

HONORING ROBBIE DAVIS GUNN

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 23, 2012

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I present the following U.S. Citizen of Distinction.

Whereas, our lives have been touched by the life of this one woman who has given of herself to her family, church, community, and Nation; and

Whereas, Mrs. Robbie Davis Gunn's good works are present in Nashville, Tennessee as an exemplary mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, aunt, neighbor, community worker and friend; and

Whereas, this giant of a woman, who was raised up in the Providence Community, was born on August 20, 1928, to Rev. Robert Mitchell Davis and Mrs. Ada Edmondson Davis; and

Whereas, Robbie Davis Gunn was a virtuous woman, a woman of great integrity who remained true to the uplifting of her community and family which in turn uplifted others; and

Whereas, she was an exemplary mother and mother-in-law, serving as compass and wise counselor and bringing great joy to her own children and their spouses and friends; and

Whereas, Mrs. Robbie Davis Gunn loved her family, encouraging all of those around her to make a difference, be it her children, her elected officials, her neighbors and her church members at Lake Providence Missionary Baptist Church where she was a faithful member for 72 years; and

Whereas, this remarkable woman gave of herself, never asking for fame or fortune as she became a quiet storm, a spark that starts a flame; and

Whereas, the U.S. Representative of the Fourth District of Georgia has set aside this day to bestow a Congressional Recognition on Mrs. Robbie Davis Gunn for her leadership, friendship and service to all of the citizens of Nashville and the Nation;

Now therefore, I, HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, Jr., do hereby attest to the 112th Congress that Mrs. Robbie Davis Gunn of Nashville, Tennessee is deemed worthy and deserving of this "Congressional Recognition"—Mrs. Robbie Davis Gunn, U.S. Citizen of Distinction.

Proclaimed, this 25th day of March, 2012.

IN RECOGNITION OF JONI D. LEE

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 23, 2012

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Sergeant Joni D. Lee for her 31 years of service with the South San Francisco Police Department. Long before community policing was a popular concept, Sergeant Lee personified a law enforcement officer fully integrated into the community. She has worked closely with local businesses, educated our youth and supported our senior citizens.

Sergeant Lee was hired as the first female officer by the San Francisco Police Depart-

ment in June 1980. In November 2000 she was promoted to sergeant, another first for a woman at the department. She was instrumental in developing county wide programs and protocols for the investigation of sexual assaults, exploitation of children on the internet and curbing school truancy.

During her three decades in law enforcement, Sergeant Lee has demonstrated her professionalism, outstanding skills in negotiations and handling of dangerous situations while keeping her humanity and an open mind.

She solved her very first murder case in 1988 within 48 hours, a benchmark in law enforcement. A man who lived with his divorced wife had taken in a transient man and his young girlfriend. Tragically, the transient shot the man. After the murder, Sergeant Lee befriended the girlfriend of the transient and feels that she made a difference in the young woman's life.

Sergeant Lee has worked on the Hostage Negotiation Team since 2000. In a high-profile hostage-suicide incident at the Travelodge in 2003, she was one of two primary negotiators and deserves credit for saving the life of the suspect's girlfriend. The suspect had barricaded himself and his girlfriend in a room at the motel after allegedly killing a prominent kick boxer. After about 14 hours of negotiations over the phone, Sergeant Lee convinced the girlfriend to leave the motel room.

Mr. Speaker, I have been at events with Sergeant Lee and have witnessed the air of safety and calm she radiates.

Sergeant Lee also worked as a Peer Support Advisor and Police Explorer Advisor. She was honored as the South San Francisco Police Association Officer of the Year in 1996 and 2003 and was awarded the Avoid the 23 Pin in 2002 and 2003.

Enthusiasm, optimism and generosity are in Sergeant Lee's DNA. Outside her work with the police department, she volunteers her time and expertise to Special Olympics and the Boy Scouts of America. She has also coached varsity softball at Menlo Atherton High School.

She was born in San Francisco in 1956 and attended South San Francisco High School. She earned her Associate in Arts, Administration of Justice from the College of San Mateo and her Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Administration from San Jose State University.

In her spare time—of which she now will have much more upon her well deserved retirement—Sergeant Lee enjoys reading, softball, racquetball, bicycling, traveling, outlet shopping and cooking.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this body to rise with me to honor Sergeant Joni Lee for her dedication to public service and safety. She will be deeply missed by her fellow officers and the law abiding residents of South San Francisco.

SMALL BUSINESS TAX CUT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2012

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak out against the fallacy that is H.R. 9.

I am always happy to support policy initiatives to stimulate economic growth and job creation and believe a private-public partnership during this time of economic recovery is essential.

