

married at Martha's Vineyard in a small and beautiful ceremony.

After they both retired from their careers on Capitol Hill in 1995, the Edwards decompressed by living in the village of Loumarin in Southern France. For more than a decade, the Edwards lived half the year in Carmel-by-the-Sea in California and half at Holly Point, their home overlooking the Chesapeake Bay in Edgewater, Maryland. They settled in Carmel for the last three years.

Born in New York on October 5, 1946 to the late John and Dorothea J. Wilkie, Edie graduated from Concord Academy and Vassar College. Tall and slim and athletic, she was an avid tennis player with a forehand her opponents considered lethal.

In addition to Mr. Edwards, she is survived by five stepsons; a sister and two brothers, Rennie Wilkie Lieber, John McNeil Wilkie and Peter Wilkie, and their families. She is also survived by her stepmother, Margot Loines Wilkie, of New York and Martha's Vineyard and two stepsisters, Faith Morrow Williams and Constance Morrow Fullenweider and their families.

Mr. Speaker, Edith Wilkie Edwards touched many lives in her community and devoted her life to building a more peaceful world. It is a privilege and a high honor to recognize her life. She will be missed and I know I speak for the whole House in honoring the life of this dedicated and loving woman.

HONORING ABRAHAM BREEHEY

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 2, 2011

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Abraham (Abe) Breehey, a devoted husband, father, son, and brother and to mourn him upon his sudden passing at the age of 34. Abe was the Government Affairs Director of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers. Born in Binghamton, New York in 1976, Abe Breehey graduated with a Bachelor's Degree from Sienna College in Loudonville, NY. He earned a Master's Degree in Public Policy from Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy at the University of Albany and went on to serve as a Legislative Assistant during the 107th Congress and 108th Congress. He joined the IBB legislative staff in 2004. Abe was a sagacious voice for labor, widely respected on Capitol Hill and throughout the ranks of his union for his intellect, passion and commitment. He had the innate ability to build consensus across political and ideological lines.

On April 14, 2011, Abe passed from this earthly world to his eternal reward. He will long be remembered as a husband devoted to his beloved wife, Sonya and his treasured young daughter, Abigail. He is survived by his parents, Ray and Carol, his sister Rachel, three nieces, a nephew, and his loyal dog Kesey. Abe leaves behind a legacy of many friends whose lives were bettered for having known him. Mr. Speaker, during his lifetime, Abe enriched the lives of everyone around him. As we bid farewell to this vibrant man, I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning his passing and honoring his unwavering patriotism and legendary service to the working men and women of our community and our country.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 2, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today our national debt is \$14,287,630,052,323.12.

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 \$3,649,204,306,029.30 since then.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

ADA LAUNCHES JOBS-SOCIAL SECURITY-MINIMUM WAGE CAMPAIGN

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 2, 2011

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, Americans for Democratic Action has launched a Progressive agenda for jobs, rejuvenating the American economy, saving Social Security, and raising the minimum wage.

JOBS

Workers without jobs can't provide adequately for the basic needs of their families. The unemployment crisis is damaging families and contributing to a multitude of economic and social ills, including:

The highest poverty rate for working-age people between 18 and 64—12.9% in 2009—since 1965. Today, 43.6 million Americans are living in poverty, 19 million of whom are in deep poverty.

Workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own often cannot pay mortgages and rent, even when receiving unemployment benefits, which are not equivalent to wages lost. The foreclosure crisis—primarily the outcome of misdeeds of bankers and mortgage brokers—is driving further declines in home values while destroying once-vibrant neighborhoods. Joblessness also contributes to increased homelessness, which is not only tragic for families who lose their homes, but is accompanied by broader social harms and increased budget pressures on already strapped local and state governments.

Unemployed workers—along with many who are still employed—are losing employer-based health insurance coverage. In 2009, 50.7 million people were without health insurance—the highest number of uninsured since the Census started collecting the data in 1987. Joblessness is increasing pressure on public programs such as Medicaid, while increased use of uncovered emergency services by those with no other option for care is driving further increases in healthcare costs for small businesses and those still fortunate enough to have jobs and healthcare coverage.

