

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## FEDERAL RESERVE TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2012

SPEECH OF

**HON. SPENCER BACHUS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 24, 2012*

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in qualified support of H.R. 459, the Federal Reserve Transparency Act of 2012. Before addressing the merits of the legislation, I want to pay tribute to its author, the gentleman from Texas, Mr. PAUL, who serves as the Chairman of the Financial Services Committee's Domestic Monetary Policy Subcommittee. His tireless advocacy on monetary policy issues and his crusade for a more open and transparent Federal Reserve have been hallmarks of his congressional career. With that career coming to a close at the end of this Congress, it is appropriate that the House consider this bill.

H.R. 459 is bipartisan legislation which will help promote greater public understanding of the Federal Reserve's operations and the impact of its decisions on average Americans. A more transparent central bank will be more accountable for its decisions, which have broad consequences for the American economy, including consumers, savers and small businesses. By de-mystifying the Federal Reserve, we can enhance public confidence in the institution and help address some of the legitimate questions the American people have in the wake of the extraordinary measures that the Fed took at the height of the financial crisis, which have resulted in a tripling of the size of the Fed's balance sheet since 2008.

To his credit, Chairman Bernanke recognized the need for the Fed to improve the transparency of its operations early on in his tenure, and under his leadership, the Fed has made significant strides in this area. Among other initiatives, the Chairman now holds quarterly press conferences, giving the American public an insight into his thinking on the state of the economy and the basis for monetary policy judgments that would have been unheard of under past Fed Chairmen. The Fed has also achieved a greater level of clarity in policy statements issued by the Federal Open Market Committee, and has become much more explicit in its targeting of inflation.

While these are welcome developments for which Chairman Bernanke should be commended, in a representative democracy, maximum transparency is essential to maintaining the trust of the governed. If we err, it must be on the side of the public's right to know. By removing certain statutory limitations on the current authority of the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to audit the Fed's operations, H.R. 459 builds on the reforms that Chairman Bernanke has instituted and will make for a more open and accountable central bank, which is a goal we all share.

Having said that, no legislation is perfect, and there is one aspect of this bill that, if not carefully implemented, runs the risk of under-

mining the Fed's political independence. Specifically, the bill would authorize the GAO to audit the Federal Reserve Board's "deliberations, decisions, or actions on monetary policy matters," thereby removing a limitation that was imposed on the GAO when it was first given statutory authority to audit the Fed in 1978. Proponents of expanding the scope of the GAO's audit authority cite the unconventional policy interventions carried out by the Fed in recent years in its attempt to stabilize the financial system and stimulate the economy as justification for a more robust congressional role in overseeing the central bank's operations. It should be noted, however, that the inclusion in the Dodd-Frank Act of reforms first proposed by Financial Services Committee Republicans that significantly curtail the Fed's emergency lending authorities under section 13(3) of the Federal Reserve Act go a long way toward addressing concerns about the Fed's ability to conduct rescues of individual financial institutions without the review and approval of Congress.

As a general matter, I worry that the level of congressional scrutiny authorized by H.R. 459 may, if not exercised cautiously and responsibly, be incompatible with the need to insulate the Fed from political pressures and ensure that its decisions are based on sound economic principles rather than on jaw-boning from Capitol Hill. I am therefore sympathetic to Chairman Bernanke's argument—which he made in recent testimony before the Financial Services Committee—that a central bank that operates free of such political influence is likely to produce better economic outcomes and a more stable interest rate environment.

Indeed, the danger of allowing political considerations to guide monetary policy judgments was on full display at a recent hearing in the other body, where one of the Senators, citing Congress' inability to reach consensus on how to jump-start our anemic economic recovery, loudly urged Chairman Bernanke to "get to work" and implement a more aggressive monetary easing. This kind of rhetoric underscores the need for the GAO to exercise its expanded audit authority under H.R. 459 prudently, and to resist any efforts by Members of Congress to use this new tool to influence decisions on monetary policy. Failure to protect the central bank's independence from such political pressure will have dire consequences for our economy and for the legitimacy of the Federal Reserve as an institution.

