

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND RETIREMENT SECURITY ACT OF 2011

SPEECH OF

**HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 1, 2012*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1173) to repeal the CLASS program:

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Chair, I rise today in firm opposition to this legislation that would repeal the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports Act, the CLASS Act.

As part of the Affordable Care Act, the CLASS Act is our nation's first real attempt to provide voluntary, fiscally-responsible, long-term care for the more than 70 percent of Americans who will need such support at some point in their lifetimes.

As the Representative to thousands of seniors in Florida's 20th district, I know too well how hard our families strive to plan and pay for the long term care services that most of them so desperately need.

By repealing the CLASS Act, this Congress abandons millions of middle class seniors, Americans with disabilities, and all families struggling to provide long term care for loved ones.

Of course, we are willing to admit that this program isn't perfect. But that is no excuse for the Republicans' "repeal and abandon" approach to legislation—and our nation's seniors.

Rather than pull the rug out from under our seniors and loved ones—I urge my colleagues to work to fix this vital program.

### HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JOAN AND GEORGE KESSEL

**HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 2, 2012*

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Joan and George Kessel, two outstanding members of the South Florida community who have dedicated their lives to advancing the security of Israel, promoting Jewish values, and protecting the welfare of Jewish people across the globe.

Joan and George Kessel embody the spirit of adventure. They may spend a great deal of time in South Florida, but they truly are citizens of the world. While they have traveled the globe far and wide, it is their trips to Israel that have touched them most profoundly. During their many stays in Israel, Joan and George have learned firsthand the challenges faced by the Israeli people in a hostile, volatile region. These are the experiences they carry with them back to South Florida.

At home, the Kessels are known for their willingness to take on leadership roles in any endeavor that advances the security of Israel and strengthens the bond between our two nations. They generously support a wide range of Jewish organizations, yet their dedication to these causes extends far beyond philanthropy. By opening their home to visiting Israeli soldiers and dignitaries, they have fostered the kind of cultural exchange between Americans and Israelis that is the bedrock of the deep friendship between our two nations.

On January 8, 2012, Joan and George Kessel were honored by Friends of the Israel Defense Forces (FIDF) for their work on behalf of a safer and more secure Israel. I can think of no two individuals more deserving of this honor. I am humbled by their generosity and commitment, grateful for their friendship, and look forward to their continued leadership in the pro-Israel community for years to come.

### HONORING MAYOR GERALD A. CALABRESE

**HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 2, 2012*

Mr. ROTHMAN of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my dear friend and mentor, Mayor Gerald A. Calabrese of Cliffside Park, in honor of his 87th birthday. Mayor Calabrese is the longest-serving mayor in the state of New Jersey, having begun his 49th year in office in January.

After first being elected to the Cliffside Park Borough Council in 1955, Gerry was elected mayor in 1959, and has served continuously as the Borough's chief executive since his reelection in 1965. During Gerry's time as mayor, Cliffside Park has enjoyed unprecedented growth, largely thanks to his leadership. He is well-known for gaining many federal, state, and county grants to help his community. Highlights from his tenure include the building of Cliffside Park's current Borough Hall, the public library, and a senior citizen housing development, which was one of the first of its kind in New Jersey to be built using federal grants.

Moreover, Gerry has proven his strong leadership by finding other innovative ways to improve his community while saving the taxpayers money. Under his guidance, Cliffside Park is about to embark on a major redevelopment program by building a joint DPW facility with neighboring Fairview. Cliffside Park and Fairview are the first communities in the state to combine their DPW facilities. Not only was a new facility desperately needed, but by vacating the property the DPW currently sits on, the town made valuable land available for development which will now go on the tax rolls.

In addition to his public service in Cliffside Park, Gerry served in the Navy and is a member of the American Legion Post 126 as well

as the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the AmVets. He is also a former professional basketball player, having played for the Syracuse Nationals during the 1951 and 1952 seasons. Gerry was inducted into St. John's Athletic Hall of Fame for his years on the basketball team.

