

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING SARAH ELISABETH ENGLAND ON THE OCCASION OF HER BAT MITZVAH

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 16, 2014

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the thirteenth birthday and Bat Mitzvah celebration of Sarah Elisabeth England. In the company of her parents Lori Slass and Bill England, as well as her grandparents, uncles, classmates, and numerous friends and neighbors, Sarah celebrated her Bat Mitzvah at Congregation Kol Ami in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, on December 13, 2014, her thirteenth birthday. Sarah is a wonderful young lady, and the ceremony she led with Rabbi Elliot Holin was rich in both tradition and meaning. Sarah's thoughtful, articulate, and touching comments during the ceremony were a particular highlight of the celebration, and I would like to share them here so everyone can become familiar with this promising young lady.

SARAH ENGLAND'S DVAR TORAH

I enjoy being Jewish because of the feeling that everyone is friends and family. I am proud to be part of a tradition that has been going on for thousands of years. And I am glad that I am learning about the tragedies that have happened to our people. Don't get me wrong, I hate the idea that this stuff has happened to us, but I am glad that we are not trying to hide them from our younger generations. These are things that cannot be allowed to forget. For if the world is to forget, it will be much easier for it to happen again.

My favorite holy day is Tu b'Shevat, the New Year of Trees. Even though it's not as popular as say, Rosh Hashanah, it is an entire holiday wrapped around something I love, nature!

My Mitzvah Project is helping women get business clothing so they can get back up on their feet to find jobs and other opportunities. I have done a drive to collect clothing and I will be volunteering to separate clothing in the coming months.

A particularly transforming personal experience I have had was when I realized how poorly the LGBTQ community is treated, and I was appalled. I could not believe that people would treat each other like this. People complain about something that is racist or sexist, but they overlook how people treat people who just love each other. When I found out that my family members were part of the LGBTQ community, I couldn't stop smiling. I am so proud of them and everyone who keeps fighting. I hope that marrying someone you truly love is soon legal in all states.

I chose to chant verses from Genesis 37:5-8 and 19-24 of my Torah Portion. It is about Joseph telling his brothers his dream, and their plans for revenge. The narrative warns us not to talk about something, even a dream, that shows you overpowering someone. It could make them mad and ruin your relationship with them. It also shows that the response of hatred could make you do

things that you might not mean to do, but in the heat and anger of the moment, might make you do crazy things.

My two favorite prayers are the Avote v'Imahote and the G'vurote. Even though my beliefs in god have changed, I think these prayers truly help us understand how he tries to use his powers for good.

If I were to re-write the Avote, it would read, "Thank You, God, for our mothers and fathers from the beginning. Thank You for creating us. Thank You for being You. Thank You for Your love and kindness. We are forever grateful. Blessed are You, God, helper and shield of Sarah."

If I were to re-write the G'vurote, it would read: "Thank You, God, for life. Thank You for creation. Thank You for freedom. Thank You for Your many mighty acts. Thank You for everything. Who is like You: creator and destroyer of life? Who is like You, all-powerful being?"

As for my relationship with God, it's not that I don't believe in something, it's just that if God really cared about all of their creations, then why are people starving and going to war and committing mass murder? I don't think that God functions in the way that some people think God does. I think that God just created us and said, "Have fun!" To quote Rabbi in a note he left me during our time in writing this speech: "the interesting and fascinating thing about free will is that we make the choices and bear the responsibility, but it is always easier to point our finger outward to blame God or others, rather than inward to take responsibility for what we have done wrong as individuals/community/society".

I was motivated to study for my Bat Mitzvah by my mother. She has helped me so much during my studies, and even made sure I was listening to the recordings of my portion during my concussion. The idea of being able to say that I have had my Bat Mitzvah is awesome! And I don't mind having my thirteenth birthday party on the same day. Thank you mom, Rabbi, and everyone who has ever helped me with my Hebrew, you are the truly amazing people in this world.

Rabbi Holin asked me to talk about some of the greatest challenges facing our country or the world, and I think it is the need for greater gun control. The idea that someone can obtain a weapon capable of murdering men, women, and children with great futures to be had, just makes me sick. It is wrong that people can acquire guns so easily. I would pass a law that states, "To own a gun, you must undergo multiple mental and physical tests administered by a higher force". A police member or maybe a new job could be created specially trained in this task. I would also ask that anyone who owns a gun at the moment to also take the test so that we know if they are able to have one.

Some personal goals I have are being able to fully recover from my concussion, being able to see the LGBTQ community fully accepted as who they are, seeing gun violence stopping, and getting into a good college.

