

RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF PRAMILA JAYAPAL

**HON. ADAM SMITH**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 1, 2012*

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the accomplishments of Pramila Jayapal, founder of the Hate Free Zone, now called OneAmerica. For more than a decade she has worked tirelessly to ensure that people from immigrant communities have a voice in America. Her efforts have made Washington State and our Nation a better place for all people who call it home.

In the days immediately following the attacks of September 11, 2001, Pramila began the Hate Free Zone Campaign of Washington as an entirely volunteer-run organization to combat discrimination against immigrants, especially from communities of color—primarily Muslim, Arab American, East African and South Asian—and to work against stereotypes in a post 9/11 world. At first, the mission was to advocate for the rights of those who were likely to be victims of hate crimes.

Soon after, Pramila began to shift the focus of the Hate Free Zone towards identifying and addressing violations of the rights and civil liberties of immigrants. Through these efforts, she began working with community leaders and elected officials to address these concerns on local, State, and Federal levels.

In 2008, the Hate Free Zone became OneAmerica: With Justice for All, reflecting the mission of advocating for the fundamental principles of democracy and justice by giving voices to all immigrant communities. Today, OneAmerica works with allies and community leaders to educate, engage and advocate, and has become an active and trusted immigrant advocacy organization in Washington State.

Pramila's dedication to the protection of civil rights and civil liberties is important to every single group of Americans, immigrants and non-immigrants alike. The promotion of civic education, voting rights and civil liberties benefits everyone who calls the United States home.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I honor Pramila Jayapal and all of her work at OneAmerica. Though she is moving on from OneAmerica, I have no doubt she will continue to advocate for those in need. Her dedication to improving the lives of all persons living in Washington State has been an inspiration to us all, and I look forward to her next endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE 2012 GREEN COMMUNITY AWARD WINNERS

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 1, 2012*

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the winners of the 2012 Green Community Awards.

Every year the Green Guiding Committee of Prince William County awards people or orga-

nizations for their work towards bettering the community and sustaining the environment. Each of this year's winners has tackled an issue in their immediate area that presents a larger environmental problem. The Green Awards are the highest honor given for environmental service in Prince William County, and this year's winners exemplify the qualities and work ethic that are required to keep our community green.

I extend my personal congratulations to:

Stonewall Jackson High School Ecology Club—for raising awareness about environmental issues, inspiring fellow students to get involved, hosting events for younger students and taking the lead on conservation projects in the field.

Prince William Trails and Streams Coalition—for their ongoing efforts, projects and programs to create, restore, clean and preserve trails and access to natural areas for the entire community.

Friends of the Occoquan—for their ongoing fall and spring projects to clean up the Occoquan River in Prince William County for the past 13 years.

Vulcan Materials—Manassas Quarry—for their corporate practices to conserve resources and reduce waste, plus their efforts to support schools and organization in their efforts to protect the environment.

The Taylor Family of Windy Knoll Farm—for their generous offer to allow local conservation groups to host programs and demonstrations on the farm, as well as their use of sound and environmentally wise management practices.

Eric VanNortwick—for his ongoing efforts to clean up, maintain and enhance trails along Neabsco Creek in Prince William County.

Ed Dandar—for his dedication in coordinating and overseeing logistics for the 26 mile clean up along the Occoquan River.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the winners of the 2012 Green Community Awards and in thanking them for their dedication to our community.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2013

SPEECH OF

**HON. GENE GREEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 31, 2012*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5325) making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and for other purposes:

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chair, I am concerned about the Energy and Water Appropriations bill for several reasons. One of these reasons is that while this bill increases funding for the Army Corps of Engineers over the President's request, it is not enough. The Army Corps completes critical flood control projects and also, through dredging at our port, fuels a major economic engine in Harris County, Texas and has been underfunded for years.

Additionally, by cutting New Starts completely, this bill prevents funding for a vital project in Houston that will explore widening and deepening the shipping channel to the Turning Basin. This funding is critical to preparing our Port for the years ahead.

The Port of Houston is the largest foreign tonnage port and the largest petrochemical port in the country. In fact, it moves the second largest amount of cargo in the country, as 8.5 percent of our nation's cargo moves through the Port of Houston. The commerce that occurs at our port is critical to our Nation's energy and chemical sectors and to our country's ability to trade and move goods throughout our country. It is a port of national significance, but has not received the attention that is necessary to answer the challenges we face in the near future. Despite the national importance of our port, it is facing a dredging crisis.

