

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SERVICE
OF BETTY BENNETT

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2013

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of her retirement from my office, it is my pleasure to recognize the lifetime of public service that Betty Jean Robinson Bennett has provided to Chilton County, the State of Alabama, and our country.

For a Member of Congress, a staple of good representation is listening to the concerns of constituents and addressing community needs identified by local officials and business, education, agricultural, and civic leaders. The role of the congressional field representative is essential to connecting what is happening on a daily basis in our communities to the work being done in the U.S. Congress. In Betty Bennett, I have had an effective, dedicated, and loyal staff member who has helped me to represent the Sixth District in Washington.

Betty, or "Miss Betty" as she is affectionately known, has deep roots in Chilton County. She attended Clanton Elementary School and Clanton Junior High School and graduated from Chilton County High School with honors and responsibilities including her position as editor of the school magazine in her senior year and membership in the National Beta Club.

In 1968, Betty began an association with government service and political activity that became a lifetime vocation. Her career and experiences provide a fascinating reflection on Alabama's recent political history. One of many originally-enrolled Democrats to later join the Republican Party on principle, Betty is the only person to have been the President of both the Democrat and Republican Women's Clubs in Chilton County. She continues to serve on the Chilton County Republican Executive Committee and on the Alabama Republican Executive Committee representing Chilton County.

Betty's leadership skills were recognized when she was chosen as the Selective Service Director for the State of Alabama, a presidentially-appointed position, in May 1990. She was recommended by Governor Guy Hunt and appointed by President George H.W. Bush through the National Director of the Selective Service System, Samuel K. Lessey, Jr. Betty was the first woman to serve as a state director and is the only woman to ever serve in that capacity in Alabama.

As director, Betty coordinated the appointment of all local Selective Service Boards and directed personnel in three National Guard and Reserve Unit detachments in Montgomery and Birmingham. She was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal of Alabama by Governor Hunt for her achievements after being nominated by officers of the National Guard and Reserve and the Alabama Adjutant General.

Betty began her congressional duties in January 1997 as a field representative for then-Congressman Bob Riley in the Third District. She joined my staff in January 2003 after Bob was elected Governor of Alabama and has provided more than a decade of diligent service to the people of the Sixth District.

During that time, Betty has ably represented my office during the development of a number of important projects, including the establishment of the Jefferson State Chilton-Clanton Center. With her deep knowledge, she has always been my liaison to the agricultural community and has worked closely with the Alabama Farmers Federation, whose President Jimmy Parnell is also from Chilton County. Betty is an advocate for the local peach industry and can always be counted on for her support of the Chilton County Peach Festival. Above all, Betty has always cared about helping people and finding solutions to problems.

Betty's service and love of her home county has been commemorated, appropriately enough, at Chilton County High School. In 2006, then-Principal Larry McHaffey started the Betty Robinson Bennett Leadership Scholarship for a senior exhibiting academic achievement as well as leadership in school, community, and church activities. What was more meaningful to Betty than a scholarship being named in her honor, I am sure, is the help it offered to a student and future leader.

On Friday, December 6, Betty's legacy of service will be celebrated during a reception at Jemison City Hall. Her many friends know very well that "retirement" is just a word to Betty and that she will remain visible and active in her community for many years to come.

Let me close by again expressing my appreciation to Betty for her service to my office, the people of the Sixth District, and the State of Alabama during a most remarkable career.

**HONORING DELTA BURIAL
CORPORATION**

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2013

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable Funeral Home Business in the Delta, Delta Burial Corporation of Marks, Mississippi.

Delta Burial Corporation in Marks, Mississippi was first organized in 1927. It took on new life in 1928, when a couple of men got together and had it incorporated.

The founders of Delta Burial were Silas Kelly, I.W. LouAndrew and Rueben Price. The Officers at that time were: John Melchor—President; Dan Nickels—Vice President; Mamie Ruth Smith—Secretary; Hernando Butts—Treasurer and A.L. Saddler—General Manager and Agent.

Delta Burial Corporation is the only corporation that was owned by all black stockholders and still is today. The company started out with one building in Marks, MS, and then got stronger and added four more locations to serve the areas. The branches are: Belzoni Branch, Belzoni, MS; Clarksdale Branch, Clarksdale, MS; Lexington Branch, Lexington, MS and Mound Bayou Branch, Mound Bayou, MS.

Delta Burial is a business that provides burial, life insurance and pre-arrangements services for the deceased and their families. We strive to provide the highest quality of service to accomplish our goals. Our motto is "Seldom Equal, Never Excelled."

