

best, and I know my colleagues join me in thanking them for their service and in wishing them well in their new endeavors.

DAWSON, YOU ARE SO AWESOME,
YOU ARE SO DAWSOME, AS CAN
BE! IN HONOR OF DAWSON COX
AND HIS COURAGE AND HIS BAT-
TLE

HON. JEFF FORTENBERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 31, 2012

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize one of Lincoln, Nebraska's most courageous sons, and one of my constituents, Dawson Cox. I had the honor to take him and his sisters Stevie and Nessa on the floor of the House during our vote, and spend time with him and his family. Dawson's Make A Wish, was to come to Washington D.C. and visit the new Dr. King Jr. Memorial, and to stand on the very spot where the I Have A Dream speech was given. Dr. King is his hero. And Dr. King would be proud of Dawson too for his courage! Dawson toured the Capitol, and met many members of Congress and one of the House's true Icon's JOHN LEWIS. Congressman LEWIS, is the only surviving member left who spoke on that day. His new friend Bert, was so impressed with his courage and faith, and his spirit, that he penned this poem in his honor. Our prayers and our thoughts go out to Dawson and his family, during his most courageous battle.

DAWSON, YOU ARE SO AWESOME, YOU ARE SO
DAWSOME, AS CAN BE!

Dawson!
You are so Awesome!
You are so Dawsome!
As Can Be!
You're Major "D"!
For you are one of Nebraska's,
most courageous of all sons so to be!
Yea, you are a Husker!
Who can so muster!
The will and the courage,
and the faith to so overcome!
To Fight The Good Fight!
As Thy Will Be Done!
With all of your might!
For inside of you, but shines such a light!
For You are Major!
You're Major "D", and yet your so young!
And mini me, you so complete me!
You see,
because heroes come in all shapes and sizes,
but it's all about what's within their hearts,
that which so comprises . . .
Of what they so can be!
He's The Man!
Even Washington has his initials DC,
Dawson Cox understand!
Because, In The Game of Life . . .
Dawson, you are a winner so very bright!
And if ever I had a son,
I so wish that he could be like you this one!
With that smile,
that tells me all the while,
that the heart of a champion so beats in this
one!
And when you walked on that House floor,
they say the ratings on Cspan shot up so
much more!
That's because you are Major "D"!
And you are so Awesome Mr. Dawson can't
you see!
For you are as brave as can be,
as any Navy, Air Force, Army, or United
States Marine!

Because,
you and your families just like them and
theirs,
fight a war and the good fight continually!
For you are all so much alike in so many
ways!
And yet Dawson,
you are just a little boy!
Who out of such heartache can still find so
much joy!

And yet,
already so much you so understand!
And what we could so learn from you,
if we but so walked hand in hand!
If Dr. King,
is a King Among Men!
Then, you Dawson . . .
are but a Prince Among Children!
For he's for MLK Jr.,
all the way
Heroes,
our children should not so have to be,
but sometimes this is what our Lord has cho-
sen for us to teach!

To be inspired!
To take and lift our hearts higher!
To show us all that against all odds they
never tire!

All in their profiles of courage don't you see?
And to remind us to hold our families close!
To so remember what so but means the
most!

And to against all odds to always so believe!
And, that is why . . .
with tear in eye Dawson you so complete me!
Dawson!

You Are So Awesome!
You Are So Dawsome!
So Dawsome As Can Be!
Because,
it's with your heart you so run!
On earth as it will be in Heaven,
as Thy Will Be Done!

And that smile,
and that wit,
and that mind,
so very creative and so quick I'll carry with
me every day!

Because, you are my new best friend. . .
Dawson, your Major "D" . . .
And you are as Awesome as Awesome so can
be!