Workers without jobs can't pay taxes that provide the resources to hire teachers, police and firefighters, build and maintain roads, provide for appropriate national security, ensure product safety, protect the environment, and fill urgent long- and short-term national needs.

We condemn the folly of deficit slashing while 15 million Americans remain unemployed—plus 11 million more who are underemployed or have dropped from the labor force. Insufficient economic demand and idle productive capacity in the economy, in the short-term, bleeds federal and state budgets, whether or not current economic conditions meet the official definition of "recession." Reckless spending (except perhaps for ill-conceived and poorly executed wars) is not the cause of our budget woes. This is made obvious as conservatives decry the deficit, but cannot or will not name any specific government program they would slash in order to meet their demands for deficit reduction.

Job creation—and the economic growth that spurs job creation—is the only way to reduce a budget deficit that is primarily the result of high unemployment. Unemployed workers represent idle productive capacity—lost wages and lost economic output. Lost wages reduce demand for goods, services, and investment, and depress tax receipts. Without consumers with money to spend, firms don't invest or hire, leading to more joblessness and still lower output. That leads to declining tax receipts along with growing demand for automatic stabilizers (such as unemployment benefits) and safety net services (such as Medicaid, food stamps, and housing assistance). Government deficits are inevitable in economic downturns with high unemployment.

Since firms will not hire or invest where demand is lacking, and unemployed workers cannot expand consumption and increase demand, only the government can spur growth—through deficit spending and investment. Tax cuts may be helpful, but in the current climate, direct spending and investment will more quickly and more strongly stimulate demand. Investing now in America's current and future prosperity is the remedy for both joblessness and the long-term budget deficit.

Conservatives argue that austerity will spur economic growth. That argument is based on evidence that fiscal austerity reduces interest rates (borrowing costs) for firms, and thus stimulates investment. But the evidence for this model does not mirror current conditions. Interest rates in the U.S. are already at historically low levels, yet firms are not investing or hiring. Moreover, few of the countries that experienced rapid growth while practicing fiscal austerity adopted austerity when the economy was operating far below its potential level of output, and in no case was a country as far below its potential as the U.S. is today.

Furthermore, all of the evidence that austerity fosters growth comes from countries with a much larger percentage of their economy involved in export industries than is the case with the U.S. Trade provides a source of demand for countries with a large export sector. The U.S. currently cannot rely on export-led growth to stimulate sufficient demand to reduce unemployment. For unemployment to be reduced in the short run, domestic demand must be increased. Thus, arguments for slashing government budgets in order to stimulate jobs and economic growth are not credible under current economic conditions.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, ARRA, may have created or saved up to 3.3 million jobs and averted a second Great Depression, according to the independent Congressional Budget Office, CBO, estimates. But simple math shows that it was woefully insufficient to offset the loss of \$2.1 trillion in

economic activity, \$3.4 trillion in lost home values, and \$7.4 trillion in lost stock values in 2009 and 2010. Not only was \$787 billion in stimulus insufficient to offset the losses, it was also swamped by an estimated \$570 billion in spending cuts by state and local governments over the 2009–10 period.

Thus, the stimulus provided by ARRA and other measures amounted to only about \$126 billion per year for 2009 and 2010. The total effective stimulus was perhaps only 10% of the output lost.

By 2014, the CBO projects that total lost output will reach \$3.4 trillion—more than \$11,000 per person—assuming unemployment returns to normal levels by then. That figure will be worse if unemployment remains high. Additional and substantial economic stimulus that more realistically accounts for current economic realities is required, both to create jobs and to begin building the foundation for a prosperous future in which budget deficits can be reduced without causing economic contraction during a period of record unemployment.

The way to achieve a balanced federal budget is with a sound banking system and rational monetary policy; government investment (recognizing the difference between spending and investment); and full employment at decent wages and benefits.

We need jobs, and we have much work to do.

A great nation can't remain great with crumbling bridges and schools, bursting water mains, leaking untreated sewage, grossly inadequate transportation systems, over-dependence on foreign oil, unaffordable higher education, and broadband preparedness that ranks 15th among OECD countries. ADA calls for restoring America's global competitive position with a restored manufacturing base, and rebuilt and expanded public infrastructure including broadband, throughout the nation.

