

SUPPORTING UNANIMOUS DECISION OF U.S. SENTENCING COMMISSION MAKING RETROACTIVE THE REDUCTION IN SENTENCING GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO MOST FEDERAL DRUG TRAFFICKING OFFENDERS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to applaud the unanimous vote of the U.S. Sentencing Commission to apply retroactively the reduction in the sentencing guideline levels applicable to most federal drug trafficking offenders.

This action is welcome news to the families and loved ones of the estimated 46,290 persons eligible to have their cases reviewed by a judge to determine if their sentence should be reduced by on average of 25 months, or as much as 18.8 percent.

The United States incarcerates nearly 25 percent of the world's inmates, even though it only has 5 percent of the world's population. Thirty years ago, there were less than 30,000 inmates in the federal system; today, there are nearly 216,000, an increase of 800 percent.

This over-crowding of our federal prison system—at an annual cost of about \$6.5 billion—is the direct and proximate result of the proliferation of offenses carrying mandatory-minimums and the discriminatory 100–1 disparity between crack and powder cocaine sentences in federal law.

African Americans and Hispanics comprise more than 6 in 10 federal inmates incarcerated for drug offenses. And African American offenders receive sentences that are 10 percent longer than white offenders for the same crimes and are 21 percent more likely to receive mandatory-minimum sentences than white defendants according to the U.S. Sentencing Commission.

The decision by the U.S. Sentencing Commission is particularly gratifying to those of us who worked tirelessly over the last two decades to restore balance and justice to federal drug sentencing policy.

In 2005, I introduced the “No More Tulias Act of 2005” (H.R. 2620) in response to the infamous drug task force scandal in Tulia, Texas that occurred six years earlier, during which 15 percent of the town's African American population was arrested, prosecuted and sentenced to decades in prison based on the uncorroborated testimony of a federally funded undercover officer with a record of racial impropriety.

Later, in 2007, I introduced the “Drug Sentencing Reform and Cocaine Kingpin Trafficking Act of 2007” (H.R. 4545), bipartisan legislation eliminating the unjust and discriminatory 100 to 1 disparity between crack and powder cocaine sentences in federal law. Companion legislation in the Senate was introduced by then Senator JOSEPH BIDEN of Delaware (S. 1711).

Three years later, this effort bore fruit when the Congress passed and President Obama signed into law the “Fair Sentencing Act of 2010” (P.L. 111–220), which finally ended the 100:1 ratio that had resulted in unconscionable racial disparities in the average length of sentences for comparable offenses.

But a large gap remained in the justice provided by this landmark legislation: its provisions were not retroactive. That gap has been filled today by the unanimous vote of the Sentencing Commission.

Beginning in November of this year, all federal inmates sentenced under the old regime are to be afforded the opportunity to have their sentences reconsidered under the provisions of current law, and those eligible for release may be reunited with their families and loved ones as early as November 2015.

Mr. Speaker, the vote today by the Sentencing Commission is a giant step in the right direction as it makes federal drug sentencing policy and practice fairer for all, helps save the taxpayers millions of dollars annually, and reaffirms the premise that the men and women who have paid their debt to society are worthy of a second chance to redeem their lives and contribute to their communities.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and missed the vote on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule. Had I been present, I would have voted “no” on rollcall No. 428.

A TRIBUTE TO MILWAUKEE COMMUNITY JOURNAL'S DR. TERENCE N. THOMAS SCHOLARSHIP ANNUAL BRUNCH

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Ms. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the Milwaukee Community Journal's Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship Annual Brunch. The Dr. Terence N. Thomas Scholarship Annual Brunch celebrates its 38th anniversary at the Italian Conference Center on Sunday, August 3, 2014. The annual event was established in 1996 to promote academic excellence and to pay tribute to the publisher's deceased and beloved son, Dr. Terence N. Thomas. This fund has granted over a half million dollars to students who retain a 3.0 cumulative grade average or better.