Unfortunately, H.R. 9, the so-called Small Business Tax Cut Act, is a broad measure affecting 99.6 percent of all businesses that is not targeted at job creation.

The benefits it provides will be meted out unevenly and in an arbitrary manner, accruing in large measure to the wealthiest taxpayers.

While these facts alone argue for its rejection, this temporary and expensive provision is also the very antithesis of tax reform. It couldn't be further from the truth.

Yet again the Republican tax plan in the form of H.R. 9 would along with the Ryan Republican Budget Plan, serve to dismantle Medicare and instead hand older and disabled people a voucher toward the cost of private insurance. It's not a new or creative idea, and it will actually add more costs to families and to our Nation's bottom line. You cannot have a tax giveaway to a select few businesses while Medicare continues to suffer, ultimately hurting our most vulnerable.

While claiming to "preserve" Medicare, the plan would actually imperil the community program and shift much of the costs to the very people it is supposed to help. As private plans aggressively court the healthiest and least costly beneficiaries, the traditional Medicare program would be left with an ever dwindling pool of beneficiaries—those who are too sick and poor to purchase private insurance with the help of Mr. RYAN's coupon.

In time, Medicare will "wither on the vine," as those who oppose the program have long intended. Like last year's proposal from Mr. RYAN and last week's proposal from Senate Republicans, this plan does nothing to really preserve Medicare or to solve our Nation's skyrocketing healthcare costs.

It only slams those costs onto individuals who can least afford them: older and disabled Americans, while jeopardizing their health coverage, adding profits to corporations, and letting millionaires off the hook.

Similarly, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program is our most important anti-hunger program, with over 46 million Americans in more than 21 million households relying on it to help feed themselves and their families. Yet, by advancing H.R. 9 this Majority takes away money that could be used to shore up this program which serves the truly destitute.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SNAP, is the cornerstone of the Nation's nutrition assistance safety net. SNAP touches the lives of over one in seven Americans. Indeed you could say that SNAP saves lives. Everyone's life is not as simple as some on the other side would have us believe—every person who is homeless cannot be fixed with magic dust and self-help policy prescriptions. Life is complicated and fraught with danger and uncertainty.

Lucky are many of us who go home to warm shelter, food, and family. There, but for the grace of God go I.

SNAP benefits are available to most people who meet the financial requirements, and the program serves a broad spectrum of low-income people. In Fiscal Year 2010, SNAP provided about \$5.4 billion in food benefits to a monthly average of over 3.6 million people in Texas.

Another pressing issue is the encroaching and massive debt from student loans. In January President Obama stated:

When kids do graduate, the most daunting challenge can be the cost of college. At a time when Americans owe more in tuition debt than credit card debt, this Congress needs to stop the interest rates on student loans from doubling in July.

Student debt loan and the looming prospect of a massive interest rate increase is like a stealth tax darkening the horizon of borrowers nationwide. Indeed it is a ticking time bomb for students and families: If Congress doesn't act in 74 days, subsidized Stafford student loans rates will double from 3.4 percent to 6.8 percent.

In 2007, Congress made an historic investment in higher education when we passed the College Cost Reduction and Access Act. Included in this legislation was a provision that reduced the fixed rate on Stafford student loans for undergraduate students. The College Cost Reduction and Access Act lowered subsidized Stafford student loan rates from 6.8 percent to 3.4 percent over a four-year period easing the burden on thousands of students and their families.

However, despite the ever-increasing cost of a higher education and the challenging job market graduates face, without Congressional action these rates will double later this year and cost students and families thousands of dollars over time.

In their zeal to avoid picking "winners and losers," the majority has embraced a massive \$46 billion tax cut that is being offered in the name of small business but will go to 99.6 percent of all businesses, whatever the value of their assets or the amount of their income and irrespective of the nature or function of their business.

The tax break is available to partnerships of highly paid professionals, including lawyers and lobbyists. It is available to hedge fund and private equity fund managers. By restricting the definition of small business to an employee count and ignoring other relevant factors, such as revenues, H.R. 9 guarantees that the benefit will be available to a host of businesses that are anything but small. For example, many professional sports teams would get the tax break.

H.R. 9 is not targeted at job creation. Any number of measures could have been included in H.R. 9 to limit the availability of the tax benefit to businesses that hire or invest in the United States.

None of these measures was included. There is no requirement that a business receiving the deduction created by H.R. 9 expand employment.

In fact, a business that reduces employment remains eligible for the deduction. Even worse, businesses that reduce their American workforce while expanding overseas still get the tax break. In contrast to measures such as bonus depreciation or expensing, there is no requirement that a business receiving the tax break invest in the United States. And in contrast to measures such as infrastructure spending, this one-time tax cut for the very wealthiest would have a relatively small effect on cumulative economic output.