I would like to take a moment now to thank all of the people that have helped me to be where I am today, my mom and dad, Rabbi Holan, Rebecca Schwartz, Mrs. Holtzman, Mr. Monblatt, and anyone else who helped me during this journey and during my concussion.

THANKING KATHLEEN THERESE MEANY FOR HER SERVICE AS PRESIDENT OF THE MWRD BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 16, 2014

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Kathleen Therese Meany who will retire from her position as President of the Board of Commissioners of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) of Greater Chicago.

Commissioner Meany is a former professor of Political Science. She taught at Harold Washington College, one of the City Colleges of Chicago. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Roosevelt University and her Master's Degree from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

Commissioner Meany was elected to the Board of Commissioners in 1990 and served as Vice President for 16 years. Her eight fellow Commissioners then unanimously elected her to serve as President in January 2013. She also serves as Chairman of the Ethics Committee and the Pension, Human Resources and Civil Service Committee, as well as Vice Chairman for the Federal Legislation Committee, the Finance Committee and the Maintenance and Operations Committee.

One of her accomplishments on the MWRD Board was the introduction of a program to collect and properly dispose of household hazardous waste, which had previously been discharged indiscriminately into the sewage system. I commend Commissioner Meany for always looking out for the best interests of the people she represents and hope that future commissioners will look to her as a fine example.

Commissioner Meany has made it her duty to keep the communities of the Chicago area connected to the MWRD's operations. She is truly a dedicated public official and it is only appropriate that the Kathleen Therese Meany Presidential Garden was dedicated to her on June 20th in Cicero, Illinois.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Commissioner Meany for all she has done for the Chicago area and wish her all the best as she moves forward after retiring from the Board.

IN HONOR OF CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER MANUEL "MANNY" REAL

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 16, 2014

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chief Probation Officer Manuel "Manny" Real on the occasion of his retirement from the County of Monterey. On December 12,

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

2014 Chief Real will relinquish his position and retire after 39 years of exemplary public service.

Manny has served as the Chief Probation Officer of Monterey County since February 12, 2004 and has overseen a staff of approximately 300 along with an all administrative budget, operational aspects of the Probation Department's Divisions of Administration, Adult Juvenile Hall and Youth Center and Alternative Programs. At the time of his appointment, Chief Real was already a 30-year veteran of the Monterey County Probation Department having worked in various capacities in both the adult and juvenile divisions. He worked in investigations and field supervision. At various times "Manny" served as a juvenile traffic hearing officer, a child custody investigator and a court officer. His tenure as Chief began in the middle of a series of financial crises. Chief Real worked tirelessly to with the CAO's budget office to mitigate any negative side effects, preserve the progress made, and ultimately restore balance between available resources, community needs and effective interventions.

Chief Real has worked hard in strengthening relations and collaborations County Social Services, Behavioral Health, education, law enforcement, criminal justice, behavioral health and community organizations. Chief Real was integral in securing the use of the old Natividad Hospital to establish the Silver Star Gang Prevention and Intervention Program a one-stop gang prevention and intervention program. The program is unique as it combines probation supervision, educational, vocational and job training, counseling services and truancy abatement, along with mentoring and community outreach strategies to help decrease gang activity. It was a pleasure having worked with Chief Real at the federal level to bring in \$1.5 million dollars to assist with anti juvenile violence and the programs at the Silver Star Resource Center continues to serve many families in Monterey County.

Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for the whole House in extending our most sincere gratitude for Chief Real's service. I want to wish Chief Real the best as he embarks on a new chapter in his life and know he will enjoy spending more time with his wife, children and grandchildren.

IN OPPOSITION TO THE FY15 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION (NDAA) CONFERENCE REPORT

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 16, 2014

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Conference Report for the FY2015 National Defense Authorization Act.

For the last 53 years, Congress has passed—and the President has signed into law—an annual Defense Authorization bill to provide critical resources our Armed Forces need to maintain the best military in the world. While I recognize that there are many important programs that are authorized in this legislation, this NDAA also contains many major policy decisions affecting our country and our armed forces. Unfortunately, Congress was

not allowed to consider a single amendment dealing with very consequential policy issues to this 1648-page bill.

The NDAA Conference Report also authorizes funding to deploy an additional 1,500 troops to Iraq. I support the core pillars of the President's plan to fight ISIS, including the use of American surveillance, intelligence assets and air power against ISIS targets in Iraq and Syria and the arming and training of the Iraqi Army and Kurdish forces to stop the ISIS advances in Iraq. I also believe we should supply weapons to those groups in Syria, such as the Syrian Kurds, who have consistently fought ISIS, and whose priority is to defeat ISIS. However, I believe the Congress should make it clear that American ground troops should not be used in a combat role in Iraq or Syria.