Mayor Gerald A. Calabrese is the pinnacle of integrity and effectiveness. It is no wonder that he received two standing ovations during his swearing-in ceremony in January of this year and has been called a "second father" and "iconic public servant" by so many respected public officials. Mayor Calabrese has been a role model for me, as he has been for so many others in New Jersey whom Gerry has helped during their careers.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to celebrate the birthday of my constituent and dear friend, Mayor Gerald A. Calabrese. I join with the grateful residents of Cliffside Park in thanking him for his innumerable contributions to our community.

### HONORING EVA MARIE BALDWIN WILBUR

**HON. TOM MARINO**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 2, 2012*

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of my constituent, Ms. Eva Marie Baldwin Wilbur on the occasion of her 95th birthday.

Eva Marie Baldwin was born February 19, 1917, the first of eight children to Earl and Frances Baldwin, in Middletown Township, Susquehanna County. Eva attended Rush Schools in Susquehanna County, where her father, Earl, drove the school wagon.

On August 10, 1935, Eva married Clayton Wilbur in Stevensville.

For forty-one years, Eva worked as a tax collector for Pike Township. She is an active parishioner of Rushville Church, and is a member of the Bradford County Republican Women. Even at the age of 95, Eva remains a part of her community, still hosting a Friday night card game for family and friends.

Eva is the proud mother of three children: Shirley, Edna, and Arlyn, grandmother of four, great-grandmother of six, and great-great-grandmother of three.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my constituent, Ms. Eva Marie Baldwin Wilbur, on the occasion of her 95th birthday, and ask my colleagues to join me in praising her commitment to country, community, and family.

### RECOGNIZING MELANIE DRESSEL

**HON. ADAM SMITH**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 2, 2012*

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Melanie Dressel, President and

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

C.E.O. of the Tacoma, Washington-based Columbia Bank, for being named a Community Banker of the Year by American Banker magazine.

Melanie joined Columbia Bank in 1993 and ten years later was named its Chief Executive Officer. Under Melanie's leadership, Columbia Bank acquired five other banks, increasing the bank's assets by fifty percent. These actions have helped Dressel transform Columbia Bank into a regional power.

Despite the bank's growth, Melanie has remained close to traditional community banking practices. Columbia Bank is committed to giving individuals and businesses in the Pacific Northwest a safe, secure, and customer-focused banking option.

Throughout her tenure, Columbia Bank has consistently been honored as one of the region's best places to work. The bank is regularly featured on the Puget Sound Business Journal's "Washington's Best Workplaces" list and listed as "One of Washington's 100 Best Companies to Work For" by Seattle Magazine. Even during challenging economic times, it is encouraging to see Columbia Bank going the extra mile to ensure employee satisfaction.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Melanie Dressel. Her dedication to community banking has helped grow Columbia Bank to provide exemplary service its customers, employees, and our community.

#### RECOGNIZING SUSAN STECHNIJ

#### HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 2, 2012*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to honor the work of Susan Stechnij in the Palm Beach area of Florida. Susan is one of the landlords at the Everglades Inn, a member of the Homeless and Housing Alliance of Palm Beach County. She shares my passion for helping the homeless in the community and in the fight to prevent and end homelessness.

Recently, Susan was honored with an award to denote her special contribution to the homeless people of West Palm Beach. The Lord's Place, a nonprofit organization focused on ending the cycle of homelessness in the area, honored Susan with the Unsung Heroine Award. She was awarded this honor for helping a dying homeless man find relief in the last few weeks of his life. Due to her hard work, the man was able to live comfortably in an apartment rather than facing the difficult conditions that the homeless are faced with on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, Susan deserves to be recognized for her heroic efforts. People like Susan serve an important role in communities across the state of Florida and the country. Her compassion and selflessness in helping those less fortunate is commendable, and I am proud to recognize her as a Hastings' Hero.

IN RECOGNITION OF NICK AND TRACY BROWN

#### HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 2, 2012*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Nick Brown and Mrs. Tracy Brown for their immeasurable contributions to their community and the subsequent honor they have received during Prevention First's "Fly Me to the Moon" Gala on February 4, 2012. The Browns are valuable members of my district and assets to their communities and country. Their actions are truly worthy of this body's recognition.