In 1998, the Federal Government and the Port of Houston invested \$700 million over the course of years, to deepen and widen the Ship Channel. An investment we have benefitted from tremendously.

As the years have passed silt has settled and reduced the draft in the channel significantly. Today, only .4 percent of the channel is dredged to its proper depth across the entire width of the channel. That is astounding. Our Nation's investment is rapidly deteriorating.

Currently, the Houston Ship Channel is dredged to a depth of 43 feet, but it should be 45 feet. The Panama Canal is expanding and when it is completed, the Port of Houston should be at a minimum of 45 feet and we could take advantage of additional depth.

In the most recent President's budget request, the Administration asked for \$700,000 in new dredging money and new start funding of \$100,000 toward study on the widening and deepening of the Houston Ship Channel to the Turning Basin. The new start funding is particularly important, once a project gets new start money it is more likely to be funded in the future. Unfortunately, in the bill we are considering today, the funding for the new start will be eliminated.

This increased funding level for dredging just over \$24 million, which is maintained in the Energy and Water Appropriations bill, is welcome and I am pleased that Congress and the Administration are committing more resources to our maintenance dredging needs, particularly in a budget environment when most programs are cut. However, it's about a third of the total needed to bring our channel back to its authorized depth. The reduced draft costs our region money.

As we confront the dual challenges of adopting policies that create jobs and reduce the debt, funding for dredging projects is an item that, while costly, will have more of a positive impact on our economy than a negative impact on our deficit. The Texas Transportation Institute performed a study and determined that a direct economic impact of the loss of 1 foot of draft is \$373 million. The majority of this impact is lost business opportunities due to light loading of non-containerized vessels. If the dredging crisis at the port continues to worsen, this cost will quickly increase.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANT  
ROLE THAT LOCAL BROADCASTERS  
PLAY IN ALERTING  
THE PUBLIC DURING WEATHER  
EMERGENCIES

**HON. ANDRÉ CARSON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 1, 2012*

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, in recent years, unpredictable and sometimes violent weather has struck our Nation. The months of May and June are the most likely times for tornadoes to strike the great Hoosier state. Getting to safety before a tornado strikes can be the difference between life and death. Success in that effort depends on access to timely information. For this reason, I want to thank local broadcasters in the 7th District of Indiana for providing critical information during weather emergencies.

Last year, a violent storm caused the sudden collapse of the concert stage at the Indiana State Fair. This tragic incident killed seven and severely injured dozens more. It could have been much worse. Timely alerts from local broadcasters enabled Fair officials to clear the Midway minutes before the storm struck, potentially saving the lives of hundreds.

Radio and television stations are our Nation's most reliable network for distributing emergency information. When electrical lines are knocked down and Internet and mobile networks become inoperable, broadcasters are the last line of defense—transmitting public safety information over the airwaves.

Local television and radio stations play a critical role in ensuring public safety. Now is the time to expand their ability to provide emergency notifications. Increasingly, the American people have access to mobile phones. By equipping these devices to receive FM radio signals, millions of Americans could depend on their mobile phones to provide critical information in advance of a weather emergency.

As a former official with the Department of Homeland Security, I know first-hand how cell phone networks can become overloaded and inoperable during an emergency. By adopting this technology, broadcasters can provide timely information to mobile phones—enabling the American people to take shelter in advance of a weather emergency. I call upon my colleagues in Congress, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Federal Communications Commission and the mobile phone industry to work together to expand the reach of local broadcasters in providing critical information during a weather emergency.

I want to once again thank local broadcasters in my district for their essential role in promoting public safety.

RECOGNIZING HABITAT FOR HUMANITY  
OF PRINCE WILLIAM  
COUNTY VOLUNTEERS

**HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 1, 2012*

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Habitat for Humanity of Prince William County Volunteers.

Habitat for Humanity seeks to eliminate poverty housing and to make decent shelter a matter of conscience and action. Habitat invites people from all walks of life and faiths to work together in partnership to build and repair houses with families in need through our Neighborhood Revitalization Initiatives: New Construction, Home Rehabs, Home Repairs and the Habitat Restore. Home repairs consist of A Brush with Kindness, Weatherization, Critical Home Repairs and Critical Home Repairs for Veterans. None of their work is possible without the funding and time that their donors and volunteers give so generously. 490 volunteers donated more than 6,867 hours in 2011 and eleven of those volunteers individually donated more than 100 hours each.

