

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Teresa A. Rodges has dedicated her life to helping others in need. From organizing post-secondary education programs to creating affordable mammogram screenings for underprivileged women, she is a role model to the community and the epitome of an excellent leader. She has changed and saved the lives of many people through her service. I am pleased to honor Mrs. Rodges as the Lambda Rho Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority recognizes her as its 2012 Woman of the Year.

HONORING PRESIDENT MA OF TAIWAN FOR HIS RE-ELECTION VICTORY

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2012

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and honor President Ma of Taiwan for his re-election victory. I believe that the people of Taiwan and the United States have a reason to celebrate President Ma's second inauguration, which occurred on May 20, 2012.

I hope that during his second term, President Ma and the United States can work together to address the concerns that both our countries share, such as enhancing our mutual security, and exchanging ideas to improve the health care of both of our societies.

These efforts, with the countless successes in the past and the close relationship we have maintained with Taiwan, assure a bright and peaceful future for both of our countries.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM HUELSAMP

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2012

Mr. HUELSAMP. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 302, the Grimm Amendment to H.R. 5854, I inadvertently voted yes when I intended to vote no. I believe every worker should be able to decide for themselves whether or not they would like to join a union. Project Labor Agreements violate workers' rights and inhibit business growth. No one should ever face compulsory membership in any group. Given our current fiscal situation, the last thing Congress should be doing is imposing more burdensome regulations on businesses and workers. I am proud that Kansas is a Right-to-Work state, and I am committed to promoting workers' rights at the federal level.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

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. 5854) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and for other purposes:

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Chair, I was unavoidably detained and unable to be present for the vote on the Grimm Amendment to H.R. 5854, the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. I want to state for the record that I strongly support this amendment, and had I been present, I would have voted yes.

Mr. GRIMM's amendment would strike the anti-project labor agreement language inserted into the bill. This bi-partisan amendment is an important defense against Republican attacks on labor and project labor agreements.

As a Member of Congress, I take the responsibility to protect workers' rights seriously, and I support economic solutions that protect and lift all Americans—not just the privileged few—in order to create a safe and prosperous nation for all. A cornerstone of this economy are Project Labor Agreements, which are pre-hire agreements that establish the terms and conditions of employment to ensure tax payer funded projects use local workers to finish on time and under budget.

It is time to rebuild our economy in a way that is consistent with our values. Until all Americans are back to work, more must be done on behalf America's middle class and working families. Project Labor Agreements are a vital part of this process, and I strongly support all attempts to protect them.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2012

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, on May 30, 2012, I was unavoidably absent for votes in the House chamber. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall Votes 294, 295 and 296.

CONGRESSIONAL SHADOW DAY FOR FOSTER YOUTH

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2012

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support of National Foster Care Month, which is observed in May to increase awareness of the challenges faced by children in the foster care system. Yesterday, I participated in Congressional Shadow Day for Foster Youth and had the pleasure of being shadowed by Dontysha Torry of Washington, DC. Dontysha shares the experience of over 400,000 children in America who are a part of our Nation's child foster care system. I would also like to urge my colleagues to not lose sight of the challenges facing thousands of children who find themselves in the foster care system. These 400,000 children are our children, and the responsibility for their successful development into adulthood remains our responsibility. This is why foster care policies should be

shaped, or reconsidered with the aim of: 1) increasing the amount of eligible parents willing to adopt; 2) minimizing traumatic changes in a child's educational career and developmental process; 3) curbing the risk of homelessness in early adulthood; 4) and addressing the serious realities of sexual abuse.

I would be remiss if I did not also mention the importance of remaining mindful of the impact foster care policy has on underprivileged communities. African-Americans, who make up approximately 60 percent of my constituents in Brooklyn, but approximately 12 percent of the larger U.S. population, make up a staggering 27 percent of children who enter foster care. Unfortunately, African-Americans are more likely to remain in the foster care system longer and in many instances will never be permanently placed.

Finally, we all know that often quoted proverb "it takes a village to raise a child." Similar to villages, which comprise of a number of different community members that serve different purposes, the community established to support foster care children should also be a diverse one. The success of a child is dependent on the influence of a number of persons including: those willing to adopt; those willing to serve as court appointed special advocates; and those willing to serve as tutors and higher education counselors. Let us all encourage our community members to get involved regardless of how minor one may assume their role to be. We can hardly imagine the impact a small deed may have on a child.

