

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2012

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for rollcall votes 80–91. Had I been able to vote, I would have voted “no” on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule, “no” on H. Res. 566, “yes” on the journal vote, “yes” on the Thompson (CA)/Eshoo (CA) Amendment to H.R. 1837, “yes” on the McNerney (CA) Amendment (#3) to H.R. 1837, “yes” on the McNerney (CA) Amendment (#4) to H.R. 1837, “yes” on the Garamendi (CA) Amendment (#5) to H.R. 1837, “yes” on the Napolitano (CA) Amendment to H.R. 1837, “yes” on the Garamendi (CA) Amendment (#7) to H.R. 1837, “yes” on the Markey (MA)/Thompson (CA)/Matsui (CA) Amendment to H.R. 1837, “yes” on the Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 1837 and “no” on Final Passage of H.R. 1837.

CONGRATULATING AT&T VETERANS ON OPERATION HYDRATION: MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2012

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to recognize before the United States Congress the great men and women of AT&T Veterans.

This AT&T Employee Resource Group was founded in 2007 under the motto, “Serving Those Who’ve Served Our Country.” With over 300 members in Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) and 3,300 nationwide, this group of true American patriots is doing great things for our nation’s military veterans and active duty troops.

Recently, the DFW chapter joined forces with the local USO to raise \$8,000 and provide over 1,200 cases of water for troops moving through DFW International Airport. Most of these servicemen and women were only home for two weeks of R&R before heading back overseas.

AT&T Veterans not only provided the water bottles, but volunteered to greet incoming flights and provide a hero’s sendoff for departing troops. They called this project Operation Hydration, and it’s been a real success.

To the AT&T Veterans, congratulations on a mission accomplished!

Thank you for your service—past and present—and may God continue to bless the United States of America through great folks like you.

ST. CROIX RIVER CROSSING PROJECT AUTHORIZATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today the U.S. House of Representatives passed the St. Croix River Crossing Project Authorization Act (S. 1134) by a vote of 339 to 80. Originally spearheaded by Congresswoman BACHMANN (MN–06), S. 1134 authorizes construction of a \$700 million mega-bridge over the protected St. Croix River between Minnesota and Wisconsin, benefiting only 18,000 cars per day.

Every policy debate has two sides and I worked hard to reflect the voices of Minnesotans in the Fourth District, as well as those Stillwater and Oak Park Heights residents who are deeply concerned about this mega-bridge project.

Congress’ passage of this \$700 million bridge bill doesn’t diminish its excessive cost, size, negative effect on Highway 36 traffic congestion, or its adverse impact on the St. Croix River.

Supporters of this legislation, including Senators KLOBUCHAR and FRANKEN, and Governor Dayton, assume responsibility for protecting communities along Highway 36 from crippling traffic congestion and the families and businesses of Oak Park Heights from property tax increases—the direct consequences of the project they so strongly championed.

I want to thank my friend and Minnesota colleague, Representative KEITH ELLISON (MN–05) for his eloquence on the floor of the House in opposition to S. 1134. I share Congressman ELLISON’s concern that replacing one bridge at a cost of \$700 million to the exclusion of more than 1,100 other structurally deficient bridges in Minnesota places too many communities and motorists at risk. I am committed to working with Representative ELLISON, Governor Dayton and all Minnesota members of Congress and state legislators to repair or replace these substandard bridges.

RECOGNIZING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE

HON. ANN MARIE BUERKLE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2012

Ms. BUERKLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 125th Anniversary of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse.

Presided over by Bishop Robert J. Cunningham, the Diocese has been a beacon of hope and sanctuary for all those seeking assistance in the Greater Syracuse area.

The diocese has 133 parishes, 9 missions, and 3 devotional chapels. In addition, the diocese has three Catholic hospitals that assist 650,000. There are people and seven special centers for social services assisting over 100,000 people. The Catholic Diocese oversees 42 residential facilities that care for the disabled, 24 Catholic schools, and 264 offices. Overall, the diocese employs approximately 3,000 people.

Today, churches, schools, and community organizations of the Diocese serve much more than the Catholic population. The outreach programs established by parishes across seven counties in Central New York reach out to people of all beliefs and walks of life.