It is my honor to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the names of volunteers of Habitat for Humanity of Prince William County:

Susan Jacobs, Karen Wilkinson, Rob Major, Chris Daffan, Theresa Accoo, Christine Rowe, Kisha Sogunro-Wilson, Anita Duecater, Renee Wolfolk, John McBride, Brian Swanson, Marci Swanson, Dob McCubbin, Frank Jacquette, Sandi Stark, Mike Stark, George Braun, Matthew Watkins, Bob Gainer, Al Harris, Lynn Ashe, Razan Azzarkani, Betty Reichert, Lynn Eklund, Kristine Reyes, Justin Marohnic, Darren Fischer, Casey Brewster, Gary Wright, Elizabeth Hayde, Ashley Tyler, Cheryl Novogradac, Joseph Bolos, Scott DeGroat, Kim Morris, Teresa Blacksmith, Jennifer Miller, Rich Feickert, Chris Reilly, Timothy Grembowski, Andi Pollard, Kenneth Morilak, Jeffrey Beathard, Quinton Morris, Kudzaish Mlambo, Pam Hart, Barbara Atwell, David Wurst, Mayumi Ferrin, Matthew Whalen, Rita Ayanga, Michael Renfro, Nathanael White, Kurt Wall, Sheryl Madison, Rodney Owens, Richard Revaz, Denise A. Womack, Phyllis Hall, Polynice Paul, John Grennek, Carmen T. Courchene, Sharon Dangerfield, Isalee Jackson, Cortni Robinson, Lauren Hughes, Christina Frank, Marletha Dyer, Paul Whalen, Dara Dentham, Patrick Stolte, Maikao Yang, James Zhang, Ying Zhang, Connie Moser, Mark Luiggi, Jim Floyd, Al Ferguson.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the volunteers of Habitat for Humanity of Prince William County for their service and in thanking them for their dedication to our community.

THE OCCASION OF PHILLIP  
THOMPSON'S RETIREMENT AS  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF  
SEIU LOCAL 517M

**HON. GARY C. PETERS**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 1, 2012*

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend, Phil Thompson, the Executive Vice President of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 517M on the occasion of his retirement. For over 30 years, Phil has been an important leader in the SEIU, working to ensure that the rights of workers are respected.

True to the form of a leader and advocate, Phil is passionate about fighting for the rights of those he represents, whether it was his constituents when he was Shiawassee County

Commissioner or the Michigan public employees he works for every day in his current role. It is no surprise, given his spirit for serving and protecting others, that prior to his time with Local 517M, Phil had been planning to go to law school. Instead, as often happens to those with the drive to serve, Phil fulfilled his passion as a voice protecting the rights of others. Having arrived at Local 517M in April 1981 as a staff representative, Phil quickly ascended to become the branch's Executive Director in 1986.

What was originally supposed to be only a part-time job quickly became Phil's central work. As a leader for the SEIU in Michigan, Phil took it upon himself to represent the members of Local 517M at every collective bargaining session since he became Director in 1986. Phil strongly believes that communication between the unions and their members and unions and their communities is essential to ensuring that all workers have their rights protected. Phil has strived to keep his members connected to their local through strengthening member services.

Like so many who are thrust into positions of leadership by their peers, Phil has never forgotten his brothers and sisters who put him there. He strongly believes that it has been an honor to work with so many talented and dedicated union and staff members.

In recognition of his exceptional leadership skills and his effectiveness, Phil's peers have consistently given him increased responsibilities that extend beyond Local 517M. He has been elected to SEIU's International Executive Board three times between 2000 and 2008, where he is finishing up his current term as Vice President. Between 2002 and 2010 he served as President of Michigan's SEIU State Council and currently serves as its Treasurer. Phil is constantly sought to be a voice for professionals in State government, by news agencies and was recently awarded the 2012 Michigan Labor Press Award for his contributions which have supported the growth of the labor movement.

Mr. Speaker, Phil has spent his life working to strengthen the labor movement, which in Michigan and around the world has secured and protected important rights for all workers. His dedication and passion have benefited so many and I know that his colleagues and fellow SEIU members will surely miss him, his insights and his experience. I know that as a voice for fairness, even in retirement, he will continue to fight for the rights of workers and I wish him many happy and productive years to come.

REPRESENTATIVE KIND FLOOR  
AMENDMENT 78 (RULES AMENDMENT 145) TO THE NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT  
(H.R. 4310)

**HON. RON KIND**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 1, 2012*

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the amendment to waive the time limitation for awarding Lt. Alonzo Cushing the Medal of Honor.

A Wisconsin native, Lt. Cushing, on the third day of the Battle of Gettysburg, commanded