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4310—THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FIS- CAL YEAR 2013

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 31, 2012

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply disappointed that I must rise in opposition to the Conference Report on H.R. 4310, the FY13 National Defense Authorization Act. America's men and women in uniform deserve, and Congress must pass, legislation that provides them with the resources they need to preserve our national security. Unfortunately, this bill does not reflect the range of 21st-Century threats the United States must prepare for, nor does it reflect the urgent fiscal crisis this Congress must address. What this massive \$633 billion defense bill does reflect, however, are disastrously misplaced priorities.

On May 10th of this year, House Republicans passed the Sequester Replacement Reconciliation Act (H.R. 5652), which exempts the Pentagon from \$55 billion in automatic spending cuts agreed to in last year's Budget Control Act (P.L. 112-25). How did they pro-

pose to do it? By cutting over \$310 billion from domestic programs. These were cuts to nutrition assistance programs for low-income seniors, people with disabilities, and working families; cuts that will deny more than 200,000 low-income children their school lunches; cuts to the Meals on Wheels program critical to disabled seniors, and cuts to programs that protect vulnerable and abused children. These will have a real and severe impact on American families. Instead of asking the Pentagon to make tough choices and eliminate wasteful spending programs, House Republicans would rather balance the budget on the backs of our Nation's most vulnerable citizens.

Here is just one example of Pentagon spending that House Republicans are protecting by cutting programs for low-income children, seniors, and working families: in this fiscal year, the Department of Defense plans to spend \$389 million for its 150 military bands and more than 5,000 full-time, professional military musicians. This is a prime example of excessive military spending that we simply do not need, and can no longer afford. Earlier this year, the House passed my bipartisan amendment to this bill limiting the amount the military spends annually on military bands to no more than \$200 million—not an insignificant sum. I am very disappointed to see that this language was not included in the Conference Report. This smart cut would have continued to provided \$200 million for military bands in fiscal year 2013, ensuring that America would maintain its strong tradition of military bands, while saving taxpayers \$2 billion over the next decade.

Lastly, the Conference Report does virtually nothing to correct the civil liberties abuses passed in last year's defense authorization bill. House and Senate Conferees stripped a bipartisan amendment offered by Senators FEINSTEIN (D-CA) and Senator LEE (R-UT) which would have helped ensure that no one can be denied a fair trial and detained indefinitely when they are captured in the United States. I am appalled that this commonsense amendment to protect the most basic American civil liberties was not included in the legislation before us today.

Mr. Speaker, there are several positive provisions of this bill that I support, including the continuance of DOD clean energy programs, lifting restrictions on servicewomen's access to reproductive health care, and addressing military sexual assault. It also takes steps that would help eliminate hazing in the military and prevents any increase in new TRICARE fees. Unfortunately, the underlying legislation contains too much wasteful spending and does not correct the egregious human abuses that were part of the fiscal year 2012 bill.

One of our primary duties as Members of Congress is to provide the resources and policy guidance necessary to protect our Nation. We must make certain that every dollar in this bill contributes to our national defense. It is time for tough choices and smart cuts that save taxpayer dollars, even at the Pentagon. Wasteful and excessive Pentagon spending is no longer acceptable as low income families, seniors, and disabled Americans to go without the critical services.

I urge my colleagues oppose this legislation.

RICHARD ARMEY'S \$8,000,000
GOLDEN PARACHUTE

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 31, 2012

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, given the role that former Majority Leader Richard Armeý has played in significantly increasing the role in militant conservatives in the Republican party, the article in the Washington Post on December 25 is important information that all Members should know.

[From The Washington Post, Dec. 25, 2012]

FREEDOM WORKS TEA PARTY GROUP NEARLY
FALLS APART IN FIGHT BETWEEN OLD AND
NEW GUARD

(By Amy Gardner)

The day after Labor Day, just as campaign season was entering its final frenzy, FreedomWorks, the Washington-based tea party organization, went into free fall.