Much of the success of the Milwaukee Community Journal can be attributed to one of its founders and Publisher, Patricia O'Flynn Pattillo. The Milwaukee Community Journal evolved from a publication called the Soul City Shopper, following the 1965 riots in Milwaukee. Insurance companies had refused to pay businesses for damages incurred during the riots. Ms. Pattillo was encouraged by business leaders to assume the role of editor of the publication. She penned a barrage of editorials that eventually pressured the insurance companies to uphold their obligations by paying claims so that repairs could be made and that businesses could reopen. This effort was dubbed The Unity in the Community Campaign; it was very successful and mobilized the entire community.

In addition to the scholarships, the brunch will honor many of those individuals who took part in that Unity in Community mobilization. The brunch's theme, “Inspiration Meets Aspiration”: Fabulous, Fit, Fun and Fantastic: Unit-ing Generations,” will focus on the many and varied contributions to our community of those individuals 50 and older. The honorees contributions have been broad and vast and have been the foundation for Milwaukee's central city community.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that the Milwaukee Community Journal hails from the 4th Congressional District. It has consistently informed and entertained readers for nearly 38 years. I am pleased to give praise to Patricia O'Flynn Pattillo and her staff for providing a voice to the community and offering educational opportunities to students. I wish them many more years of success.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BEATLES' HISTORIC VISIT TO OREGON COUNTY, MISSOURI

HON. JASON T. SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 50th Anniversary of The Beatles's historic weekend visit to Oregon County, Missouri. In 1964 The Beatles visited The Ozarks of Oregon County, Missouri in September for a weekend of rest and relaxation at the Pigman Ranch.

I also would like to recognize the Ozarks of Oregon County, Missouri as the official September 19, 1964 weekend destination of John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr. The Alton Community Foundation is conducting the Ozarks Beatlemania Festival on the 12th and 13th of September this fall to celebrate this historic event in the Ozarks. The community of Alton looks forward to sharing the history and stories of the Fab Four's visit to nearby Pigman Ranch on September of 1964. Although Pigman Ranch is no longer owned by the Pigman family, the stories, the mystique and the uniqueness of the ranch remain.

With the Ozark Beatlemania Festival approaching, in which I am eager to attend, it is my pleasure to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the visit made by The Beatles to Oregon County, Missouri, before the House of Representatives.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE HOLDING

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 425 on July 16, 2014, I was unavoidably detained on my way to the House floor owing to a constituent meeting and consequently missed the Massie of Kentucky amendment vote to H.R. 5016. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

HONORING THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE JOINT IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICE DEFEAT ORGANIZATION, MAJOR GENERAL PATRICK HIGGINS

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Major General Patrick M. Higgins, Deputy Director of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization, or JIEDDO, who will retire from the United States Army on September 1, 2014, after 34 years of distinguished service. In his final tour of duty, Major General Higgins led efforts to disrupt threat networks that support, supply and employ IEDs globally. Through his contributions, JIEDDO has made significant strides in reducing the effectiveness of the IEDs and eliminating the enemy networks that seek to use these devices to harm our troops.

Major General Higgins has commanded within the special operations community at the detachment, battalion and group levels, culminating in assignment as the Commander, Joint Forces Special Operations Component Command in Iraq. He has served in numerous special operations staff assignments and director-level positions within the Joint Staff.

Major General Higgins has earned numerous awards and decorations including the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal with "V" device, Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, among others.

I am proud to share in the celebration of Major General Higgins' long and distinguished military career. I would also like to congratulate his wife, Susan, and his three daughters, Sarah, Emily and Jessica, whose love and support has aided and strengthened Major General Higgins throughout his career. I wish him all the best in his retirement.

HONORING THE FLORIDA STATE CHAPTER OF THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Florida State Chapter of the U.S. Air Force Association (AFA) in celebration of its 50th anniversary.

On Saturday, July 26, the AFA will hold its annual state conference in West Palm Beach, Florida. It is a privilege to represent constituents who are so deeply committed to the education, advocacy, and support necessary to maintain America's dominance in aerospace that helps keep our Nation secure.

From issuing scholarships and supporting STEM programs in elementary schools, to restoring and preserving Air Force fighter aircrafts, Florida's AFA chapter has been a tremendous advocate in the South Florida community.