The benefit provided by H.R. 9 is arbitrary. In the case of small business owners, the same amount of small business income will not always produce the same benefit. Be-

cause the benefit is a deduction and not a credit, the value of the benefit increases with income.

In addition, because the size of the benefit can be limited by a taxpayer's taxable income, losses that reduce or eliminate such income, including losses carried forward from prior years, can eliminate the benefit.

Preliminary analyses indicate that H.R. 9 is a \$46 billion tax cut disproportionately benefiting the very wealthiest Americans.

Although a distributional analysis by the Joint Committee on Taxation is not yet available, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities indicated that, based on an analysis provided by the Tax Policy Center, approximately "49 percent of the tax cut provided by H.R. 9 would go to the 0.3 percent of people with incomes exceeding \$1 million in 2012; they each would receive an average tax cut of more than \$44,000."

Middle- and low-income families are struggling to recover from the deepest recession in decades; they have lost jobs, homes and retirement security. The Republican Majority for months resisted extending the payroll tax cut benefiting these families. But now, the Majority is rushing to put forward another tax break for the very wealthiest Americans.

Given that this Committee has spent the last year and three months talking about tax reform, perhaps the most striking thing about H.R. 9 is that it is the antithesis of tax reform. The House Republican budget assumes that this Committee will produce a tax reform package with two rate brackets, but it offers no clear indication of how to finance rate reductions that would cost trillions of dollars.

The only hint we have gotten is the vague promise of the House Budget Committee chairman to eliminate what he calls "tax loopholes." But to raise sufficient funds for his tax reform plans, his definition of "tax loophole" would have to include provisions related to health, education, home mortgage interest, and pensions.

These are not "loopholes." Rather, in many cases, they are provisions designed to achieve clear economic and social policy goals. Ironically, H.R. 9 would be a new tax expenditure and a temporary one at that. And it would have far less merit than policies, such as the mortgage interest deduction and the exclusion for employer provided healthcare, that now appear to be in the majority's crosshairs.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot in good conscience support a measure that takes away from Medicare, the SNAP Program, and dollars that could be used to mitigate the devastating effect of sharply escalating interest rates on Stafford student loan.

Let's reject this bill and move on to real job creation, tax reform and deficit reduction and not the sham version before us this morning.

HONORING FRANCIS LEE CONTRACTING AS THE 2012 DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 23, 2012

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me

in honoring Francis Lee Contracting as the 2012 District of Columbia Small Business of the Year, as well as its principals, Brian Smith, Geary Powell, and Terry Smith.

Francis Lee Contracting is a District of Columbia small business specializing in excavation, grading, site concrete, clearing, grubbing, and demolition. After doing work in the initial stages of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, DHS, headquarters construction project at the St. Elizabeths West Campus, Francis Lee Contracting was selected as a subcontractor to perform earthwork for the perimeter security fence there, because of the high quality of its work. Francis Lee Contracting is located in Ward 8, where the DHS headquarters construction is taking place and which is the section of our city with the highest unemployment rate. Francis Lee Contracting has worked to improve the local community and has hired Ward 8 residents.

Francis Lee Contracting has over 50 years of experience in the construction field, on both public- and private-sector projects, and has several certifications, including Certified Business Enterprise and certifications to work with the District Department of Transportation, the Maryland Department of Transportation, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. Francis Lee Contracting continues to share its experience and knowledge with other small businesses by sponsoring and participating in training sessions about bonding and other aspects of the construction industry.

The House of Representatives is gratified when a local small business competes and is selected to perform work on a federal construction project because of its quality of work, as exemplified by Francis Lee Contracting.

I ask the House to join me in honoring Francis Lee Contracting and its principal, Brian Smith, for its outstanding accomplishments and commitment to the residents of the District of Columbia, and in commending Francis Lee Contracting on becoming the 2012 District of Columbia Small Business of the Year.

IN RECOGNITION OF LUBIANA
BAGNESCHI CERNOBORI

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 23, 2012

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Lubiana Bagneschi Cernobori, one of the most generous, altruistic and loving women I have ever met. Lubiana is being honored by the Peninsula Italian American Social Club in San Mateo, California for her outstanding charitable and civic activities in San Mateo County.

Lubiana was born in Lucca, Italy as the youngest daughter of the late Gina and Nello Bagneschi. She came to the United States with her family in 1952, attended local schools and learned English. In 1962 she graduated from Burlingame High School.

Perseverance, hard work and creativity have been the constant theme of Lubiana's life. She worked as a secretary and word processor for many years while raising a family. She and her husband Renato Cernobori have three daughters and four grandchildren.

Since her retirement, Lubiana has dedicated her time and energy to two Italian-American