

Washington Internship program has now delivered 130 Australian student interns over the past 13 years.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all of my colleagues to open their doors to students from around the world so that they can share in our great democracy. Similarly, I would encourage American university students to seek established and creative ways to connect with their counterparts around the globe. I ask my colleagues to join with me in recognizing the contributions of the Uni-Capitol Internship Program and to once more thank Niall O'Shea for his dedication and hard work.

HONORING JOSH UNDERWOOD

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 6, 2012

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to honor Mr. Josh Underwood, one of the twelve interns from the Uni-Capitol Washington Program, UCWIP who is currently interning in my office. The Uni-Capitol Washington Program has paired some of the brightest Australian students with various congressional offices for more than a decade and I am happy to have been a host.

Josh comes from University of Queensland and is studying law and philosophy. Over the past month, I have found him to be outstanding in his duties and going above and beyond our expectations. When complimenting Josh to Mr. Federer, the director agreed saying "Josh has been a standout among standouts in everything I've organized" and I agree wholeheartedly. He has attended committee hearings, drafted constituent correspondence, and assisted me as well as my staff with research. His Australian accent has garnered the attention of many of my constituents on tours and over the phone. Josh's commitment, hard work, and presence have been an asset to the office and he will be sorely missed by all.

The program has been in force for 13 years thanks to the vision of Eric Federer, its director and founder. The students who are selected come from a variety of academic disciplines, but all have a common interest: promoting the U.S.-Australia relationship. These student placements are enhanced by the formation of genuine friendships and the exchange of views and ideas between the Australian interns and their respective offices. We are grateful for these friendships and it is our hope that they strengthen the diplomatic ties of our great countries.

I would thank Eric Federer for the opportunity to host Josh over the past several weeks. To date, 130 interns have come through his program representing 8 different universities over the programs lifetime. It enhances opportunities for the individuals who come and enlighten those who they come to. After the internship, many receive jobs on the Hill or go to work with Federal or various State Parliaments in Australia. Other interns have gone onto work in the Australian Embassy or The World Bank. Simply put, this program selects incredibly talented individuals that are a pleasure to host and work with. It was an honor to have Josh in our office and would wish him the very best, but I sincerely doubt

he needs it. Josh, thank you again for your hard work and dedication.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 658,
FAA REAUTHORIZATION AND RE-
FORM ACT OF 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 3, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss the Conference Report for H.R. 658, the FAA Air Transportation Modernization and Safety Improvement Act. I want to thank Chairman MICA, Ranking Member RAHALL, the other conferees, and the leadership for finally bringing an FAA Reauthorization bill to the floor.

Nearly five years has passed since the last FAA Reauthorization Act passed by the Congress and signed into law by the President expired. Instead of passing a new clean reauthorization bill five years ago, the reauthorization process was subverted by the desire of some members across the aisle to hijack the FAA reauthorization process as a to advance narrow ideological interests. This politicization of what had previously been a nonpartisan approach to developing aviation legislation was a great disservice to our nation, particularly in the economically challenged conditions of the past several years.

Every day thousands of men and women give their best to ensure that the American civil aviation industry remains the best in the world. And no group of persons suffered more from Congress' failure to pass a short-term clean FAA extension last August than the airline pilots, air traffic controllers, flight attendants, baggage handlers, mechanics, technicians, customer service representatives, security personnel, and others whose livelihood depends upon a functioning civil aviation sector.

This past August, House Republican leadership, giving in to the demands of its extremist Tea Party faction and ignoring the long-standing Congressional tradition of passing clean extensions of the FAA reauthorization bill, broke precedent and attached to the bill several controversial ideologically extreme policy riders to weaken unions and kill jobs, knowing full well it would never be approved by the Senate. Then it adjourned and left town for the August recess.

This abdication of responsibility resulted in the furlough of more than 4,000 FAA non-partisan career civil servants who in many cases had spent more than two decades working to provide the public with safe, modern and efficient air travel. This Republican-initiated FAA shutdown resulted in work stoppages on 217 construction projects worth more \$11 billion that had been undertaken to upgrade the nation's air traffic control and safety infrastructure.

This House majority's irresponsible action' more than 86,000 construction jobs at risks around the country and unconscionably jeopardized the ability of nearly 90,000 household to pay their rent or mortgages, educate their children, and put food on the table.

In addition to the havoc wreaked on the families of the employees involved, the Republicans' forced shutdown of the FAA cost

the American taxpayer \$300 million in lost airport fees. To make matters worse, instead of passing the savings resulting from the lapsed airline ticket tax on to air travelers, almost every one of the airlines raised their ticket prices and pocketed the money.

By any measure the House Republicans political gambit was a colossal blunder and the resulting public backlash led the chastened majority to drop the odious anti-labor provisions and pass a clean FAA extension thereby providing time for the parties to reconcile their differences and reach agreement on the long-term reauthorization measure before us today.

