

reform, a compulsory process with collection of patient data in all birth settings, the elimination of disparities of care, and increased consumer participation.

The Home Birth Consensus Summit document is an important first step in protecting and supporting all childbearing families across all birth settings, but the discussion must not stop there. I encourage all professional organizations representing providers of maternity care and newborn care and all childbirth advocacy groups to affirm the consensus statement and commit to working together toward its realization. Mothers and babies in this country deserve nothing less.

HOME BIRTH CONSENSUS SUMMIT
OCTOBER 20-22, 2011

COMMON GROUND STATEMENTS

The following statements reflect the areas of consensus that were achieved by the individuals who participated in the Home Birth Consensus Summit at Airlie Center in Warrenton, Virginia, from October 20-22, 2011. These statements do not represent the position of any organization or institution affiliated with those individuals.

STATEMENT 1

We uphold the autonomy of all childbearing women. All childbearing women, in all maternity care settings, should receive respectful, woman-centered care. This care should include opportunities for a shared decision-making process to help each woman make the choices that are right for her. Shared decision making includes mutual sharing of information about benefits and harms of the range of care options, respect for the woman's autonomy to make decisions in accordance with her values and preferences, and freedom from coercion or punishment for her choices.

STATEMENT 2

We believe that collaboration within an integrated maternity care system is essential for optimal mother-baby outcomes. All women and families planning a home or birth center birth have a right to respectful, safe, and seamless consultation, referral, transport and transfer of care when necessary. When ongoing inter-professional dialogue and cooperation occur, everyone benefits.

STATEMENT 3

We are committed to an equitable maternity care system without disparities in access, delivery of care, or outcomes. This system provides culturally appropriate and affordable care in all settings, in a manner that is acceptable to all communities.

We are committed to an equitable educational system without disparities in access to affordable, culturally appropriate, and acceptable maternity care provider education for all communities.

STATEMENT 4

It is our goal that all health professionals who provide maternity care in home and birth center settings have a license that is based on national certification that includes defined competencies and standards for education and practice.

We believe that guidelines should allow for independent practice, facilitate communication between providers and across care settings, encourage professional responsibility and accountability, and include mechanisms for risk assessment.

STATEMENT 5

We believe that increased participation by consumers in multi-stakeholder initiatives

is essential to improving maternity care, including the development of high quality home birth services within an integrated maternity care system.

STATEMENT 6

Effective communication and collaboration across all disciplines caring for mothers and babies are essential for optimal outcomes across all settings.

To achieve this, we believe that all health professional students and practitioners who are involved in maternity and newborn care must learn about each other's disciplines, and about maternity and health care in all settings.

STATEMENT 7

We are committed to improving the current medical liability system, which fails to justly serve society, families, and health care providers and contributes to: inadequate resources to support birth injured children and mothers; unsustainable health care and litigation costs paid by all; a hostile health care work environment; inadequate access to home birth and birth center birth within an integrated health care system; and, restricted choices in pregnancy and birth.

STATEMENT 8

We envision a compulsory process for the collection of patient (individual) level data on key process and outcome measures in all birth settings. These data would be linked to other data systems, used to inform quality improvement, and would thus enhance the evidence basis for care.

STATEMENT 9

We recognize and affirm the value of physiologic birth for women, babies, families and society and the value of appropriate interventions based on the best available evidence to achieve optimal outcomes for mothers and babies.

TRIBUTE TO MEL HANCOCK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a great American who passed away last week, my friend, Mel Hancock.

Mel served in this body from 1989 to 1997. He could have easily been re-elected, but he had pledged to serve only 8 years, and he kept his word.

Mel served the people of southwest Missouri with great honor and distinction. He was one of the most down-to-earth people ever to sit in Congress, and I can assure everyone that Washington never changed Mel Hancock one bit. He was one of the most conservative Members here, and if everyone had voted as he did, we certainly would not be in the astounding hole we are in today.

Mel was a very successful small business man. Early in his career, he was a salesman for International Harvester and actually lived in my hometown of Knoxville for a year and a half in 1954 and 1955. I told him once I was glad he moved back to Missouri so I could be in Congress. Of course, it was 33 years later when we both first ran.