Mrs. Tracy Brown has admirably served on numerous boards for various organizations throughout Monmouth County, New Jersey. She is a hardworking member of the Monmouth Medical Center Foundation Board and has dedicated countless hours to the Ranney School Annual Fund committee. Mrs. Brown has also co-chaired the Count Basie Gala, Prevention First Gala and the Visiting Nurses Association Show House Gala. Tracy is a member of the Prevention First Executive Committee and remains an integral part of its Board. Together, Tracy and Prevention First's continued efforts have had a resounding effect in preventing alcohol and other drug usage in young adults throughout the local community.

Nick Brown's generosity as a philanthropist and valued member of the community is evident through his service. Mr. Brown is the Managing Director and head of Financial Product Brokerage, North and South America, at GFI Group. He is a partner of Jersey Partners, serves as a director of the Financial Markets Association and was formerly a member of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York's Foreign Exchange Steering Committee. In addition to his professional endeavors, Nick currently serves on the boards of the Center to Prevent Youth Violence and the Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank, New Jersey. He also served as a high profile board member for the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence for 12 years. Nick remains an active board member of HELP USA, a charitable organization dedicated to providing quality housing and on-site supportive services to guide individuals towards independence and self-sufficiency. Together, the Browns have been blessed with five beautiful children, Kristina age 24, Kelli age 22, Peter age 12, Laney age 6, and Lexi age 5.

Mr. Speaker, once again, please join me in congratulating Nick and Tracy Brown for receiving the honors bestowed by Prevention First. Mr. & Mrs. Brown's unending generosity and charitable activities have undoubtedly touched many lives and have helped countless people throughout New Jersey.

IN SUPPORT OF FAIR TRIALS AND ACCESS TO COUNSEL FOR THOSE WITH MENTAL DISABILITIES

#### HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 2, 2012*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Ensuring Mental Competence in Immigra-

tion Proceedings Act. My legislation will make immigration proceedings more fair and humane for individuals with mental disabilities, and help prevent wrongful deportations and indefinite detentions. Specifically, this bill amends the Immigration and Nationality Act to ensure that immigration judges will have the authority to stop proceedings or appoint counsel when an individual is not competent enough to represent him or herself due to a mental disability.

The status quo isn't working. Judges who in good faith have terminated deportation cases because of a person's inability to participate based on mental disability have had their decisions overturned. Consequently, these cases end up in an ongoing loop that keeps these individuals in costly, inhumane detention or results in their unfair deportation.

Examples of immigrants and U.S. citizens with mental disabilities who have been unjustly detained or deported include:

An immigrant from Mexico with severe cognitive disabilities who was declared incompetent by an immigration judge in which he was unrepresented by counsel. His case was put on hold and the Department of Homeland Security allowed him to linger in detention for four and a half years, at a cost to taxpayers of about \$300,000;

A 50-year old legal permanent resident with schizophrenia who had lived in New York more than 30 years was ordered by a New York court to serve 90 days in a mental institution for trespassing. Instead, he was transferred to a detention facility in Texas, where he received no medication for weeks. He then faced a proceeding without counsel, and was deported to the Dominican Republic so quickly that his family did not know what had happened to him until he was gone;

A citizen who had bipolar disorder and developmental disabilities was deported to Mexico, and subsequently to Honduras and Guatemala. It took four months to return him to the United States. ICE officials claim that he signed a statement indicating he was a Mexican national—he was not.

All of these events could have been avoided if immigration judges had the tools they need to properly adjudicate cases involving individuals with mental disabilities, and if these individuals had access to counsel. We cannot allow citizens and immigrants to be wrongly deported or remain in indefinite detention simply because they have a mental disability. By granting judges the ability to discontinue proceedings when an individual is mentally incompetent or to appoint counsel so that the individual receives a fair adjudication, this bill will reduce the costs of long detentions and delayed proceedings and make our immigration system more just.

The National Association of Immigration Judges has asked Congress for reform. Over fifty organizations including Human Rights Watch, the National Disability Rights Network, the American Civil Liberties Union and the American Immigration Lawyers Association endorse the Ensuring Mental Competence in Immigration Proceedings Act. This legislation is the right thing to do for mentally incompetent detainees, for our courts, and for taxpayers. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.