Delta Burial officers today are as follows: Manuel Killebrew—President, Fannie Smith—

Executive Secretary; Irma Jean Bell—General Manager; Aaron Gunn III, Dexter Howard and Cedric Burnett—Morticians; and Shelton Leonard—Funeral Director.

Each year Delta Burial gives back to the community and surrounding areas by donating funds for different causes and to the less fortunate. Also, they distribute Black History calendars, fans and yearly planners.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Delta Burial Corporation for its dedication to serving our great country.

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROBERT D.
WHITE**

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2013

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of the retirement of Lieutenant Colonel Robert D. White, we hereby acknowledge his exemplary military career of service and honor in the United States Air Force. Colonel White began his Air Force career as an officer and instructor pilot with the 37th Flying Training Squadron, Columbus AFB, Mississippi in September 1992 and proceeded into various other positions of leadership, including Chief of Disclosure and Release Division Headquarters, National Geospatial Intelligence Agency in Virginia, which provides geospatial intelligence in support of national security. Colonel White also served as Chief of Flight Safety for the Air National Guard, Andrews Air Force Base. And as a command pilot, he logged more than 4,500 hours in the air and served overseas. For his outstanding service and leadership in flight safety, Colonel White was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, Second Oak Leaf Cluster. His singularly distinctive accomplishments reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force. We thank Colonel White for his service to our country and congratulate him on the successful completion of his duty as a United States Air Force officer.

**CONGRATULATING MUNILLA CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT ON
THEIR 30TH ANNIVERSARY**

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2013

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Munilla Construction Management (MCM) on their 30th anniversary, and to commend its exemplary service to the Miami community.

MCM is a construction company founded in Miami, FL in 1983, which specializes in Heavy Civil and Building Construction. However, their history dates back to 1941 where for nearly two decades Fernando Munilla, Sr. was one of Cuba's premier builders and a pioneer in construction methodology. His endeavors included an engineering firm, three of the largest concrete plants, and a construction management company. His work in Cuba included major projects such as the Jose Marti Monument in Havana, and the Cuyaguatije River Bridge. However in 1960 Fidel Castro confiscated his firm and the Munilla family was separated.

Four of his sons were brought to the United States through the Pedro Pan airlift operation, only days before the Bay of Pigs invasion. Two more brothers remained in Cuba with their mother, Maria. Fernando also remained in Cuba where he led covert operations along with the CIA. He later managed to escape where he eventually reunited his family, and settled in Miami. It was there that MCM was founded and thrived, earning a reputation for managing the construction of some of the most complex and challenging projects in South Florida.

The commitment and hard work of MCM's personnel has resulted in it being named one of the fastest growing Hispanic Construction Firms in Florida. Not only that, they are the 7th largest Hispanic contractor in the United States as ranked by Hispanic Business Magazine (2012), as well as being ranked among the top 400 contractors in the United States by ENR magazine. They have also been awarded numerous accolades including the Florida Transportation Builders Association (FTBA) Design-Build Project of the Year for 2010, the Hispanic Company of the Year 2008 by the South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the Regional Contractor of the Year 2008 by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Having known the Munilla family for years, I can attest to their high degree of integrity, character and professionalism. They have also become very close friends of mine and are truly one of the most exceptional, loyal, trustworthy, and caring friends I have. It is a privilege to know all six of the Munilla brothers and their families. In addition, they have been devoted to their company, their employees, and the Miami community since its inception in 1983. Today, the Munilla family's dedication has made MCM an irreplaceable company for South Florida, and their family has become a treasure for the community.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to congratulate Munilla Construction Management, and the entire Munilla family, as they celebrate this milestone. I am certain that we can all look forward to many more years of outstanding service, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing their outstanding achievement.

VELTON LOCKLEAR III

HON. BETO O'ROURKE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2013

Mr. O'ROURKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Army Sgt. Velton Locklear III, who died while serving his nation in Iraq.

Sergeant Locklear, known as "Lock" by his friends, was an El Pasoan, and graduate of Eastwood High School. During high school, he excelled at football and was an All-Star wide receiver.

Sergeant Locklear, like so many of his family members, wanted to serve in the Armed Forces. His two sisters, Julie and Lori, served in the Army and his father is retired Sgt. Maj. Velton Locklear Jr., who served in the Army for over 24 years.

