

RECOGNIZING BANDERA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE EMPLOYEES

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I want to recognize three power linemen from the Bandera Electric Cooperative: Jay Rasberry, John Hernandez and Garrett Clark. These linemen volunteered for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) International Foundation and spent three weeks in northern Haiti building and upgrading power lines. These efforts have helped communities in Haiti receive affordable, safe and reliable energy.

These three power linemen worked side by side with NRECA International on the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded Pilot Project for Sustainable Electricity Distribution. This project commercializes power from the Caracol Industrial Park generation station that is currently serving 8,000 consumers in Caracol and surrounding communities with electricity 24 hours a day. When the project is complete, a total of 10,000 consumers will have access to electricity.

Less than 15% of the people in Haiti have access to electricity. The service and sacrifice of these linemen will impact the lives of thousands of Haitians resulting in improvements in healthcare, education, and economic opportunity.

In appreciation of all they have done, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking them for their humanitarian efforts.

HONORING STEPHEN COOK

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Stephen Cook for being awarded the American FFA Degree as a member of the National FFA Organization. Stephen is a member of the Willow Springs Chapter of the FFA and, with four of its other members, received this prestigious award. He is also currently on active duty with the U.S. Marine Corps, making this accomplishment even more impressive. FFA is an intercurricular student organization for those interested in agriculture and leadership consisting of 629,367 members, aged 12–21. Stephen is among the 463 FFA members from Missouri that received the American FFA degree, marking the highest number of recipients from any state.

As a past recipient of the American FFA Degree, I offer my highest congratulations as I understand the hard work and effort required to reach this goal. In order to obtain the American FFA Degree, a member must begin their pursuit of the award during their freshman year of high school through participation in every level of the organization and leadership events.

As a former member of FFA, I can proudly say that my experience in the organization was invaluable learning about leadership skills and public speaking. It is my pleasure to rec-

ognize Stephen Cook for receiving this prominent award and thank him for his service to our county before the United States House of Representatives.

INTRODUCTION OF THE 21ST CENTURY POWER GRID ACT

HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the 21st Century Power Grid Act. The bill would finance public-private partnerships to carry out innovative projects related to the modernization of the electric grid.

Unfortunately, today the U.S. electric grid is still operating in the 20th Century. We must act now to improve grid reliability, flexibility, efficiency and security. There are literally a limitless number of ways in which the federal government can play a part to help modernize the electric grid. What we cannot afford is the status quo.

Whether it's the application of digital technologies, advanced communications and control, distributed energy resources, resilience, cybersecurity, or providing customers with more choice in energy source, usage and rates; it's a completely new world for how we can generate, distribute and consume electricity.

The federal government—in partnership with state and local governments, the private sector and ratepayers—must play a role in developing a strategy for the modernization of the electric grid and be an investor in the research, development and deployment of new advanced technologies.

The 21st Century Power Grid Act would direct the Department of Energy to provide assistance, in the form of grants or cooperative agreements, to help advance the future grid. In order to be eligible to receive this assistance, utilities can partner with entities such as national labs, universities, or state and local governments to develop or demonstrate new grid technologies or energy management techniques.

Most have heard the term “smart grid,” but I'm not sure many appreciate how truly revolutionary it could be if we were to achieve a smarter grid. “Imagine a city in the middle of a deep freeze. The local power grid is struggling to keep up with everyone's heaters. What if the grid could automatically communicate with buildings in the area and negotiate reduced power consumption in exchange for a financial incentive? A large hotel that's only half-full due to the weather could dial back its thermostats, saving money on their bill and enabling the grid to divert that energy to homes and schools.”

This scenario was taken directly from the website of one of our national labs, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. PNNL and their partners recently completed a two year project that successfully demonstrated that this sort of communication and cooperative energy usage is possible.

In your own home, imagine if you could throw dishes in the dishwasher or clothes in the dryer and then set the device to automatically start when you can pay the optimal rate for electricity. This is a win, win. Consumers

pay less, and utilities can more efficiently manage peak loads.

And the scenarios I've described don't even begin to scratch the surface of the potential for better integration of distributed energy sources like solar, wind and geothermal; energy storage capabilities; or other advances that only become conceivable when you do the type of basic research this country has always supported and excelled in.