Turning to the merits of the bill before us, there is much in it that I approve and support.

First, the conference report maintains funding at current levels, authorizing a \$63.4 billion investment in our Nation's aviation system for fiscal years, FY, 2012–15. Of this amount, approximately \$13.4 billion is allocated for the Airport Improvement Program, AIP, \$38.3 billion for FAA Operations, \$672 million for Research, Engineering & Development, and \$10.9 billion for FAA's Facilities & Equipment.

Second, the bill provides about \$1 billion in funding authority for FAA's Next Generation, NextGen, air traffic modernization program, approximately the same as the past two years. When fully implemented, NextGen will complete the transformation of an antiquated air traffic control system based on World War II-era technology to one based on 21st Century GPS technology. Additionally, the bill accelerates the development of a NextGen satellite-based navigation system to provide pilots with more accurate information to track aircraft and weather. And to strengthen accountability for the progress on the NextGen program, the Conference Report sets a schedule for FAA and creates the new position of Chief NextGen Officer to oversee the effort.

Third, stripped from the Conference Report is the controversial House Republican provision that would have increased the percentage of employees who must vote in favor of a union before the National Mediation Board could certify the union as their representative. Had this provision not been dropped, it would have unfairly tilted the playing field against employees because a union could be certified only if it won the votes of a majority of all employees in a particular group, not just those who actually voted. It is clearly unfair to consider a vote not cast as a vote against. To put it another way: there is a gigantic difference between not voting and voting No! I am pleased that this anti-democratic provision has been dropped from the bill.

Fourth, the bill establishes a process for mediation and binding arbitration of impasses between the FAA and the collective-bargaining representatives of employees to help ensure that disputes are resolved fairly and efficiently without any disruption to the aviation system.

Fifth, the bill requires the FAA and OSHA to move forward with long-stalled rules to extend OSHA protections to flight attendants.

Sixth, the bill will help relieve congestion at many of the nation's interior hub airports by authorizing eight new round-trip flights between Reagan National Airport and airports located more than 1,250 miles away.

Finally, I am also pleased that H.R. 658 includes protections for passengers. For example, air travelers have greater assurance they will be treated fairly while traveling. Tarmac delays are something we have all experienced

at some point while traveling and can become frustrating to passengers who have no information as to when they will begin their travel. Now, airlines and airports would be required to have emergency contingency plans to take care of passengers who are involved in long uncomfortable tarmac delays. Passengers will no longer have to sit and wait on the tarmac wondering if they will ever move or be fed.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, and having served on its Aviation Subcommittee, I have worked tirelessly with my colleagues to secure passage of a clean FAA reauthorization bill. But I cannot support a reauthorization bill containing anti-labor provisions that undermine the rights of workers to bargain collectively over the terms and conditions of their employment. Regrettably, this bill does.

The bill contains statutory amendments to the Railway Labor Act which undermines 75 years of experience by the National Mediation Board's, NMB, in conducting representation elections in the air and rail industries. By removing the NMB's explicit statutory discretion in determining whether an election is mandated, this provision imposes new roadblocks for employees seeking union representation.

Another provision undermining the ability of employees to secure union representation is a proposed change in the way union run-off elections are handled. Under the proposed language, if Union A receives 40 percent of the votes and Union B receives 25 percent of the votes and the remaining 35 percent of the employees vote "no union," then the run-off will be between Union A and no union. This is true even though 65 percent of the employees indicated they wanted a union and soundly defeated the "no union" option.

Most problematic, however, is the provision in the bill relating to "showing of interest," requiring 50 percent of employees to sign up just to have an election. That is the same percentage of employees that would warrant union certification were the Employee Free Choice Act enacted into law.

This is the first time in history that Congress is legislating a showing of interest requirement in any federal labor law. Were this "showing of interest" provision to be applied in a merger setting, a larger employer that merges with a somewhat smaller airline will virtually guarantee there will be no unions on the merged property because where large numbers of employees are furloughed, it is virtually impossible for unions to meet the 50 percent threshold.

Taken together, these provisions constitute impose an intolerable burden on the ability of working men and women to bargain collectively over the terms and conditions of employment. I cannot support a legislative proposal that includes such provisions.

As one who born and raised in the House of Labor, educated in the School of Business, and who spent 14 years working in the corporate world, I stand ready to continue working with my colleagues, the Administration, industry and labor to develop and pass legislation that is beneficial and in the best interests of management, labor, government, and the public.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on this bill and once again urge this House to come forth with a clean long-term FAA reauthorization that will not impede workers rights.

HONORING LIN BREHMER

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 6, 2012

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, on January 24, 2012, longtime radio host Lin Brehmer received honors recognizing his 20th anniversary on Chicago's 93.1 WXRT FM, as the station also celebrated its 40th anniversary on the air.

