

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2011

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I missed rollcall vote No. 225 on H.R. 1246. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on this vote.

RECOGNIZING THE 2010-2011 CONGRESSIONAL YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR 500 HOURS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY—ALEX ROBINSON

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2011

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure and privilege to inform the Members of the United States House of Representatives that the students of the 2010-2011 Congressional Youth Advisory Council (CYAC) from the Third District of Texas have completed a total of 500 community service hours, fulfilling and far surpassing the requirements of their assigned CYAC in the Community service project.

This year 46 students from public, private, and home schools in grades 10 through 12 made their voices heard by joining CYAC. As the Third District's young ambassadors to Congress, these bright high school students met with me on a quarterly basis to discuss current events and public policy. These impressive young people recognize an important truth: the heart of public service is found when giving back to the community. CYAC students volunteered their time and talents with over 30 organizations including Adopt-A-Highway, Habitat for Humanity, Meals on Wheels, Teen Court, and the USO, to name a few. As one student shared, "CYAC in the Community has allowed me to realize my calling to serve those in the U.S. Armed Forces." I am beyond thrilled that CYAC has helped students unleash their full potential and chase their dreams.

President George H.W. Bush once said, "A volunteer is a person who can see what others cannot see; who can feel what most do not feel. Often, such gifted persons do not think of themselves as volunteers, but as citizens—citizens in the fullest sense: partners in civilization."

With this statement as a benchmark, I am proud to congratulate the members of the 2010-2011 Congressional Youth Advisory Council for showing themselves to be outstanding young citizens of this nation. It is my privilege to submit summaries of their work to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to be preserved for posterity and antiquity. To these young public servants, thank you, and keep up the great work! I salute you!

A copy of each submitted student summary follows:

Since I have been a competitive swimmer for over ten years, I thought that it would be a good idea to volunteer at the Plano Special Olympics Swim Team. Not only did I help these kids with their swimming, I made friendships that mean the world to the kids.

I worked for about three months with them, and most of my swimmers achieved their goal at the championship meet, which was a gold medal. One swimmer was constantly afraid of getting in the water, but I eventually got him to conquer his fear and jump into the pool. Often, especially at schools, the mentally challenged kids are written off and no one pays attention to them, but that is just wrong. These are some of the nicest people that you will ever meet, and they are especially eager to learn. Not only is this a great opportunity to make these kids better swimmers, it is a chance to make these kids feel like they fit in and it makes them feel very good about themselves. I was very apprehensive about volunteering at first, but it was one of the most rewarding decisions that I have ever made. The Special Olympics is often short on volunteers, and I really recommend volunteering.

—Alex Robinson

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AIR FORCE SERGEANTS ASSOCIATION

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2011

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Air Force Sergeants Association's 50th anniversary, which will be celebrated at its 2011 Professional Airmen's Conference and International Convention in San Antonio, July 23 through 27, 2011.

The Air Force Sergeants Association is a not-for-profit organization serving the professional and personal interests of its 110,000 association members, made up of active duty, veteran, and retired enlisted members of the Air Force, as well as the Air National Guard and Reserve. The AFSA advocates for 955,873 active duty and retired Airmen, whether they are an association member or not. Including family members, who also "serve," the number of enlisted "Airmen" represented by AFSA is huge. The association has an auxiliary to which family members of Air Force enlisted members can belong.

The association began in 1961, and has earned the respect of Congressional, Pentagon, and Veterans Affairs leaders for its relentless role as a voice of the Air Force enlisted. The association was instrumental in the establishment of the Survivor Benefit Plan for surviving spouses of retired veterans. They played a major role in the recent passage of the Post-9/11 GI Bill, a comprehensive overhaul of the previous education benefits that will ensure Air Force members and their families are provided with improved educational opportunities. The association has ensured that many military family issues have been brought to the forefront, including the need to construct additional child development centers for child care needs and the establishment of an oversight office in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for the Exceptional Family Members Program to better manage special needs across all military services.

The association also played a significant role to assure veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and other Overseas Contingency Operations receive the proper and well-earned benefits, care, and treatment for their selfless and heroic service to a grateful nation.

At the vanguard of the effort to achieve cost-of-living adjustments for all those in uniform and those who have retired, the association was a main force in implementing TRICARE for Life medical benefits for retirees over 65 and the implementation of "concurrent receipt" of retirement and disability pay for disabled veterans, rated over 50% disabled.

Additionally, the Air Force Sergeants Association has been a reliable source of information for the legislative process in support of military members and their families.

This well-known and highly respected veteran's organization has been dedicated to serving the total Air Force enlisted corps and their families for 50 years. For 2011, they have adopted "The Air Force Sergeants Association—A Global Voice for over 50 years" as the theme for their Professional Airmen's Conference and AFSA International Convention. May the association continue its good work for many years to come.

FAA REAUTHORIZATION AND REFORM ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

HON. RICK BERG

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 1, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 658) to amend title 49, United States Code, to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2011 through 2014, to streamline programs, create efficiencies, reduce waste, and improve aviation safety and capacity, to provide stable funding for the national aviation system, and for other purposes:

Mr. BERG. Mr. Chair, for eight years, Washington has failed to provide our nation with a long term and stable plan for our aviation infrastructure.

This bill will ensure the much-needed long-term stability and development of our nation's aviation infrastructure.

However, I'm incredibly concerned about the provision in this bill that would phase out Essential Air Service support.