To not provide the Department of Energy with resources to invest in smart grid research and development would be akin to preventing the National Institutes of Health from doing medical cures research. The electric grid is an indispensable element of modern society and is critical to our national security, economy and the general well-being of the citizenry.

I urge my colleagues to support the 21st Century Power Grid Act.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

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 \$18,789,199,596,566.93. We've added \$8,162,322,547,653.85 to our debt in 6 years. This is over \$8 trillion in debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

CLASS 1A—ARCOLA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM STATE CHAMPIONS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the Purple Raiders of Arcola Jr. High School as the IHSA Class 1A high school state champions.

On November 27, 2015 Arcola defeated Stark County by 35–17 winning the Class 1A State Championship. I would like to recognize the effort of this amazing team and congratulate them on their historic season as they celebrate their first state championship title in 27 years.

I would also like to congratulate the Strader family. Brothers Clayton and Connor and their cousin Chase for contributing to six touchdowns and several tackles. Tommy Eddleman, Jim Fishel, Aldo Garcia, Chad Hopkins, Jarod Kiger, and John Lidy make up the coaching staff which supported Athletic Director and Head Coach, Zach Zehr to provide great leadership for these talented football players.

I look forward to the continued success of the Arcola Jr. High School. I extend my best wishes for another outstanding season next year.

The following are Arcola Purple Raider Varsity Football players: Conner Strader, Clayton Strader, Parker Ingram, Kollin Seaman, Martin

Rund, Daniel Mendoza, Victor Gonzalez, Myles Roberts, Blake Lindenmeyer, Seth Still, Chase Strader, Mario Cortez, Sam Crane, Alec Downs, Tony Salinas, Wyatt Fishel, Giovanni Salinas, Brandon Lebeter, Cole Hut-ton, Rey Garza, Ethan Still, Mason Gentry, Javi Leal, Pablo Rodriguez, Kaleb Byard, Jonny Garza, Dalton Pantier, Gavin Coombe, Luke Spencer, Tito Garcia, Clayton Kuhring, Jack Spencer, Alex Kauffman, Aaron Dudley, Grant McPherson, Jorge Garza, and Jack Nacke.

IN RECOGNITION OF RICHARD
SHICKLE'S RETIREMENT

HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize Richard Shickle, an extraordinarily gifted leader from the northern Shenandoah Valley, on his retirement.

Very proud of his roots in Frederick County, Richard Shickle has applied the values with which he was raised and the education he received at James Wood High School and Virginia Tech to have an extraordinary influence on the place he has always called home. Armed with a bachelor's degree in Public Administration and a professional designation as a Certified Public Accountant, Richard Shickle has spent decades as a strong and visionary leader of two of the most important institutions in the Shenandoah Valley, the Government of Frederick County and Shenandoah University.

Richard Shickle is the longest serving Chairman At-Large of a county board of supervisors in the Commonwealth of Virginia. For twenty years, he has served the citizens of Frederick County, four as Supervisor for the Gainesboro District, and sixteen as Chairman of the Frederick County Board of Supervisors.

Under Chairman Shickle's conservative leadership, Frederick County has experienced great economic growth that has included business relocations and expansions by H.P. Hood, Kraft Foods, Fisher Scientific, McKesson, O.N. Minerals and Navy Federal Credit Union.

The county's low taxes have fostered the growth of many small businesses while still providing for important capital improvement projects, including the Bowman Library, the Frederick County Public Safety Building, several schools including Millbrook High School, and the Frederick County Transportation Center.

And Chairman Shickle's penchant for careful planning has resulted in the Rural Areas Recommendation and Report, as well as the establishment of the Frederick County Economic Development Authority, which has proven to be an important economic development tool for the county.

As though the responsibilities of being Chairman of the Frederick County Board of Supervisors had not been sufficiently challenging, until recently, Richard Shickle also served, for 32 years, as Vice President for Administration and Finance of Shenandoah University during a period of rapid growth. In that capacity, he oversaw the offices of the university that are responsible for its administrative, financial, budgetary, and physical plant func-

tions; and coordinated its student employment, legal services and insurance programs.