Mel was 59 when first elected and was the oldest freshman of those who were elected in 1988. All of the new Members very quickly grew to respect and look up to him.

In Missouri, Mel had started a business installing security cameras in banks. He started with very little, worked very long hours, and saw the American Dream come true in his own life. He saw that as government grew bigger and bigger, it took away more and more of our freedom and really hurt the middle class and those in small business. He believed that Big Government really helped only those who worked for the government and very wealthy Big Government contractors.

So he took on the establishment in Missouri with what came to be called the "Hancock Amendment." This was an amendment to limit property taxes, and he really just started out as one man taking on the government and its contractors. But he won, and Missouri was a better place for it. The people had more control over their own money.

One quick story. I doubt that Mel hardly ever went to a movie, but one night he and I were invited to the world premier of "Air Force One," a movie starring Harrison Ford. It was a Hollywood-type opening with bright lights and a long red carpet. Most people came in tuxedos and long dresses, many in limousines. At that time, because I did not drive long distances in Washington, I drove a very cheap chocolate brown K-car that I had bought used from a rental company. The passenger door made a horrible, very loud sound when it opened. I do not believe I ever saw Mel laugh as hard as when the attendant opened his door of that little brown car, making the loud noise, so Mel and I could walk in our very ordinary suits down that long red carpet. He loved the fact that we were among the very few who had not come in tuxedos and limousines.

There's an old saying about "being country before country was cool." That was Mel. Mel was possibly the first Tea Party person in the best sense of those words many years before there was the Tea Party of today. Mel ran for Congress on the slogan of "Give 'em Mel." When he won, he became a gift to this Nation and to his people.

Mel was assigned to the very prestigious Ways and Means Committee. Most former members of that committee become lobbyists or highly paid consultants. But it was no surprise to me that, when he left, he went home to be with his family and the people of Missouri and never came back. He was a kind, honest, hardworking American who helped thousands of people.

Mel Hancock loved his wife, Shug, and his children, and he loved his country. He made this Nation a better place by all that he did in his good life.

HIRING HEROES ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, America continues to be the land of

the free because America continues to be the home of the brave. I think it most appropriate that this House take up legislation today that will include the Hiring Heroes Act.

This legislation is exceedingly important because our brave heroes, our troops, go to distant places, and they risk their limbs and their lives to protect great and noble American ideals. They do not ask why. When the clarion call comes, they respond by going to their various assignments and doing their jobs.

When they leave home, they many times will leave home a wife that is with child. Many of their children are born while they are in distant places protecting our great and noble American ideals. They will leave behind them children who are about to take their first steps. They never get to see the first step or hear the first words spoken.

When a troop goes to war, that troop has that family with him or her. A family goes to war, not directly, but always indirectly, with the troop that goes to war.

And they do their jobs. They have done their jobs in Afghanistan. They have done their jobs in Iraq. And they will continue to do their jobs.

But it is sad to note that of those veterans who have done their jobs in Iraq and Afghanistan, 12.1 percent of them are unemployed. This is not a partisan issue. This issue transcends the lines that generally separate us. If they can go to distant places and risk their limbs and their lives for us to do their jobs for us, we have to provide jobs for them when they come home.

This is about doing the right thing for people who answer the clarion call to serve without reservation or equivocation. They merit jobs when they come home. This is why I'm proud that this House will take up legislation that will accord tax credits to businesses that hire our veterans.

□ 1100

If a business hires a veteran who has been unemployed for 4 weeks, there is a \$2,400 tax credit available. If that veteran has been unemployed for 6 months, there is a \$5,600 tax credit that's available. If the unemployed veteran has been unemployed for 6 months and has a service-connected disability, there is a \$9,600 tax credit available to the business.

This is the business of America: putting our veterans to work.

This piece of legislation merits our consideration for other reasons as well. The legislation will allow approximately 100,000 veterans of wars of other eras to be helped with job training and other programs. This piece of legislation is the least a grateful nation can do for those who answer the clarion call to serve in distant places.

