefighter might be hungry as well. All the firefighters who came in from across the country could talk about was how well they were treated in Texas, God's country.

Today, it's an honor for me to be here on the House floor to honor my heroes who made it possible for thousands of families to have homes to go home to. This Saturday, our community will honor those who held the line by celebrating their service and by heeding their warnings that the fire danger remains extraordinarily high as the drought drags on.

RECOGNIZING AVON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OF AVON, SOUTH DAKOTA FOR BEING NAMED A BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

HON. KRISTI L. NOEM

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Avon Elementary School of Avon, South Dakota for being named a Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education.

This year the Department of Education named 305 schools Blue Ribbon Schools, Avon Elementary School was one of them. I would like to congratulate Avon Elementary School for its incredible academic achievements. This school reflects the attributes all American education institutions strive for: academic improvement and tangible results. These early successes will give students the ability to further their education and open doors to future opportunities. The commitment of students and staff to quality education and a high level of performance is commendable.

Again, congratulations to Avon Elementary School for being named a Blue Ribbon School.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast votes on the following legislative measures. If I were present for rollcall votes, I would have voted "aye" for the following votes:

Roll 801, October 24, 2011: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 320: To designate a Distinguished Flying Cross National Memorial at the March Field Air Museum in Riverside, California.

Roll 802, October 24, 2011: On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended H.R. 1160: To require the Secretary of the Interior to convey the McKinney Lake National Fish Hatchery to the State of North Carolina, and for other purposes.

HONORING KEITH KIRBY AND CURBCO FOR 25 YEARS OF SUCCESS

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor two great men and one great company.

As a young man Robert Matsko served in the United States Air Force. After leaving the military he earned a bachelor's degree in liberal arts from Michigan State University. Upon completion of his degree, Robert worked at A.C. Spark Plug for 7 years. In 1967 he began teaching at Randels Elementary in the Carman School District. Mr. Matsko found his calling as an elementary school teacher. He

taught at Carman for 27 years making a lasting impression on hundreds of young students, especially Keith Kirby. During his career, Robert Matsko was twice awarded "Who's Who of Teachers in America."

At the age of 11, Keith Kirby decided to start his own business. Keith began mowing lawns and that business became what is known today as CurbcCo. CurbcCo is a multi-million dollar business that has grown from lawn care to a full service maintenance company. They specialize in landscape, snow removal, street sweeping as well as paving and asphalt maintenance. Keith embodies the American Dream and the entrepreneurial spirit that makes this country great. His vision and investment have created jobs for many and helps provide for our community.

In his humble ways Keith credits much of his success to his 4th and 5th grade teacher, Mr. Robert Matsko. We all have a teacher that has changed us for the better and Keith thought it was important to highlight his teacher at CurbcCo's 25 year anniversary party.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Keith Kirby and CurbcCo on reaching the milestone of 25 years in business. Also, join me in thanking Mr. Robert Matsko for his years of dedication to the profession of teaching.

RECOGNIZING HAMLIN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL OF HAYTI, SOUTH DAKOTA FOR BEING NAMED A BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

HON. KRISTI L. NOEM

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Hamlin Junior High School of Hayti, South Dakota for being named a Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education.

This year the Department of Education named 305 schools Blue Ribbon Schools, Hamlin Jr. High School was one of them. I would like to congratulate Hamlin Jr. High School for its incredible academic achievements. This school reflects the attributes all American education institutions strive for: academic improvement and tangible results. These early successes will give students the ability to further their education and open doors to future opportunities. The commitment of students and staff to quality education and a high level of performance is commendable.

Again, congratulations to Hamlin Jr. High School for being named a Blue Ribbon School.

HONORING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CLUB OF BUFFALO

HON. KATHLEEN C. HOCHUL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 26, 2011

Ms. HOCHUL. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation.

Whereas: The Twentieth Century Club of Buffalo is located in the City of Buffalo in Erie County; and