A great nation consists of livable cities and towns that work for people, with decent affordable housing, quality public schools, well-designed and functioning public transportation systems, and jobs that provide decent wages. Cities cannot be warehouses for vast numbers of homeless and impoverished people who have no prospects and no hope.

A great nation will be at the forefront of addressing global problems that have resulted from past mistakes. Global warming, polluted water, and energy insecurity require investment in high-speed railroads and mass transit systems; emission-free vehicles and the infrastructure to power them; research, development, and construction of renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, and waterpower.

America, with enforced fair labor standards and collective bargaining rights. To begin the process of restoring America's industrial-employment base, ADA calls for fair trade policies that promote economic activity and lift wages in all nations, including our own; reformed tax policies that reward companies for creating jobs here, rather than for shipping

them overseas; and national and local purchasing goals that support American manufacturing.

For community restoration and further job growth, ADA calls for doubling funding for programs to employ youth—including high school dropouts, high school graduates, and college graduates. This includes expanding AmeriCorps, the Job Corps, and the Peace Corps, a renewed Civilian Conservation Corps to restore our national parks and forests, a Neighborhood Corps to protect, maintain and revitalize (or as necessary demolish) distressed housing, and Home Care Corps providing services to the elderly in their own homes.

These ambitious programs, sparked by public investments, will generate millions of jobs that pay middle-class wages, serving urgent national needs and restoring the private economy. These are the necessary underpinning of a strong America.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security is under siege on multiple fronts, most of them familiar.

Social Security is not part of the budget deficit. It's been made a scapegoat by long-time enemies of the program. Social Security payments are, in fact, not government spending at all. Government spending includes the purchases of goods and services by government. Social Security payments are direct transfers from working people with more income to the elderly, disabled, widows and orphans who have less income, and who mostly contributed to the program during their working years. As such, a dollar reallocated from one final consumer to another has no direct effect on GDP whatsoever. Such transfers are fair and effective, increasing security and reducing poverty.

The Commission on Deficit Reduction is co-chaired by millionaire Erskine Bowles and former Senator Alan Simpson, who calls Social Security retirees "Greedy Geezers," as if either man would consider living on the average benefit of \$13,860 per year. The Commission includes only one economist; the rest are career politicians, most of whom have supported cuts to Social Security. And the Commission has accepted support from Peter G. Peterson, who has waged a relentless, decades-long campaign to cut Social Security and Medicare. The composition of the Commission is deeply flawed, including bias and conflicts of interest. Any proposal by the Commission regarding Social Security cuts should be rejected.

For two-thirds of the elderly, Social Security is at least half their income. About a third of the elderly rely on Social Security for most of their income. Social Security isn't in jeopardy, except from the Commission, other privatizers, and unemployment—jobless workers don't pay payroll taxes.

With no changes, Social Security can pay full benefits until 2039, and thereafter about 80 percent of currently scheduled benefits. Simple changes that don't damage the program,

and make contributions more progressive, can be made. Changes in FICA tax policies for higher-income earners would make it possible to reduce contributions by lower income earners, making the system less regressive and helping to address the enormous income gap that has developed in the U.S. over the past 30 years. Policy options include:

Raising the cap on which the payroll tax (FICA) is applied above the current \$106,800;

Removing the cap entirely; or

Applying the cap to all taxable income, including interest, dividends, and capital gains.

The payroll tax, currently accumulating a \$2.6 trillion surplus, is invested in U.S. government bonds, about the safest investment in the world.

Proposals to allow workers to contribute a portion of their FICA contributions to individual accounts are a sure way to undermine the entire Social Security system, and must be off the table. It may sound harmless, but siphoning off funds earmarked for Social Security makes it impossible to pay for current benefits. Individual accounts held in investment funds would be subject to the ups and downs of the business cycle. For those fortunate enough to retire in good times, the accounts may be a good deal. For those reaching retirement in a downturn, the effect could be disastrous. They may have little more than a much-reduced Social Security benefit to survive on and face years of poverty in retirement. We should not forget the last two years and the disastrous effect of the recession on 401(k)s.