I am honored to say I will vote for the legislation. I believe in our country. I believe in the American service people—the troops that go to distant

places. I want to make sure that they have every opportunity to recapture what they lost when they left their homes, left their jobs for years on end. If they can leave their jobs here and make sacrifices for us, we've got to make sacrifices here so that they can have jobs when they return home. America will continue to be the land of the free as long as we continue to make sure that we have jobs for those who are brave enough to serve us in distant places.

God bless America and God bless our troops.

JUDGE RUSTY LADD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the Honorable Judge Rusty Ladd—a great man, a tireless public servant, and an advocate for the homeless.

Larry Brown “Rusty” Ladd passed away Friday, September 30, 2011, and he will be missed by all who knew him. I was privileged to know Judge Ladd, and I know the legacy he leaves behind will not soon be forgotten by his family, his friends, or his community, and especially Irene and the children.

Rusty was born in Breckenridge, Texas, on August 8, 1952, as the oldest son of a cotton ginner. He graduated from Lubbock Christian College in 1975 with a degree in Biblical Studies, and joined the police force in 1977. In 1988, he graduated from Texas Tech Law School and started his own practice as a defense attorney in Dallas. He then moved back to West Texas as a prosecutor in Amarillo and Plainview. In 1996, he continued his practice in Lubbock as assistant and then deputy district attorney at the Lubbock County District Attorney's Office. In 1999, Rusty assumed the judge's bench of the Lubbock County Court-at-Law No. 1.

When he took the bench, he said, “I'm a new judge, and in taking the bench, I'm going to be able to fulfill my oath to defend the laws of the State in an absolutely fair and impartial way.” He was true to his word—serving fairly and impartially, compassionate when possible and firm when necessary.

Rusty showed kindness not only in the courtroom but also on the streets of Lubbock. He opened his heart to the homeless in the Lubbock community, serving on the homeless committee of the Lubbock City Council since 2010 and volunteering through Carpenter's Church. Rusty dedicated his time and effort to serving the poor and the marginalized.

“The thing a homeless person misses the most is not food or shelter,” Ladd said. “It's a genuine relationship with somebody that's got a stable life going on.” His Christ-like attitude toward the poor is inspiring, and I hope and pray that we can continue the selfless acts that he initiated.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in extending my sincere thanks to Judge

Rusty Ladd for leaving this world a better place than he found it. I am truly honored to recognize his accomplishments. He will certainly be missed, but he will never be forgotten by those who knew him and were touched by his life.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2011

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2011.

This legislation will extend unemployment insurance one additional year, preventing 6 million people across our Nation, as well as thousands of Nevadans, from losing their unemployment benefits.

This is especially important in my home State of Nevada, which continues to struggle with the highest unemployment rate in the Nation. Nevada's unemployed need good-paying jobs that can't be shipped overseas. That's why I'm focused like a laser on creating clean energy jobs and cracking down on the Chinese Government's unfair trade practices that are cheating Nevadans out of thousands of good-paying jobs.

But Nevadans also need relief in their job search. What they don't need is name-calling. Unfortunately, that's what they're getting in Washington. In fact, one of our Representatives had the nerve to suggest that unemployment insurance is creating a Nation of hobos. Hobos? Mr. Speaker, no one wants to be unemployed. No one wants to be out of work. No one wants to be called a hobo.

No one has ever come up to me and said, SHELLEY, Congresswoman, I love being unemployed. Life on unemployment is such a picnic.

No, they're not saying that. They say, SHELLEY, Congresswoman, I want a job. Find me a job. I want to work so I can take care of my family.

Mr. Speaker, Nevada's unemployed are not hobos. They're unemployed through no fault of their own, and they're desperate—desperate—to find a job. They can't afford not to work, and they can't afford the kind of elitist and insulting attitude representing them in Congress. They need all of us in the House and the Senate working day and night to fix our economy and to put people back to work. They don't have time for ideological battles about killing Medicare by turning it over to private insurance companies. They don't have time for vote after vote protecting taxpayer giveaways to big oil companies.

It's time to get serious about creating jobs, and it's time we get serious about extending critical unemployment insurance for families in Nevada