In 125 years, the dedicated volunteers and clergymen of the Diocese of Syracuse have not stopped spreading the universal messages of peace and goodwill. I commend the members of the Diocese for holding to their founding principles of Faith, Hope, and Charity for all. I congratulate the Diocese of Syracuse on their 125th Anniversary and I thank them all for their good works.

IN APPRECIATION OF MR. RICK LOTTIE FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ON THE THIRD DISTRICT OF TEXAS, ACADEMY SELECTION BOARD

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2012

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to publicly recognize and thank Mr. Rick Lottie for his years of distinguished service on the Third District of Texas’ Academy Selection Board.

A 1969 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, Mr. Lottie served his country with distinction as a Marine Corps infantry officer from 1969 to 1974, including a deployment to Vietnam from 1970 to 1971.

He then spent his civilian career working for first-rate IT services companies such as Electronic Data Systems, Perot Systems, and MCI Systemhouse.

Mr. Lottie, always a community servant, has served on the board of directors for the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation and Admiral Nimitz Foundation and is currently an advisor to the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund.

As a member of the Third District’s Academy Selection Board, Mr. Lottie has sacrificed his time and offered his guidance to help me send some of North Texas’ best and brightest young people to United States Service Academies.

It is a privilege to know this true American patriot.

To Rick, thank you for your service, and God bless you.

• This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2012

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Friday, March 2, 2012, marks Texas Independence Day. 176 years ago, the Texas Declaration of Independence was ratified by the Convention of 1836 at Washington-on-the-Brazos.

This is an important day for Texas and patriotic Texans observe this occasion with great pride.

In 1824, a military dictatorship took over in Mexico abolishing the Mexican constitution. The dictatorship refused to provide trial by jury, freedom of religion, public education for their citizens, and allowed the confiscation of firearms, this last one being the most intolerable, particularly among Texans.

The Texas Declaration of Independence states that Texas' government had been "forcibly changed, without their consent, from a restricted federative republic, composed of sovereign states, to a consolidated central military despotism."

It stated that because of the injustice of Santa Anna's tyrannical government, Texans were severing their connection with the Mexican nation and declaring themselves "a free, sovereign, and independent republic . . . fully invested with all the rights and attributes" that belong to independent nations; and a declaration that they "fearlessly and confidently" committed their decision to "the Supreme Arbiter of the destinies of nations."

The Texas Declaration of Independence was fully justified because this military dictatorship had ceased to protect the lives, liberty, and property of the people of Texas.

Failure to provide these basic rights violated the sacred contract between a government and the people, and Texans did what we still do today—stand up for our rights by declaring our independence to the world.

In response, the Mexican army marched to Texas waging war on the land and the people, enforcing the decrees of a military dictatorship through brute force and without any democratic legitimacy.

As future President Sam Houston and other delegates signed the Texas Declaration of Independence, General Santa Anna's army besieged independence forces at the Alamo in San Antonio.

Four days after the signing, the Alamo fell with her commander Lt. Colonel William Barrett Travis, Former Tennessee Congressman David Crockett, and approximately 200 other Texan defenders.

All these men were killed in action, a heroic sacrifice for Texan freedom. If this tragedy were not enough, weeks later Santa Anna's army massacred over 300 unarmed Texans at Goliad on March 27.

In a dramatic turnaround, Texans achieved their independence several weeks later on April 21, 1836. Roughly 900 members of the Texan army overpowered a much larger Mexican army in a surprise attack at the Battle of San Jacinto. I am proud to represent the San Jacinto Battlefield and State Park.

That battle is memorialized along the San Jacinto River with the San Jacinto Monument. The monument is larger than the Washington Monument here in DC.

Today we give thanks to the many Texans that sacrificed for the freedom we now enjoy. God bless Texas and God bless America.

CELEBRATING HARRY BELAFONTE'S 85TH BIRTHDAY

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House to join me in extending warm wishes to Mr. Harry Belafonte, a great American who celebrates his 85th birthday today.

Harry Belafonte is not only the consummate entertainer, but he is a tireless civil rights advocate. He has used the fame and wealth that he earned early on in his career as a musician and actor to support and advance the cause of civil and human rights.

Harry Belafonte was born Harold George Belafonte, Jr., at Lying-in Hospital, New York City, New York. He was the son of Melvine, a housekeeper, and Harold George Belafonte, Sr., a Jamaican who worked as chef in the Royal Navy. From 1932 to 1940, he lived with his grandmother in the village of Aboukir in her native country of Jamaica. When he returned to New York City he attended George Washington High School after which he joined the Navy and served during World War II.