The President has asserted that the 2001 Authorization to Use Military Force (Public Law 107-40) provides the Executive with broad authority to take all military action necessary in both Iraq and Syria to degrade and ultimately destroy ISIL. While the President has indicated that he does not intend to deploy U.S. ground forces into combat, there is nothing in current law to prevent him from doing so. Congressman MCGOVERN, Congressman JONES, and I asked the House Rules Committee to allow us to offer an amendment to ban the use of U.S. forces in ground combat in Iraq, with the exception of rescue operations for Americans. Unfortunately, this request was denied.

The NDAA Conference Report also provides a two-year authorization to deploy American troops to train and equip the so-called "moderate" Syrian rebels. In September, a majority in Congress voted to temporarily authorize preparation for such a mission for a short period ending December 11th. This bill extends that authorization for two more years and is written so that the four defense committees can exclusively decide how much funding should be allocated for this mission. Congressman DENT and I led a bipartisan letter to Speaker BOEHNER urging him to give us the opportunity to vote on that provision. We also presented an amendment to the House Rules Committee which would have presented this authority. Once again, we were not provided the opportunity to vote on this measure.

My primary concern with the proposal to arm the so-called "moderate" Syrian opposition is that it will have unintended negative consequences that will not serve our ultimate goal of defeating ISIS.

First, the primary objective of these Sunni Islamist fighters is the defeat of Assad and his Alawite dominated regime—not the defeat of ISIS. Since the start of the war there have been shifting alliances among these Sunni Islamist forces that include the al-Qaeda affiliate, Jabhat al-Nusra, different elements of the Free Syrian Army, the Islamist Front, Ahrar al-Sham and ISIS, among others. Their common cause and overriding objective is defeating Assad. Indeed, the commander of the Syria Revolutionaries' Front, Jamal Maarouf, one of the most militarily proficient commanders of the FSA, recently said that, "It's clear that I'm not fighting against al-Qaeda. This is a problem outside of Syria's border, so it's not our problem. I don't have a problem with anyone who fights against the regime inside Syria."

While there is no doubt that Assad is a brutal dictator, he does not pose the same threat to the United States as ISIS, and his forces

have recently been battling ISIS. At this point, arming fighters whose primary purpose is to weaken Assad has one unintended result—strengthening ISIS. Indeed, I fear that the arms we provide to the so-called Syrian opposition are more likely to end up in the hands of ISIS or al Nusra.

I also have significant concerns about other measures in the NDAA Conference Report. I was disappointed that it includes a provision to continue funding restrictions on the construction or modification of detention facilities in the United States to house Guantanamo detainees. It also removes the prohibition on transfers of Guantanamo detainees to Yemen that was included in the SASC-reported bill.

Despite my overall opposition to this legislation, it does authorize many important programs. I was pleased that the Women's Small Business Procurement Parity Act, S. 2481, was included in the final Conference Report. This language provides much needed guidance to assist federal agencies in reaching the goal of awarding 5 percent of federal contracts to women-owned small businesses.

Today's bill also restores more than \$818 million in cuts made to military readiness accounts. This will allow our military to invest in critical repairs and upgrades to many mission-critical facilities such as electrical and fire protection system upgrades.

I am also encouraged that this bill builds on a number of provisions passed in last year's NDAA and continues to address the problem of sexual assault in the military. In particular, it would eliminate the so-called "good soldier defense" in court-martial proceedings, prohibiting a soldier from using good military character as a defense in a sexual assault case. These proceedings should be based on the specific evidence presented in the case.

Finally, I am pleased that the bill contains many long-delayed public lands conservation measures to protect more than one million acres of public land, including 245,000 of new wilderness.

While I support each of these measures, the fact remains that without the amendments I proposed, the bill could create a very slippery slope that would drag American troops even more deeply into Syrian war and renewed conflict in Iraq. For those reasons, I regretfully am unable to vote in favor of this year's NDAA Conference Report.

CONGRATULATING FYFFE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 16, 2014

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Fyffe High School Football Team on winning the Alabama High School Class 2-A Championship on December 5, 2014.

Coach Paul Benefield, his players, and staff achieved the very difficult task of a 15-0 record during the 2014 season. I would officially like to congratulate them on their victory.

Coach Benefield has spent 34 years in the coaching and teaching profession, winning many games and awards. In 18 years as the head coach at Fyffe, Benefield has won more than 200 games and 13 region and area