Concerns about the scope of GAO's audits of monetary policy deliberations were never aired in the Financial Services Committee because of a decision by the House Parliamentarian to refer H.R. 459 exclusively to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. This referral, which Dr. Paul and I challenged at the time in extensive written correspondence and in meetings with the Parliamentarians, ignored decades of past precedents recognizing the Financial Services Committee's jurisdiction over legislative proposals affecting the Federal Reserve's conduct of monetary policy. While the Parliamentarian ul-

timately granted the Financial Services Committee a sequential referral of H.R. 459 after it had been reported to the House and scheduled for floor consideration, the initial referral to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform short-circuited the legislative process and denied Members of the Financial Services Committee, including Dr. Paul, an opportunity to fully debate the important issues of Federal Reserve transparency and independence raised by this legislation.

Again, I commend Dr. Paul and Chairman Bernanke for their efforts to bring greater transparency to the Fed's operations.

HONORING ALEXANDRE LOPES

**HON. FREDERICA S. WILSON**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 31, 2012*

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Alexandre Lopes, for being selected as the Macy's—Florida Department of Education, 2013 Teacher of the Year. Mr. Lopes embodies the merit and dedication required to lead students in today's challenging academic environment. He serves at Carol City Elementary School as a teacher in the Learning Experience Alternative Program. As an educator Mr. Lopes has dedicated his career to special needs students with communication issues. The LEAP program has allowed Mr. Lopes to express his creativity and compassion for teaching by using music and dance to progress the student's communication skills. His courage, vision and passion are contributing factors behind his emergence as a pioneer in education, community leader, and role model amongst his peers. As a former educator I am pleased to honor Mr. Lopes, and wish him the best of luck as he moves into the national competition.

IN RECOGNITION OF ANN  
KATHLEEN SIMS

**HON. JACKIE SPEIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 31, 2012*

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Ann Kathleen Sims who helped shape the lives of thousands of young children in the Bay Area. After providing quality and affordable child care for 35 years, Ann is retiring as the founder and director of Bayshore Child Care Services.

Ann built the five day care centers in Daly City with endless passion and dedication offering children a place to learn, be fed, hugged and loved while offering their parents the freedom to work and provide for their families.

Ann grew up near London and received her teaching diploma from Philippa Fawcett College, an affiliate of London University. She

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started her career as a teacher in the Inner London primary schools. In 1968, Ann immigrated to the United States. She taught first-grade students at Kalamazoo School in Lansing, Michigan and then moved to San Francisco to become the head teacher at Jack and Jill Nursery School.

After Ann had her first child, Frankie, she set up her own day care school in Berkeley. From there she moved across the Bay and became director of the Daly City Community of Children's Services. She established the first local state-funded childcare in the basement of a church in the Bayshore neighborhood in 1978—the birthplace of Bayshore Child Care Services. Never afraid to take on big projects, Ann moved into a dilapidated Navy school built in 1943 and started renovating the new home of her growing child care center. The renovations have been ongoing and even now, a community kitchen is being built in the Midway Center.

The Midway Center became the flagship of Bayshore Child Care Services and Ann won numerous contracts to expand her services to more families in San Mateo County to include the Parkview Center and the 87th Street Center. I had the pleasure to work with Ann when she partnered with the David and Lucile Packard Foundation to build the Mission Center, a custom-designed center that serves infants and toddlers.

Helping parents has always been the priority for Ann. She is a tireless and innovative advocate for families and has embraced father friendly programs, special needs programs, and coordinated services for families. She and the Peninsula community built another custom design, parent friendly preschool and resource center, the Price Street Center or Our Second Home.

Ann has turned a single classroom day care center into five centers serving over 250 children every day and employing 50 individuals, primarily teachers.

As Ann has reached her well-deserved retirement, Bayshore Child Care Services will join forces with Peninsula Family Services. The combined organization will continue the mission of supporting families on limited resources and providing their children with safe and nurturing environments in which to learn and explore.

Ann can now look forward to spending more time with her family including her husband of 29 years, Mike Sims, and their daughter, Frankie S. Crawford.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor Ann Kathleen Sims, a dear friend, an outstanding teacher and a powerful family advocate. She has made San Mateo County a better place to live and work for all of us.

COMMEMORATING ORBIS INTERNATIONAL FOR ITS 30 YEARS OF SAVING SIGHT AND REBUILDING LIVES IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

**HON. STENY H. HOYER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 31, 2012*

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend ORBIS International, an organiza-

tion that has been an outstanding member of the global community for 30 years. I am proud to recognize its invaluable service and contributions to some of the most vulnerable populations in the world.

