

## OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 2, 2014*

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$18,005,549,328,561.45. We've added \$7,378,672,279,648.37 to our debt in 5 years. This is over \$7.3 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

## FUNDING FOR ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH

**HON. GENE GREEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 2, 2014*

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to appropriate an additional \$200 million to the National Institutes of Health for research on Alzheimer's disease.

More than five million Americans currently have Alzheimer's disease. Today, someone develops Alzheimer's every 67 seconds and by 2050, it will be every 33 seconds.

Alzheimer's is the most expensive disease in America. Unless action is taken, the cost of Alzheimer's will total \$1.2 trillion in 2050, and Medicare and Medicaid spending on Alzheimer's will increase 500 percent.

My mother-in-law battled this disease, so I appreciate how devastating it can be to patients and their loved ones.

The bipartisan National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA) was passed by Congress unanimously.

NAPA called for the creation of a National Alzheimer's Plan, which has resulted in some notable accomplishments. However, scientists and researchers must have the necessary funds to carry out the blueprint set forth in the Plan.

Congress provided an additional \$100 million in Alzheimer's research for fiscal year 2014, yet we continue to underinvest.

To address a disease of this magnitude, we must further our commitment by increasing funding for Alzheimer's research by \$200 million in fiscal year 2015.

## HISTORICAL RECORD OF POLITICAL STATUS ISSUE IN AMERICAN SAMOA

**HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA**

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 2, 2014*

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to include, for historical purposes, the following information on the political status of American Samoa.

[Press Release, Oct. 2, 2006]

FALEOMAVAEGA TESTIFIES BEFORE POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION

Congressman Faleomavaega announced today that he testified before the American

Samoa Political Status Commission in a hearing held on Saturday, September 29, 2006 at BYU-Hawaii in Laie, Hawaii.

I believe the work of this commission is critical for American Samoa's political future, Faleomavaega said. I am honored to provide input as the commissioners deliberate our political status options.

In my opinion, before we get too far ahead of ourselves in examining our political options we need to look inward to resolve some lingering ambiguities regarding our current territorial status. Currently, American Samoa's political relationship with the United States is governed by the two Treaties or Deeds of Cession signed in 1900 (Tutuila) and 1904 (Manua). These documents provide no clear protections for our culture, no clear guidance for our relationship with the United States, and no expression of political unity between our own islands.

To me, it makes sense that we should address these issues first before we can develop a roadmap for our future. Otherwise, unresolved questions will always remain regarding our internal (Tutuila and Manua) and external (with the United States) political relationships.

One source of ambiguity in these documents is that, in a Samoan context, this was understood to be a treaty of cession, rather than a deed of cession. In the Samoan version of these documents, our chiefs used the term *feagaiga*, which means treaty, but in the English version, the word treaty is never mentioned. To our Samoan chiefs this treaty relationship meant that Samoans would maintain a measure of autonomy the terms of the agreement allowed the U.S. the right to use the land and the harbor, in exchange for providing protection against hostile nations. Viewed as a deed, however, this agreement would have meant that the chiefs were giving over the land as well as their sovereignty over the land. The problem inherent in this ambiguity is that a deed of cession offers our people something less than the sovereign status that a treaty would provide, and in fact the term deed implies ownership of property rather than a sense of the rights and privileges of a sovereign people.

Another source of ambiguity related to these two treaties/deeds is that they were negotiated separately between the United States and each of the island groups. Because these two instruments were two separate acts, by themselves they did not unite American Samoa into one political entity. Therefore, the fact remains that to this day, there is no officially declared political union between the island groups of Tutuila and Manua, only separate understandings with the United States.

Furthermore, despite what others may have said was the understanding in the past, these treaties do not provide for the protection of the basic rights of American Samoa's people. While these two treaties have proven instrumental in providing stability to the people of American Samoa for the past 106 years, the deeds do not cover many of the most basic issues of concern for our people, such as citizenship, immigration, international trade and commerce, national security, marine and communal property rights, or membership in international organizations, to name a few. Rather than being instruments that express some vague obligation on the part of the United States to protect our culture, I see these two treaties as asserting United States sovereignty over our lands and our lives.

While the Deeds of Cession still stand as the basis upon which American Samoa can claim a political relationship with the United States, there is still some confusion even within the United States government as to the effect of these two treaties. A review

of the U.S. Department of State listing of U.S. treaties in force makes no mention of any treaty existing between the United States and the island groups of Tutuila and Manua.