I am proud to recognize the Florida Chapter and the entire AFA community for their achievements in promoting aerospace power and enhancing aerospace and science education for South Florida's next generation of leaders.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM D. MAGWOOD IV

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my thanks to a dedicated public servant who is moving on to another important assignment. Bill Magwood, currently a Commissioner on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), will depart for Paris in September to serve as the Director General of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Nuclear Energy Agency. I want to wish Bill and his wife Janet all the best as they embark on this great adventure. I know Bill will do a wonderful job in this new position.

As a Member of Congress representing Idaho's second congressional district, I got to know Bill as the Director of the Department of Energy's Office of Nuclear Energy. In that capacity, Bill played an instrumental role in forming the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) as the nation's lead lab for nuclear energy and that designation has served the nation, the nuclear energy industry and the State of Idaho very well. Bill Magwood's vision for INL and creative institutions such as the Center for Advanced Energy Studies has exceeded all of our expectations and we owe Bill a debt of gratitude for his foresight and perseverance.

After leaving the Department of Energy and working in the private sector for a few years, Bill was asked by President Obama to return to government service and serve on the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Bill accepted this challenge, but I do not believe he or anyone else had any idea of what was in store for him Under Bill's watch at the NRC, the Fukushima disaster hit Japan and the NRC was thrust into the spotlight to explain the situation to the American people. At the same time, the NRC was faced with serious internal challenges, which Bill met with courage and conviction, and for this he deserves our recognition and praise.

Bill Magwood has served his country with honor and distinction and I want to offer my praise as he moves on to his new international leadership role.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

HON. BILLY LONG

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th year of the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

The General Council of the Assemblies of God began in Hot Springs, Arkansas in 1914 with 300 people and has called Springfield,

Missouri its home since 1918, and we are proud to call them our neighbors in the 7th Congressional District. This broad coalition of ministers decided to work together to fulfill common goals by providing fellowship, establishing schools, and sending missionaries abroad. Since 1914, the Assemblies of God has grown to more than 67 million adherents in over 366,000 churches worldwide.

In these 100 years, Assemblies of God members have preached the gospel, prayed for the sick, witnessed miracles, published profound insights on the spiritual life, and established churches, schools, orphanages, and rescue missions. The Assemblies of God's dedication and loyalty to their members and employees has become a vital part of the Springfield community. Their outreach and sponsorship of higher education is a true testament of their fellowship and values. The General Council has formed close relationships to local businesses and universities, creating a network that values community, education, and friendship. It is an honor to recognize the General Council for their leadership and service.

I am confident the work of the General Council of the Assemblies of God will continue to make a positive impact in the area over the next 100 years.

A TRIBUTE TO RAY ALPERT—ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY

HON. ALAN S. LOWENTHAL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, our community lost a true friend and major benefactor on Wednesday, June 11, 2014 with the passing of Ray Alpert at the age of 87.

Ray and his wife, Barbara, were known throughout Long Beach for their generosity and passion for organizations that helped support the Jewish community. Over the decades, Ray and his wife Barbara donated millions of dollars to the Jewish Federation of Greater Long Beach and West Orange County and its partner agencies, the Alpert Jewish Community Center, Long Beach Hillel, Jewish Family and Children's Service and the Hebrew Academy of Huntington Beach.

From its inception, the Alpert Foundation has provided the Long Beach and Western Orange County Jewish Federation with its largest annual gift. In 1997, their lead donation to the Federation was instrumental in creating the 85,000 square foot Alpert Jewish Community Center, whose comprehensive programs and facilities now serve almost every segment of our community. "The Alpert Jewish Community Center is forever indebted to Ray and Barbara for their generosity and caring for the Center," said Jeffrey Rips, Executive Director.

Ray's longtime friend, Jewish Federation and Jewish Community Foundation Past President, and community leader in his own right, Eugene Lentzner, spoke lovingly of his 50 year association with Ray. "Ray achieved great success, yet he was the most unpretentious and unassuming person I ever know. (And you should also know that comment applies to his wife also)," said Gene. "He was most comfortable outside the limelight; yet he served on many boards, he had a lot to say