Chicago is a city of many treasures.

From the architecture to the museums and cultural institutions, from the sports teams to our food, there are many, many reasons to celebrate The Windy City.

But with so much to do, see, and eat, some of our city's finest features do not make it onto most tourists' To Do Lists. But if you want to share with a visitor some of the true heart and soul of Chicago, drive down Lake Shore Drive with the Lake on one side, our beautiful skyline on the other, and 93 WXRT on the radio.

I have tried to explain to my children about the vast wasteland that was music radio in Chicago before XRT. Forty years ago, all you had was the same ten songs on AM radio. Then came XRT, with a rich, diverse playlist. With a passion and integrity unmatched even today.

No coincidence it became a 24 hour station in 1976, demonstrating our city's unique commitment to independent thinking, and an unbridled celebration of art and music.

Like many others, XRT linked me to a new world.

XRT encouraged me to leave my sterile environment and travel to the Earl of Old Town to listen to Steve Goodman—and my first concert at The Aragon Ball Room to see Mott the Hoople, the New York Dolls. Not to mention other famous haunts that played host to greats like Iggy Pop, David Bowie, Muddy Waters, Frank Zappa, Roxy Music, and the like.

Thank you XRT, for 40 great years. You made me a better person.

So tell your kids to turn their FM radio dial to 93.1, WXRT; they will find Lin Brehmer, "Your best friend in the whole wide world."

Lin has been the morning voice on XRT for the last 20 years, and is a Chicago institution unto himself. For 20 years, Lin has been there with us to celebrate all things Chicago; from commiserating another Cubs loss, to suggesting the perfect restaurant for a post-concert dinner.

He shares with us the best of the city and makes sure we better understand the world, with "Lin's Bin." He helps us discover new sounds, rediscover old favorites, and provides an unparalleled soundtrack to our days.

A celebrated fixture in radio, Lin has received a variety of honors throughout his illustrious career. In 1990 he was also honored as "Music Director of the Decade" by Hard Report.

Lin's musical sensibilities are nicely summed up by his motto, borrowed from the writing of Gerard Manley Hopkins, "Flesh fade and mortal trash fall to the residuary worm, you and I might as well Rock and Roll."

Dubbed the "Reverend of Rock and Roll" early in his radio career, Lin sought to put together a radio program unlike any other. Now, more than 35 years since he first hosted a radio show in Albany, New York, Lin has succeeded in doing that, and so much more.

Radio isn't Lin's only passion; he is also quite the accomplished Foodie, never going anywhere without a Zagat guide in his car and his self-described "eating pants," an outfit with enough "give" to accommodate another Chicago meal at the Weiner's Circle.

His favorite restaurants in Chicago include a wide variety of cuisine, for an even broader array of occasions. His recommendations have included "Best Upscale Mexican For When You Want To Leave The Kids At Home" or the very specific "Best Late Night Steak Burrito."

I'm sure he also enjoys splitting a cinnamon roll with our friend and his colleague Teri Hemmert, another Chicago jewel, at her favorite table at Ann Sather's Restaurant on the northside.

Lin Brehmer is a man who helps us to discover the best about Chicago, and in doing so, has become a Chicago treasure himself.

We appreciate and applaud his career as one of our city's finest radio personalities and most recognizable voices, and look forward to the music, experiences, and food he will help us discover in his next twenty years.

Thank you, Lin, for always reminding us why "It's great to be alive."

CELEBRATING DAVID MARVIN BLUMBERG'S 60TH BIRTHDAY

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 6, 2012

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the celebration of David Marvin Blumberg's 60th birthday.

David was born on December 26, 1951 in Jacksonville, Florida. He is the fourth of five children born to Marvin Bernard and Mary Louise Blumberg. David obtained his Masters Degree of Public Administration in 1994 from the University of North Florida.

He was honorably discharged from his service in the USAF in 1974 after having worked as an instrument mechanic on the Minute Man 1, 2, and 3 missiles at Vandenberg AFB, CA.

David worked alongside his father at Marvin Blumberg and Sons from 1974–1982. He was certified as an FAA Air Traffic Controller and worked in that capacity from 1982–2006.

Presently he is serving as an Air Traffic Safety Risk Management Facilitator and Instructor nationwide.

David is the proud father of Lauren, Will, Olivia, Nathan and Natalie. He has one grandchild, Walker Brooks Haas.

David plays the drums in a band comprised of other Air Traffic Controllers who raise money for charities and to date they have raised over \$650,000 for local and national charities.

David will be moving to Fort Worth, Texas to supplement the Federal Aviation Administration's Safety Risk Management staff.

His band Aire Traffic will be playing future benefit concerts to raise money for the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation and for the Joseph Sam's School for Special Needs Children in Fayetteville, GA.

Please join me in wishing David Blumberg a very happy 60th birthday.