As National Foster Care Month comes to an end, I urge all of my colleagues to join the Foster Youth Caucus and support initiatives and legislation that brings to issue what foster youth face in the nation to light.

RECOGNIZING THE PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER 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 the Prince William County Juvenile Detention Center Volunteers.

JDC Volunteers ensure the efficiency of Juvenile Detention Center's after-school program. They treat the youth with respect, dignity and worth, becoming role models for youth who wish to change their lives. The volunteers promote healthy social, educational, emotional, and physical development. The JDC Volunteers are truly an integral part of the center, as well as these children's lives.

It is my honor to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the names of volunteers for the Prince William County Juvenile Detention Center:

Joshua Ahmadi, Jean Andreas, Antonio Ante, Mileydi Ante, Warren Anthony, Alex Arevalo, Jose Argueta, Melis Argueta, Anthonese Barlow, Beverly Barnes, Tina Barnett, Edwardo Barrow, Paul Bauer, Robin Bauer, Matt Behnke, Katherine Best-Brown, Patricia Black, Renee Blakey, Leah Bogden-Collins, Barbara Borthwick, Patrick Bowers, Diana Bowers, Angela Brown, Michael Brown, Renee Brown, Peggy Bruhn, Richard Buckholt, Isabella Buckley, William Burrell,

Brigitte Caboteja, Keisha Cameron, Daniel Card, Alfred Cardwell, Christopher Cavaluzzi, Elizabeth Charity, Louis Chevalier, Marcia Clark, Triane Clowers, Erin Collins, Carolyn Craig-Sprow, Elaine Crocker, Vincent Currie, David Danieli, Jacqueline Daugnon, Randy Davenport, Carolyn Demps, Joel Devallon, Arthur Diggs, Paul Dressler, Henry During, Michael Edwards, Christopher Floyd, Ingrid Floyd-Casco, Emilio Fogerty, Barbara Fortenberry, Stephanie Fox, Doug Freeman, Michael French, Lohrland Gandy, Aria Gee, Keith Givens, Patsy Gordon, CeCe Greco, Tabatha Guion, Linda Hammon, Darrell Harris, Ruth Hellwig, Sherri Hines, Ernest Hines II, Rebecca Hixon, Mary Hoffman, Corey Holman, Gay Howard, Bob James, Vondetta James, Jackie James-Bond, Kimberly Jappell, Breanna Jones, Matthew Jones, Karen King, William Lewis, Dudley Ligon, Vicky Logan, John Louisor, Cora Lynch, Floyd Mangin, Sherman Manley, Leonardo Manning, Bruce Marchal, Ardine Marie, Antonio Mason, David Masters, John McKie, John McMackin, Liz Medina, Robert Melvin, Dan MenMuir, Charles Miller, Jeanne Moore, William Moore, Gregory Morris, Dona Mosley-Williams, Tyler Newton, Dianne Noble, Debbie Page-Maples, Robin Paglianite, Sheila Parocia, Caris Penzien, Christy Phillips, Bernice Piasare, LaTasha Pless, Daniel Ramirez, Paul Ramos, Carlos Recono, Hugo Retana, Rhonda Richardson, Sabeana Roberts, Reina Rodriguez, Suzanne Rucker, Joy Russom, Brandis Sanchez, Cathy Sanders, Charlene Scott, Pastor Angel Serrano, Natasha Severe, Cathy Shaffer, Dennis Smith, Latonya Smith, Odell Smith, Victoria Soberanis, Jeanne Spears, Martin Steinberg, Kevin Stewart, Sherry Stone, Anita Sullivan, Carolyn Taylor, Brenda Todd, Shonietta Travers, Doyoberto Trejo, Aimee Tucker, Ortho Vines, Diane Walden, Andrew Walker, Kenneth Wallace, Patricia Wallace, Amy Ward, Sandra Watjen, Shirley Watson, Delores Weikert, Stephen Weikert, Sandy Weinger, Elizabeth Williams, Stacy Williams, Brianne Wilson, Carol Wilson, Michael Wilson, Robert Wilson, Erica Wright, Reynold Wright, Laurie Raines, Kelly Jimenez, Tracey Wilkins-Clark, Tricia Wyman.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending the Prince William County Juvenile Detention Center Volunteers for their service and in thanking them for their dedication to our community.

IN RECOGNITION OF BRENDAN HAAS

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2012

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of nine-year-old Brendan Haas, a resident of Kingston, Massachusetts, who has displayed the most profound sense of generosity and caring to the family of a fallen soldier.