Richard K. Armeý, the group's chairman and a former House majority leader, walked into the group's Capitol Hill offices with his wife, Susan, and an aide holstering a handgun at his waist. The aim was to seize control of the group and expel Armeý's enemies: The gun-wielding assistant escorted FreedomWorks' top two employees off the premises, while Armeý suspended several others who broke down in sobs at the news.

The coup lasted all of six days. By Sept. 10, Armeý was gone—with a promise of \$8 million—and the five ousted employees were back. The force behind their return was Richard J. Stephenson, a reclusive Illinois millionaire who has exerted increasing control over one of Washington's most influential conservative grass-roots organizations.

Stephenson, the founder of the for-profit Cancer Treatment Centers of America and a director on the Freedom Works board, agreed to commit \$400,000 per year over 20 years in exchange for Armeý's agreement to leave the group.

The episode illustrates the growing role of wealthy donors in swaying the direction of FreedomWorks and other political groups, which increasingly rely on unlimited contributions from corporations and financiers for their financial livelihood. Such gifts are often sent through corporate shells or non-profit groups that do not have to disclose their donors, making it impossible for the public to know who is funding them.

In the weeks before the election, more than \$12 million in donations was funneled through two Tennessee corporations to the FreedomWorks super PAC after negotiations with Stephenson over a preemption gift of the same size, according to three current and former employees with knowledge of the arrangement. The origin of the money has not previously been reported.

These and other new details about the near-meltdown at FreedomWorks were gleaned from interviews with two dozen current and past associates, most of whom spoke on the condition of anonymity in order to talk freely.

The disarray comes as the conservative movement is struggling to find its way after the November elections, which brought a second term for President Obama and Democratic gains in the House and Senate. Armeý said in an interview that the near-meltdown at his former group has damaged the conservative cause.

"Freedom Works was the spark plug, the energy source, the catalyst for the movement through the 2010 elections," Armeý said, referring to the GOP midterm sweep. "Harm was done to the movement."

Stephenson, 73, declined a request for an interview. Matt Kibbe, the group's president, and Adam Brandon, its senior vice president, declined to discuss the issue.

"I don't comment on donors," Brandon said. "He's on our board, he's a board member like anyone else. That's it. I see him at board meetings."

Stephenson, a longtime but little-known player in conservative causes, is a resident of Barrington, Ill., a northwest suburb of Chicago known for its affluence and sprawling horse estates such as his Tudor Oaks Farm. He founded the Cancer Treatment Centers of America in 1988 following his mother's death from bladder cancer, according to the for-profit company's Web site and his public remarks. Stephenson also holds investments in a broad portfolio of other businesses, including finance and real estate companies.

Stephenson has a passion for libertarian politics stretching back to the 1960s, when he attended seminars featuring "Atlas Shrugged" author Ayn Rand and economist Murray Rothbard, according to those who know him at FreedomWorks. Like Armeý, Stephenson was an early supporter of Citizens for a Sound Economy, the conservative lobbying group founded by oil billionaires Charles and David Koch in 1984 that split into Freedom Works and Americans for Prosperity 20 years later. The Kochs, known for bankrolling a variety of conservative causes, kept control of AFP, while Stephenson and Armeý stayed with FreedomWorks.

FreedomWorks has been on a remarkable run in recent election cycles, growing its annual budget from \$7 million to \$40 million in just a few years and helping lead the tea party movement against Obama's agenda. The group was among several that rose up last week in opposition to a failed proposal from House Speaker John A. Boehner (R-Ohio) to raise federal taxes on millionaires.

The group played a crucial role in ushering a wave of tea party candidates into office in recent years, staging rallies, hawking books and videos, and organizing media appearances with conservative personalities such as Glenn Beck and Rush Limbaugh.

"I've enjoyed my association with FreedomWorks," said Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah), who defeated incumbent Bob Bennett with help from the group. "Matt Kibbe and Dick Armeý endorsed me early in my candidacy for the U.S. Senate, and they were a big help to me."

Despite such testimonials, FreedomWorks has struggled with accusations that it is an "astro-turfer"—a national organization of big-money donors that swept in to lay claim to an independent movement.