Also, as a current conflict in federal law illustrates, the U.S. Congress has its own problems in defining the U.S. relationship with American Samoa. The U.S. Congress approved these documents under the 1929 Ratification Act (48 U.S.C. 1661). Section 1661 states as follows:

Until Congress shall provide for the government of such islands, all civil, judicial, and military powers shall be vested in such person or persons and shall be exercised in such manner as the President of the United States shall direct; and the President shall have power to remove said officers and fill the vacancies so occasioned. (emphasis added)

Congress did not ratify the 1900 and 1904 Deeds until 1929, and then delegated its constitutional authority to administer the territory to the President, who transferred the administration of American Samoa to the Secretary of the Navy, primarily because the U.S. wished to establish a naval station in Pago Pago Bay.

In 1951, President Truman transferred the administration of American Samoa to the Secretary of the Interior. The transfer of all administrative, judicial, and military authority from the Congress to the President has not been amended since 1929. Notwithstanding this 1929 law delegating authority over the territory to the President, in 1984 Congress passed a bill, signed into law by the President (Pub. L. 98-213, codified at 48 U.S.C. 1662a), that now requires congressional approval of any amendment to the territory's constitution. In view of this new law, several questions and problems are now being raised. First, why does American Samoa now require Congressional approval of any amendments to its territorial constitution when Congress never expressly approved the territorial constitution to begin with? Second, there are several provisions in our territorial constitution that would raise serious constitutional issues that Congress has not yet addressed. In fact, it is questionable if Congress would approve such provisions in light of the U.S. Constitution. Unfortunately, Congress has never fully examined the contradictions between these two statutes.

The question here is whether the territorial constitution should be subject to congressional or presidential authority. If the authority is congressional, the 1929 law should be amended to rescind the authority delegated to the President; if the authority is presidential, the 1984 law should be rescinded and the approval of changes to our constitution should be returned to the complete authority of the President via the Secretary of the Interior. In either case, we have to face the fact that our present constitution and our current measure of sovereignty are nothing more than an extension of the presidential power of the Secretary of the Interior.

As we discuss our possible options in our quest for a greater measure of self-government, where are we now in our relationship with the United States? American Samoa is described as an unorganized and unincorporated territory of the United States. American Samoa is considered unorganized because since 1929 Congress has not officially organized a government for the separate island kingdoms of Tutuila and Manua under one organic act. Our territory is unincorporated because, according to Supreme Court decisions regarding the constitutional rights of insular territories, Congress has never intended to incorporate American Samoa into the Union.

From 1900 to 1951, the U.S., through the Department of the Navy, appointed military officers to govern the affairs of the islands. According to the 1921 Codification of the Regulations and Orders of the Government of American Samoa, on May 1, 1900 Commander Benjamin Tilley, the first naval commandant of Tutuila and Manua, declared that the Governor, for the time being, of American Samoa is the head of the Government. For fifty-one years, this self-made regulation governed American Samoans course with one appointed Naval Governor after another acting as the maker of all laws and appointments with little regard for the will of the people. During this period of martial law there were no elected leaders.

With the transfer of power in 1951 to the Department of the Interior, American Samoa experienced little more than a transition from military to civilian rule. Civilian-appointed governors still had full authority over island affairs. In the 1960s a territorial constitution was drafted and there began to be some involvement from the Samoan Legislature. One unintended consequence of the law passed in 1984 requiring Congressional approval of amendments to the American Samoa constitution is that, whereas between 1960 and 1984 our local leaders had extensive practice at constitution-writing, after the law was passed this practice ceased. To date, the final steps toward some measure of self-government were taken when in 1977 the first Governor was elected by popular vote and in 1980 when American Samoa elected its first Delegate to the U.S. Congress.

Given this background and history of our political relationship with the United States, Faleomavaega offered the following recommendations. First, Tutuila and Manua must officially declare a union as one political entity or governing body, thereby sanctioning its authority to deal with the United States as we negotiate our future status. This would address one of the major shortcomings of the separately negotiated Deeds of Cession.

Second, I would recommend that a national convention be called to deliberate the specific provisions of the 1900 and 1904 Deeds of Cession. As I mentioned, these Deeds do not provide any real protection for our communal lands and culture as our forefathers intended. I believe we need to formulate a statement of principles underlining our desire to either amend certain provisions of the two deeds or establish an entirely new agreement with the United States. The provisions of any such agreement should define our political relationship with the United States, whether it is a covenant status like the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, free association status like the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, and the Marshall Islands, commonwealth status like Puerto Rico, or even an Organic Act such as the one governing Guam's relationship with the United States.