At the end of the 1940s, he took classes in acting at the Dramatic Workshop of The New School in New York with the influential German director Erwin Piscator alongside Marlon Brando, Tony Curtis, Walter Matthau, Bea Arthur, and Sidney Poitier, while performing with the American Negro Theatre.

Belafonte started his career in music as a club singer in New York, a job he took to help pay for his acting classes. The first time he appeared in front of an audience he was backed by the Charlie Parker band, which included the great Charlie Parker himself, Max Roach, and Miles Davis among others. At first he was a pop singer, launching his recording career on the Roost label in 1949, but later he developed a keen interest in folk music, learning material through the Library of Congress' American folk songs archives. With guitarist and friend Millard Thomas, Belafonte soon made his debut at the legendary jazz club The Village Vanguard. In 1952 he received a contract with RCA Victor.

His first wide-release single, which went on to become his "signature" song with audience participation in virtually all his live performances, was "Matilda," recorded April 27, 1953. His breakthrough album *Calypso* (1956) became the first LP to sell over 1 million copies. The album introduced American audiences to Calypso music and Belafonte was dubbed the "King of Calypso." Belafonte was also the first African American man to win an Emmy, with his first solo TV special *Tonight with Belafonte* (1959).

More than a musician and entertainer, Belafonte was a civil rights activist and tireless leader. Belafonte's political beliefs are greatly inspired by the man that he still views to this day as his mentor: singer and activist Paul Robeson. He strongly opposed racial prejudice, segregation, and discrimination in the United States. Like Robeson and other black

entertainers, Belafonte's success in the arts did not protect him from racial discrimination, particularly in the American South. As a result, Belafonte refused to perform in the South from 1954 until 1961.

Also in the 1950s, Belafonte met a young Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on the latter's historic visit to New York. From that eventful first meeting until the day Dr. King was assassinated, Belafonte and Dr. King maintained a deep and abiding friendship.

Dr. King, Jr., said of Belafonte, "[his] global popularity and his commitment to our cause is a key ingredient to the global struggle for freedom and a powerful tactical weapon in the Civil Rights movement here in America. We are blessed by his courage and moral integrity."

Mr. Belafonte could always be counted on to be there when the need was greatest. He was there to provide the money to secure Dr. King's release from Birmingham City Jail. He raised thousands of dollars to post the bail needed to release other jailed civil rights protesters. He financed the Freedom Rides, supported voter registration drives, and helped to organize the March on Washington in 1963.

During "Freedom Summer" in 1964, Belafonte financed the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, SNCC, flying to Mississippi that August with \$60,000 in cash and entertaining crowds in Greenwood with his "Banana Boat Song." In 1968, Belafonte appeared on a Petula Clark primetime television special on NBC. In the middle of a song, Clark smiled and briefly touched Belafonte's arm, which made the show's sponsor, Plymouth Motors, nervous. Plymouth wanted to cut out the segment, but Clark, who had ownership of the special, told NBC that the performance would be shown intact or she would not allow the special to be aired at all. American newspapers published articles reporting the controversy and, when the special aired, it earned high ratings.

Belafonte has continued his involvement in the civil rights struggle to this very day. Recently, Belafonte spoke at the 50th SNCC Anniversary Conference.

Belafonte did not limit his fight for justice to the United States. He has spent his life and career advocating for human rights around the entire world. For example, disturbed by cruel events unfolding in Africa as a result of war, famine and drought, Belafonte set in motion the wheels that led to "We Are the World," the iconic song and music video organized by Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie, that raised millions in support of famine relief efforts in Africa. In 1987, Belafonte accepted the appointment as UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador—the second American to hold this position—the first was Danny Kaye.

Belafonte has continued to devote himself globally to civil and human rights issues, focusing in particular on the United States and Africa. "My social and political interests are part of my career. I can't separate them," said Belafonte. "My songs reflect the human condition. The role of art isn't just to show life as it is, but to show life as it should be."

Belafonte's international civil rights accomplishments also include his contribution to ending the oppressive apartheid in South Africa and securing the release of his friend, Nelson Mandela, imprisoned for twenty seven and a half years.

Belafonte was appointed by President John F. Kennedy Cultural Advisor for the Peace