According to public records, FreedomWorks received more than \$12 million before the election from two corporations based in Knoxville, Tenn.: Specialty Investments Group and Kingston Pike Development. The firms were established within a day of each other by William S. Rose III, a local bankruptcy lawyer.

Rose, who could not be reached for comment, has said publicly he would not answer questions about the donations. But according to three current and former FreedomWorks employees with knowledge of the donations, the money originated with Stephenson and his family, who arranged for the contributions from the Tennessee firms to the super PAC.

Brandon, FreedomWorks' executive vice president, told colleagues starting in August that Stephenson would be giving between \$10 million and \$12 million, these sources said. Brandon also met repeatedly with members of Stephenson's family who were involved in arranging the donations, the sources said.

Stephenson attended a FreedomWorks retreat in Jackson Hole, Wyo., in August at

which a budget was being prepared in anticipation of a large influx of money, according to several employees who attended the retreat. At the retreat, Stephenson dictated some of the terms of how the money would be spent, the employees said.

"There is no doubt that Dick Stephenson arranged for that money to come to the super PAC," said one person who attended the retreat. "I can assure you that everyone around the office knew about it."

Among other things, Stephenson wanted a substantial sum spent in support of Rep. Joe Walsh (R-Ill.), a tea party favorite and Stephenson's local congressman, several who attended the retreat recalled. Walsh garnered national headlines during the campaign when he questioned whether his opponent, Tammy Duckworth, a former Blackhawk helicopter pilot who lost both legs in Iraq, was a "true hero." Despite internal misgivings about the value of the investment, FreedomWorks spent \$1.7 million on ads supporting Walsh; he lost the race.

Two watchdog groups last week asked the Federal Election Commission and the Justice Department to investigate the donations from the two Tennessee companies. The groups, Democracy 21 and the Campaign Legal Center, say the arrangement could violate federal laws that prohibit attempting to hide the true source of a political contribution by giving it under another name. (Brandon declined to comment on the complaints, but he said the group's books were in order.)

PARTNERSHIP UNRAVELS

For years, FreedomWorks was headed by an unlikely duo: Armeý, 72, the old-guard politician who wears a black cowboy hat even when he's not on his Texas ranch, and Kibbe, 49, who sports mutton-chop sideburns and has a passion for the Grateful Dead.

But the most important relationship appears to be the bond between Kibbe and Stephenson, who bridged their age gap through shared libertarian views and Kibbe's battle with testicular cancer a decade ago, Armeý and others said. They said Kibbe, after being given a terminal diagnosis, was encouraged by Stephenson to get treatment at his cancer clinics; more than a decade later, they said, he is cancer-free.

Until this year, the partnership between Kibbe and Armeý worked well. Armeý's renown as a former House member drew media attention and crowds of conservative activists—most of them old enough to remember Armeý's role in the Republican revolution in Congress in 1994. And Kibbe's youthful intellectualism drew a new generation of libertarian soldiers into the FreedomWorks fold. In 2010, the two co-wrote a book, "Give Us Liberty: A Tea Party Manifesto," that became a New York Times bestseller and a successful marketing tool for FreedomWorks, which collected the book's proceeds and used it to attract donations.

The partnership came to a crashing end when Armeý marched into FreedomWorks' office Sept. 4 with his wife, Susan, executive assistant Jean Campbell and the unidentified man with the gun at his waist—who promptly escorted Kibbe and Brandon out of the building.

"This was two weeks after there had been a shooting at the Family Research Council," said one junior staff member who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media. "So when a man with a gun who didn't identify himself to me or other people on staff, and a woman I'd never seen before said there was an announcement, my first gut was, 'Is Freedom Works in danger?' It was bizarre."?

By nearly all accounts, including from those loyal to him, Armeý handled his attempted coup badly. Armeý says he was stepping in because of ethical breaches by Kibbe