After going to college at North Texas University, Velton decided to serve his country by joining the Army. During his career, he served

two tours of duty in Iraq. He volunteered for his first tour of duty and began his deployment in February of 2004. Soldiers who served with him, described Locklear as a gentle giant, who made the day better with words of encouragement during hard times and witty humor in good times. Another soldier said Sergeant Locklear was like a breath of fresh air; always positive, always had a smile on his face. His first tour ended in March 2005.

The second time Locklear deployed to Iraq was with the 25th Infantry, 3rd Brigade 2-27th Infantry Battalion in August of 2005. On Sept. 23 Mr. Locklear died in Riyadh, Iraq due to injuries suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his Humvee during combat.

Mr. Locklear was a committed and loving husband to his wife Denise and their two sons, Velton IV and Nathan, who reside in El Paso. He served our country courageously and with honor. Sergeant Locklear's service and dedication is an example to others and I am proud to honor him as a hero who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to the United States.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE AND THE TPP

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 5, 2013

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the gentleman from Wisconsin (Rep. MARK POCAN) for organizing last night's Special Order Hour on raising the minimum wage and the negotiations over the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

I very much welcome this opportunity to talk about trade issues, the minimum wage, and the growing wage gap in our country because they are closely related, in different ways, to one of the most urgent social, economic and political challenges of our time. I'm talking about the problem of growing inequality in the United States.

Over the past three decades, income inequality in the United States has been steadily on the rise. In fact, just before the 2008 financial crisis, the U.S. reached levels of inequality not seen since the late 1920s.

Today, the United States has the highest level of inequality of any advanced industrial nation. According to an analysis by the AFL-CIO, the average CEO at 327 available companies in the S&P 500 index is paid 354 times the average worker.

Moreover, a recent study showed that in 2010, the top 1 percent of U.S. families captured as much as 93 percent of the Nation's income growth gained during the economic recovery. So, this means that the most unequal advanced industrial economy in the world is becoming more so.

It is time to have an open debate and discussion on the wage gap in our country. This is important from a moral standpoint, as a matter of equity and fairness. But it is also important from an economic and political standpoint. That is, excessive inequality not only undermines social and political cohesion, it has also been shown to have negative effects on growth.

Recent research at the IMF has shown that excessive inequality slows growth because de-

pressed earnings lead to weaker demand and lower consumption.

Now, I understand that in a capitalist system, some degree of inequality is necessary for the function of a market economy, since it creates incentives to work hard and take risks. Left entirely to its own, however, the market system will produce more inequality than is economically necessary. And here in America, we have much more inequality than is necessary for efficiency.

This is also a political problem. We now have an increasing degree of resistance on the part of a lot of Americans to efforts to enter into new trade agreements because they are viewed as elevating the interests of capital over all other considerations.

Last month, I joined with 150 of my congressional colleagues in a letter to the President to express our serious concerns about the ongoing negotiations over the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). We urged the President to engage in broader and deeper consultations with Members of Congress about what will be included in this broad-ranging international trade agreement. In addition to tariff issues, this agreement could include provisions related to labor, food, natural resources, the environment, patent and copyright law, health care, energy, telecommunications and financial services. As the Ranking Member of the House Financial Services Committee, it is particularly important to me that my committee be consulted about any provisions affecting financial services.

Past trade negotiations have resulted in NAFTA, the creation of the World Trade Organization, and Free Trade Agreements with Central American countries, Peru, Panama, Colombia, and South Korea. All of these agreements were promoted by large corporations, which claimed they would create jobs. But these were empty promises, and many of these same large corporations have continued to ship jobs overseas.

What American workers need is good jobs with good pay. That is why we need to make this discussion of the wage gap and the minimum wage a top priority.

The Federal minimum wage has been stuck at \$7.25 per hour for the past four years. The value of the minimum wage has not kept up with the cost of living, and record-breaking corporate profits have not trickled down to working people.

The real value of the minimum wage is at a historic low. Today, 40 percent of American workers actually make less than the minimum wage was worth back in 1968. That is almost one quarter of American workers. Too many American families who depend upon the minimum wage are seeking Food Stamps and Section 8 housing assistance and are constant visitors to our food banks.

The American people understand the importance of fair wages, and many States and local communities have taken matters into their own hands. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, 19 States and the District of Columbia already have a minimum wage that is higher than the Federal minimum wage.

The National Conference of State Legislatures also reports that in 2013, the legislatures in California, Connecticut, New York, and Rhode Island all passed bills to increase the minimum wage beginning in 2014. The legislature in California increased the minimum wage