EAS is critical in large states like my own. Rural regions rely on EAS support for vital air transportation. In North Dakota, airports like those in Jamestown and Devils Lake would not be able to provide critical air service without EAS support.

I've talked with North Dakotans, and I know how much they rely on access to air service. Numerous North Dakotans depend on air travel as an essential part of their jobs, and for many rural residents, driving in bad North Dakota weather to get to a larger airport simply isn't viable.

Eliminating EAS would have a significant, detrimental effect on my state and on North Dakotans' access to air service.

As we prioritize spending, we also must promote economic development and job creation. In areas like North Dakota, maintaining essential air service is critical for commerce—we want businesses to invest in our cities.

A Goodrich plant in Jamestown employs nearly 500 North Dakotans. They rely on local air service to do business—air service that would not be possible if essential air service support was phased out.

We can't ask companies to invest in our state if we are unable to provide the basic infrastructure necessary for them to be competitive and do business.

I've spoken with Congressman MICA and with the Transportation committee and I understand the need for this process to keep moving forward.

This bill contains many good provisions that I support. It will expand research and development for remotely piloted aircraft, a growing field that holds enormous potential not only for our nation's military, but also our academic institutions and farmers and border security.

North Dakota has established itself as a leader in the development and research of remotely piloted aircraft technology, and I'm confident that the creation of new test sites will benefit this technology's continued success in our state.

But while I support these things, I also know how vital rural access to essential aviation is. That's why, before it is sent to the President, it is critical that the final version of this bill maintains EAS support.

So I ask the gentleman from Florida if he will commit to working with me and other concerned members to support the EAS program and maintain critical rural air service.

RECOGNIZING CHRISTOPHER S. HAMILTON

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2011

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Christopher S. Hamilton for his outstanding service to the Tall Pine Council, Boy Scouts of America. Christopher will be honored at a luncheon on Thursday, April 7, sponsored jointly by the Tall Pine Council and the Burton Rotary Club, where he will be presented with the Jack A. Hamady Good Scout Award.

Christopher S. Hamilton grew up in the Flint area, earning the Eagle Scout distinction from Troop 120 in Linden Michigan. He went on to play football for Purdue University and was a member of the only Purdue team to win the Rose Bowl. After graduation he returned to the Flint area and worked for AC Spark Plug until his retirement in 2007. During this time he was an avid promoter of Scouting. Christopher was an Explorer Advisor for Post 651, a volunteer committee member of the Tall Pine Council Golf Tournament for over 20 years, and a Friends of Scouting Captain for the Tall Pine Council. In 1999 he received the Silver Beaver Award, the highest award given to an adult volunteer in Scouting.

In 2008 Christopher became the Executive Director of the Old Newsboys of Flint. This was the culmination of several years working as a member of the Old Newsboys of Flint Board of Directors. He served as President of the Board and Secretary/Treasurer before assuming the duties of Executive Director. He has been active with Easter Seals, the United Way, the Burton Rotary Club, F&AM Lodge Number 23, Flint Elks Number 222, Burton Eagles, and several local Chambers of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Christopher

S. Hamilton as he is honored by the Tall Pine Council, Boy Scouts of America for his work on behalf of the children in the Flint community. He has touched numerous lives and I wish him the best in the future.

RECOGNIZING THE 2010-2011 CONGRESSIONAL YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR 500 HOURS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY—MICHAEL ROBERTO

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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I greeted the troops at DFW Airport. My schedule only allowed me to go on the weekends, but I took advantage of any plane coming into Dallas. I called the Welcome Home a Hero hotline and found out when the planes would arrive each day. In order to never miss the greeting, I would get to the appropriate terminal and wait there for sometimes up to an hour for the troops to come out. I will one day be one of those soldiers walking through those doors, and I seem to already appreciate the fact that there were so many people

there. The administrators make sure the troops are directed towards different terminals or gates if they have connecting flights. Also they have people bring snacks and water which the troops seem to like for obvious reasons. This event only takes a few hours including driving, but every second is worth it when you see the smiles on their faces. They are so happy to be home and ready to see the relatives that they miss so deeply. God Bless those soldiers, God Bless America.

—Michael Roberts

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2011

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, April 1, 2011, I was unable to be present for recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote No. 223 (on the motion to recommit H.R. 1255 with instructions), and "no" on rollcall vote No. 224 (on passage of H.R. 1255).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2011

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I was unable to cast my votes on Monday, April 4, 2011 due to a scheduled meeting in my District with constituents in St. Joseph and Ogden, Illinois and wish the record to reflect my intentions had I been present to vote on H.R. 1246.

Had I been present to vote on rollcall No. 225 on H.R. 1246, to reduce the amounts otherwise authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Defense for printing and reproduction, I would have voted in favor of this bill. It is imperative in these times of rising deficit and debt levels that we take a fine tooth comb to every budget and find wasteful spending. This bill, sponsored by an ex-member of our military, is a prime example of the types of bills we should continue to pursue as we tackle the overall levels of spending through the annual budget and appropriations process. Had I been present to vote on this bill, I would have voted, "aye."

INTRODUCTION OF THE VIRGINIA ACCESS TO ENERGY ACT (VA ENERGY ACT)

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2011

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, each week, folks across Virginia and the nation are confronted with the rising cost of energy. However, Virginians understand that a major component in lessening energy costs is to produce more energy.

I believe that Virginia should have every tool available to access their energy supplies. For