In retirement, Richard will continue to serve on boards and commissions, generously offering his knowledge and wisdom to the many valley leaders who will be seeking his counsel. He and his wife, Louise Marie Grube Shickle, are also looking forward to spending more time with their four children, Denise, Lisa, Richard, Jr. and Martha, as well as their eight grandchildren.

As the member of the House of Representatives from Virginia's 10th Congressional District, I know that I echo the sentiments of the people of the northern Shenandoah Valley in expressing deep gratitude for the strong leadership and dedicated service of "favorite son", Richard C. Shickle, Sr., who has left such a positive and lasting mark on our valley community.

I also know I'm joined by thousands of others whose lives he has touched, in wishing him and Louise many interesting and satisfying years of retirement to come.

IN SUPPORT OF AFFIRMATIVE
ACTION AND CAMPUS DIVERSITY

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this morning I was at the Supreme Court observing the oral arguments in the case of *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin*, No. 14–981.

The issue to be decided in the *Fisher* case is whether the undergraduate admissions policy of the University of Texas at Austin complies with the principles established by the Supreme Court in *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 306 (2003).

In *Grutter*, the Court held that "obtaining the educational benefits of 'student body diversity is a compelling state interest that can justify the use of race in university admissions.'" 539 U.S. at 325.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a representative from a state that has played a pivotal role in the Supreme Court's educational equity jurisprudence, beginning with the landmark case of *Sweatt v. Painter*, 339 U.S. 629 (1950), won by Thurgood Marshall and which held that segregated law schools violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and laid the foundation for the landmark decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

Mr. Speaker, I would urge the Supreme Court to uphold the admissions policy of the University of Texas at Austin because affirmative action is needed to ensure the diversity on college campuses that will yield diversity in the ranks of America's future leaders.

In a globalized and increasingly interconnected world, the nation that succeeds is the one best positioned to adapt to a world of differences—cultural, religious, economic, social, racial, and political.

The key to success in a diverse global economy is learning to adapt and thrive in diverse communities where the next generation and its leader are educated and trained.

And that is why it is critical that the Court uphold the principle it established in *Grutter v. Bollinger* in 2002 that diversity in higher edu-

cation is such a compelling governmental interest that race-conscious admission policies are permissible if other alternatives are found to be inadequate.

This is the situation presented by the facts in *Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin*, which was reargued before the Court today.

Although the University of Texas's consideration of race is very narrow—just one of many factors in the admissions process—its impact has been significant in advancing educational benefits flowing from a diverse student body.

From 1997 to 2004, affirmative action in admissions at the University of Texas was barred by the infamous Fifth Circuit decision in *Hopwood v. Texas*, 78 F.3d 932 (5th Cir. 1996).

As a result of the University of Texas's inability to consider a qualified applicant's race in the admissions process, between 1997 and 2004 African-American students never comprised more than 4.5% of the entering class—far below the 13% of Texas high school graduates who are African Americans.

Worse yet, for the students attending the University of Texas, during that period, 4 out of every 5 of classes (79%) at the University had zero, or only one, African-American student.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the way to produce a generation of leaders for the 21st century.

With the Supreme Court decision in *Grutter*, the University of Texas could add race to other criteria considered in its individualized admissions policy.

And behold the results—28% of African Americans enrolled at the University were admitted at this stage of admissions process, a stark contrast to the 4.5% of the student body represented by African Americans in the preceding 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, affirmative action works; it is the right thing to do for our country.

Fostering educational diversity and greater opportunity is critical to our nation's future in a global economy and an increasingly interconnected world.

That is why diversity is supported by a broad cross-section of American society, including military leaders, major corporations, small business owners, educators, and students from all backgrounds.

An America that celebrates diversity in higher education will produce the leaders, inventors, entrepreneurs, diplomats, public servants, and teachers that will serve our nation well in the global economy of the 21st century.

And of the most important things that can be done to ensure this bright future is for the Supreme Court to affirm the judgment of the 5th Circuit and uphold the admissions policy of the University of Texas.

A MAJORITY OF IMMIGRANT
HOUSEHOLDS RELY ON WELFARE

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a recent report found that more than half of immigrant households (both legal and illegal) in the United States receive welfare benefits—compared to only 30% of native households.