Baby boomers are retiring; our population is aging. Legislators noticed that in 1987 and took care of it by increasing the payroll tax, and by gradually increasing the retirement age to 67 by 2022. That increase in the normal retirement age cut benefits by 13 percent. Postponing retirement is tough for people who've had physically demanding jobs (unlike doctors, lawyers, economists, professors, and legislators). Recent data on longer life expectancy, the principal argument for raising the retirement age still further, have shown that longer life spans in the U.S. are principally a luxury for the well-off. Further, the life expectancy numbers are skewed because of declines in infant and young-adult mortality. Ordinary working Americans aren't living appreciably longer lives, and thus longer retirements are largely a myth.

We should also attract more young workers by creating an economically rational immigration policy.

Current undocumented workers should be given a path to citizenship. This will ensure that they are appropriately contributing taxes, while affording them protections they now lack, including protection from workplace discrimination, wage and overtime protections, workplace safety, and collective bargaining rights.

The Dream Act, a bill to provide citizenship to young people who were brought to this

country as children, should be made law immediately. This would provide a path to citizenship for those who attend college or serve two years in the US Armed Forces, and would help the U.S. retain the most successful, productive young immigrants.

Large numbers of the brightest students from around the world come to earn degrees from U.S. universities. Many wish to remain in the U.S., but our broken immigration system makes it nearly impossible for them to do so. We should be encouraging these graduates to remain in the U.S. on completion of their studies.

MINIMUM WAGE

The third prong of ADA's program is increasing and indexing the minimum wage. It lags at a shameful \$7.25 per hour, while Republicans call for tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires. At its current level, the minimum wage barely provides an annual income above the individual poverty level, and many minimum wage earners are trying to raise families. It is unconscionable that anyone working full time in America should be mired in poverty, unable to meet basic needs of shelter, food, heat, and clothing.

The minimum wage should be increased, and should in future be indexed to the Consumer Price Index, to ensure that it keeps pace with the rising cost of living.

Opponents of raising the minimum wage will say that it increases unemployment. The evidence for this is extremely spotty. In some states that have increased their minimum wage, unemployment has declined relative to neighboring states that have maintained minimum wage at the federal level. In others, very small increases in unemployment were seen for the lowest-wage workers, and even those increases were temporary. Most of the economic research indicates that modest increases to the minimum wage have a negligible effect on employment, which is much more affected by other economic factors. The benefit of an increase to those workers at the minimum wage level outweighs the negligible effect on employment levels, and ADA strongly supports action on legislation to adjust the current minimum. ADA forged the coalition that led to the last increase in the minimum wage, and we can do so again.

All three prongs of ADA's program—JOBS, SOCIAL SECURITY, and MINIMUM WAGE—are of a piece, and are essential to restoring the American middle class. The Republicans are raring to enact slashing cuts that mirror those of the Tories of the UK, a formula for a double-dip recession or worse. We know better. Americans need jobs. Our country needs refurbishing. Workers need jobs that pay for housing, food, education, and a decent standard of living. Workers pay Social Security taxes, so the elderly, disabled, widows, and orphans can survive above poverty. And minimum wage workers must not be left behind. ADA stands ready to build the Liberal movement to carry out this agenda.

HONORING WAYMON SIMS

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 2, 2011

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following Proclamation:

Whereas, the accomplishments of many start with the works and words of one; and

Whereas, Waymon Sims was born and raised in Athens, Georgia, where he began his athletic career as a teenager participating in football, track and basketball earning varsity letters while maintaining his membership in the National High School Honor Society at Athens High & Industrial School; and

Whereas, upon his graduation from Athens High & Industrial School in 1959, Waymon Sims entered Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia wherein he continued his athletic career in track and football while earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics; and

Whereas, Waymon Sims served our country honorably in the U.S. Navy during a time of war, he returned home to Georgia, entered John Marshall Law School, coached little league softball and baseball in DeKalb County, Georgia, won numerous championships for his girls and boys teams but most of all, he shared his time and talents for the betterment of his community and his nation through his tireless works, words of encouragement and inspiration that have and continue to be a beacon of light to those in need; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to honor and recognize Waymon Sims the Athlete, Coach, Attorney and Community Leader on his induction into the Athens Athletic Hall of Fame in his hometown of Athens, Georgia and to congratulate him as a constituent who now lives in our District;

Now Therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR. do hereby proclaim May 18, 2009 as Waymon Sims Day in the Fourth Congressional District.