ORBIS International is a U.S.-based global health organization dedicated to saving sight and eliminating avoidable blindness in developing countries. Created in 1982, ORBIS has conducted over 1,000 programs in 88 countries, trained over 288,000 healthcare professionals and touched the lives of 18 million children and adults. Today, we celebrate ORBIS International's 30 years of commitment to preserving and restoring sight by strengthening the capacity of local institutions in developing nations in their efforts to prevent and treat blindness.

The story of ORBIS International is a remarkable one. A grant from USAID and funds from private donors enabled ORBIS to begin its mission by successfully converting a plane into a fully functional teaching eye hospital, and in 1982 it flew to Panama on its first training mission. Today, the world's only Flying Eye Hospital visits 6–8 nations each year conducting programs, training medical personnel, and providing eye care services.

ORBIS is more than a Flying Eye Hospital with permanent programs and regional offices in the countries that have the highest prevalence of avoidable blindness. ORBIS has conducted more than 900 capacity building programs in its 30-year history. These capacity building programs were conducted through its six country and regional-based offices, the Flying Eye Hospital, and ORBIS' in-country, hospital-based training sessions.

In addition to treating a number of diseases of the eye that can cause blindness, ORBIS is also working in Africa to eliminate trachoma, one of the seven Neglected Tropical Diseases. Trachoma, an infectious disease found predominantly in developing countries, starts as an infection and progresses to corneal scarring. ORBIS International teaches surgical techniques and treatment for trachoma in Ethiopia and other developing countries.

Blindness has profound human and socioeconomic consequences. The costs of lost productivity and of rehabilitation and education of the blind constitute a significant economic burden for the individual, the family and society. Investments in avoidable blindness and visual impairment offer not only economic and social returns in global health, but they dramatically improve the quality of life of individuals and families. ORBIS International is a trusted partner in the global coalition of organizations fighting preventable blindness.

ORBIS programs and partnerships provide the skills, infrastructure and on-going support to build the capacity and skills necessary to sustain care at a local level. As a founding member of Vision 2020: The Right to Sight, a campaign led by the World Health Organization and other leading blindness prevention organizations to eliminate avoidable blindness by the year 2020, ORBIS is dedicated to working in partnership to create a world free of needless blindness.

I am honored to join ORBIS International in celebrating its 30 year commitment toward achieving its goal of a world in which no one is needlessly blind, and where quality eye care is available to everyone. I want to thank ORBIS International for the lives it has

touched and its leadership in providing valuable health and training services across the globe.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIP HOUSING

**HON. JACKIE SPEIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 31, 2012*

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor an outstanding non-profit in San Mateo County, HIP Housing, on the occasion of its 40th Anniversary. This remarkable organization has assisted thousands of disadvantaged and disabled residents giving them shelter and the opportunity to turn their lives around.

Because of HIP Housing, over 1,000 individuals per year have a place to call home which makes for 1,000 stories of transformed lives. These are the stories of struggling mothers with high school educations going back to school, under the guidance of HIP Housing, to earn a degree.

HIP Housing's stories include those of families who, due to illness or a reduction in hours at work, injuries from an auto accident or dozens of other causes, cannot afford rent and are dangerously close to living on the street. HIP Housing offers a helping hand and a steady course to a secure future.

The Home Sharing Program is a creative and effective way to match a home provider with a home seeker who pays rent or provides services. It cuts housing costs, promotes independence, provides companionship and increases security. Many strong friendships have started through the Home Sharing Program, and these friendships have transformed the lives of all involved.

HIP Housing's Self-Sufficiency Program helps low-income families set clear goals to become financially self-reliant within one or two years while receiving housing assistance and support services. Attending a graduation ceremony of this program is certain to make one cry. A long line of graduates traipse up to the microphone and recount how they developed parenting skills, earned a degree and landed a job, or learned the skills to start a business. One woman this year reported that she had moved from being nearly homeless to getting her college degree, and onward to making over \$80,000 per year in hospital administration, all with the help of HIP's counselors. The American Dream is alive at HIP Housing where housing is a right of everyone who wishes to work hard, and a need of all human beings who seek dignity.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me to honor the volunteers, staff, board members and foundations supporting HIP Housing. These are the quiet heroes who allow this organization to make San Mateo County a better place for all of us. HIP Housing is a shining example of what community service can be and can do to transform the world in which we live.