In February, Brendan set up a Facebook page called "A Soldier for a Soldier," which involves "trading up" items for something bigger and better. His intention was always to donate the best item he received to a military family. Through this project, Brendan began with a single toy soldier and spent three months

dedicated to trading for bigger and better things before he received the item he wanted to donate. Brendan then held a raffle with the names of families across the country and ended up drawing the name Liberty Hope Steele, the daughter of Timothy Steele, a soldier from his native Massachusetts who was killed in Afghanistan last August. On Memorial Day, Brendan presented the Steele family with a free vacation to Disney World.

Brendan's generosity knows no bounds, as he recently demonstrated a second time. Recognized for his actions during the morning telecast of "Good Morning America," Brendan was informed that the Walt Disney Company was awarding him and his family an all-expense paid vacation to Disney World for what he had done on behalf of the Steele family. Brendan; however, refused to accept the trip for himself; instead, he said it would be raffled away to another military family.

This type of selflessness is years beyond what we would expect of a young boy. Brendan has made his community and his country very proud.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Brendan Haas for his remarkable spirit, dedication and generosity. I know we will see more great things from him in the future.

COMMEMORATING AZERBAIJAN'S REPUBLIC DAY

HON. DAN BOREN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 1, 2012

Mr. BOREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the people of the Republic of Azerbaijan and their celebration of Republic Day on May 28.

Azerbaijan first declared independence from the Russian Empire on May 28, 1918. Though the Azerbaijan Republic later succumbed to Soviet forces in 1920, in its 2 years of independence Azerbaijan achieved a number of measures on state-building, armed forces, education, economy, and universal suffrage, from which it benefits today. Azerbaijan restored its independence in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Azerbaijan is a key global security partner for the United States. Azerbaijan was among the first nations to offer unconditional support for US and its allies in anti-terrorism efforts, providing use of its airspace, airports, and troops for operations in Afghanistan. Azerbaijani troops were also part of international contingent in Kosovo and Iraq.

Azerbaijan has opened Caspian energy resources to development by U.S. companies and has emerged as a key player for global energy security. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project is the most successful project contributing to the development of the South Caucasus region and has become the main artery delivering Caspian Sea hydrocarbons to the U.S. and our partners in Europe.

As a proud Co-Chair of Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus I call my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Republic of Azerbaijan on this important occasion.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

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. 5854) making appropriations for military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, and for other purposes:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Chair, I rise today to express my qualified support for H.R. 5854, the FY13 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill. While I commend Chairmen ROGERS and CULBERSON and Ranking Members SMITH and BISHOP for their efforts to craft bipartisan legislation dedicated to addressing the needs of current and former servicemembers and their families, I support this bill with strong reservations about how the measure treats the very civilian employees who will be asked to provide the services and carry out the instructions outlined in the bill.

H.R. 5854 contains a number of important provisions designed to serve our military with an eye toward trimming spending, eliminating waste and directing taxpayer dollars more effectively.

The MilCon-VA bill, as it is called, funds construction by the Department of Defense for hospitals, clinics, schools, family housing and other facilities in order to deliver timely and vital medical care to our Nation's veterans, active military members and their families. The measure also provides funding for disability care, educational benefits and other resources to help advance U.S. missions abroad.

Specifically, I applaud the committee for funding support for medical services and facilities; for veteran's compensation, pension and burial benefits for former servicemembers, survivors and their dependents; and for the important family housing here and abroad that helps ease some of the financial burden faced by our men and women in uniform.

Despite providing necessary support for these and other important projects and programs, this bill also continues a troubling new Republican pattern in the Congress of balancing our fiscal accounts on the backs of our Federal employees. It seems like every time the Republicans bring a bill to the floor, they use it as a vehicle to attack public servants by cutting their pensions, or pay, or benefits to pay for other spending items. Federal employees have already given up \$60 billion of salary over 10 years as part of the two-year pay freeze. Starting in January 2013, new Federal employees will contribute more to their pensions to offset the \$15 billion cost of Unemployment Insurance Extension legislation. And with this MilCon bill, Federal employees are asked to give up the very small .5% partial COLA allotted in the President's FY13 budget request.

Nurses and rehabilitation specialists, weapons systems mechanics and border guards are among the many dedicated Federal employees that serve our country. They sometimes serve shoulder-to-shoulder on the battlefield with our uniformed servicemembers.