Proclaimed, this 18th day of May, 2009.

HONORING THE INTERNATIONAL EYE FOUNDATION MAY 2, 2011

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 2, 2011

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the outstanding achievements of the International Eye Foundation as it celebrates its 50th anniversary. IEF, which I am proud to say is based in my congressional district, is dedicated to the prevention of blindness and restoration of sight worldwide. In 2010, together with its partner eye care providers in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East, IEF treated over 2 million people.

The history of IEF's work is fascinating. Dr. John Harry King, Jr., IEF's founder and a pioneer of corneal transplantation, sought to address the high rates of blindness in the developing world and established the International Eye Bank in 1961 under the auspices of CARE/Medico. American eye surgeons were posted to the St. John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem to perform corneal transplant operations and train local surgeons. Dr. King soon realized, however, that much of the blindness in the developing world was preventable and that care could be provided before people became blind. The name of the organization was changed in 1965 to the International Eye Foundation, which sharpened its focus on blindness prevention and primary eye care.

In order to remedy the dearth of eye specialists in developing countries, volunteer ophthalmologists were posted by IEF to countries throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America. Through IEF's Society of Eye Surgeons, Dr. King hosted a World Congress every four years, one of the earliest international eye meetings, bringing together distinguished leaders in ophthalmology and development specialists from around the world.

Throughout the 1970's, IEF facilitated many ophthalmic training and exchange programs in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. In 1972, U.S. eye surgeons were posted to Ethiopia and Kenya and, from 1976–1984, the USAID-supported "IEF Kenya Rural Blindness Prevention Project" became a model for East Africa. The training of ophthalmologists and Ophthalmic Clinical Officers was expanded while countless general physicians, nurses, and village health workers were trained in primary eye care. IEF facilitated an exchange program that exposed U.S. Navy residents to the challenges of providing eye care in Africa and the Middle East and brought doctors from Egypt and Ethiopia to the U.S. for fellowships. Ophthalmic and nurse training programs and vitamin A deficiency control programs were also conducted in Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Indonesia. IEF started Malawi's Ophthalmic Medical Assistants training program in 1980. Importantly, the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre had no eye specialist, so IEF posted a series of American ophthalmologists there to provide care, surgery and training over 15 years.

IEF helped establish Eye Banks in Amman, Jordan in 1979 and in Cairo, Egypt in 1980. Throughout the following decade, U.S. ophthalmologists were posted to a number of Caribbean nations for one year at a time. In 1985, IEF became the first eye care development organization to be accepted into "official relations" with the World Health Organization. In 1986, USAID awarded child survival grants for programs in Africa and Latin America that focused on reducing blindness from vitamin A deficiency, the leading cause of blindness in children in developing countries at that time. The availability of Mectizan® (the anti-parasitic drug ivermectin) from Merck & Company in 1990 allowed IEF to pioneer the first community-based ivermectin distribution programs in Guatemala, in collaboration with Africare in Nigeria, and in 1992 in Cameroon and Malawi.

In the early 1990's, IEF was awarded a USAID grant for programs in Bulgaria and Albania. The grant enabled 18 U.S. ophthalmologists to provide training and technology for vitreo-retinal surgery and retinopathy of prematurity to save the sight of newborns. IEF also collaborated with the Dana Center for Preventive Ophthalmology at Johns Hopkins University to conduct the first random sample epidemiological blindness prevalence survey in Bulgaria.

In the mid-1990's, IEF recognized that eye hospitals in developing countries were still underperforming and lacked management capacity and revenue sources. The SightReach® Management program was then established, reorienting the organization's mission to sustainability planning for eye care institutions. This included developing a model that can be adopted by eye units in different regions of the world. In 1999, with seed money from USAID, IEF focused on reducing