Third, once we have defined what American Samoa's relationship should be with the United States under the terms of an agreement that is agreeable to both sides, the leadership of Samoa should then call a constitutional convention and organize a government based upon the terms and conditions outlined in the agreement, not the U.S. Constitution. Moreover, I believe this must be done as soon as possible the longer this uncertainty surrounding these two Deeds remains, the further we drift from our forefathers treaty intentions and risk the erosion of our culture, of becoming less Samoan and more American or, in other words, Americans of Samoan ancestry. As it stands, we cannot claim loyalty to the United States and at the same time refuse to apply federal standards that are incompatible with our local traditions and land-tenure system.

To summarize, Faleomavaega said, what I asked of the esteemed members of the Political Status Study Commission is that, before they become too deeply involved in examining all possible future options, they focus first on clarifying the original sources of authority underpinning our current political relationship with the United States, the two Deeds of Cession, as a foundation for a unified approach to determining our political future.

The full text of the Treaties/Deeds of Cession, in English and Samoan, as well as the 1929 and 1983 laws discussed in the Congressmen's statement are available on Congressman Faleomavaega's website at [www.house.gov/faleomavaega/historical.shtml](http://www.house.gov/faleomavaega/historical.shtml)

[Press Release, May 24, 2007]

#### FUTURE POLITICAL STATUS STUDY COMMISSION REPORT NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Congressman Faleomavaega announced today that a copy of the Future Political Status Study Commission Report is now available online for the public and particularly members of the Samoan community all around the world to read.

"Many people in our Samoan community, especially those residing outside of American Samoa, have contacted my office to request copies of or to find out how to obtain a copy of the Future Political Status Study Commission Report," Faleomavaega said. "So, I am pleased to inform everyone that a copy of the report is now available online on my website and on the American Samoa Governor's website for anyone to read."

"I want to congratulate and thank The Honorable Tufele Li'amatua—Chairman, The Honorable Tualo Fruean—Vice Chairman, High Talking Chief Pofu Sunia—Executive Director, and all the Commissioners and staff of the Future Political Status Study Commission for the tremendous work they did in completing this report."

"Now that we have the report, everyone concerned should take time to thoroughly review the Commission's recommendations, especially our Fono and the Administration. As I have stated before, I believe the next logical step in this important process is for the Fono to conduct hearings to discuss the different recommendations made by the Commission. Only after such a careful review and discussion I feel we should proceed to the next steps or implementation," Faleomavaega concluded.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 2, 2014*

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, on December 1, 2014, I missed two recorded votes on the House floor. Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call 532 and YEA on Roll Call 533.

#### RECOGNIZING THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF HOPE

##### HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 2, 2014*

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Hispanas Organized for

Political Equality, or HOPE, on the celebration of its twenty-fifth anniversary. On December 4, 2014, HOPE will celebrate a quarter-century of success in championing the full participation of Latinas in America's democracy and economy. HOPE's efforts have benefited not just Latinas, but men and women of all backgrounds throughout our nation.

A cross-section of Latinas from business, political, and social backgrounds came together to found HOPE in 1989, the same year the first Latina was elected to Congress. Since that time, HOPE has been a valuable partner to Latinas who have pushed political limits, broken barriers, and defined what it means to be a leader. HOPE has directly served more than 50,000 Latinas throughout the state of California, as well as millions more through advocacy efforts. HOPE's achievements include:

The HOPE Leadership Institute (HLI), California's only statewide leadership program specifically designed to train Latina leaders in vital leadership and advocacy skills. More than ninety percent of HLI alumnae have attained leadership positions in their careers or communities, and thirty percent have gone on to serve on a local or statewide commission.

The HOPE Youth Leadership Program (HYLP), which has prepared hundreds of low-income Latina high school students for college, and trained them in civic participation. Eighty-seven percent of HYLP participants have enrolled in college after graduation.

HOPE's Latina Action Day and Latina History Day, which inspire and empower over 1,300 attendees each year to succeed and take responsibility to ensure the prosperity of their communities.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and pride that I salute HOPE, its Board, and its supporters. They have played a vital role in inspiring, empowering, and supporting so many of California's leaders over the last twenty-five years. California, and the entire United States, are stronger for their leadership. I wish HOPE continued success as it continues its mission to ensure political and economic parity for Latinas.

CONGRATULATING CASSIDY  
NUSSMAN FOR HONORABLE MENTION  
SELECTION

##### HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 2, 2014*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Cassidy Nussman for being named an honorable mention selection on the Under Armour Girls High School All-America Team by the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA). Nussman is a senior at Pearland High School in Pearland, Texas. This award recognizes Nussman's outstanding athletic achievements.

She is among an elite group of high school athletes, joining a list of 150 high school All-American honorable mentions. After this season, Nussman will go on to compete at the highest level of intercollegiate athletics at Northwestern University.

On behalf of the residents of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Cassidy Nussman for