

St. Joseph Parish named Mr. Rozzo man of the year, a title anyone in the community could agree he undoubtedly deserved. John is survived by his wife of 51 years, the former Janet M. Berard whom he married May 2, 1964; his children, Pamela J. Pasquale, Denise M. Rozzo, Alaina M. Chepke, and John A. Rozzo; his brother and sisters, Phyllis Soroka, Connie Nickell, Anthony Rozzo, Ginny Gustovich and Marilyn Bianco; his aunt, Fran Airato; his 10 grandchildren, his great-granddaughter, Leighton and many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. John Rozzo leaves behind a great example for all of us to follow as a man of faith, community activism, and true leadership. He will be dearly missed.

THE MISSING BLACK MALE

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, as the mother of two black men and grandmother of two black boys, we're here to talk about a crisis in our communities: the crisis of missing black men.

In order for us to understand where these men have gone, we must understand the root of the problem. Simply put, too many places in our nation are a tale of two cities. One city is bright, shiny and new—it's home to new condominiums and fancy restaurants. The other city is littered with boarded up stores, abandoned homes, and too many people without a job and without hope.

This disparity did not happen overnight. We've lived with these structural injustices for centuries. But it wasn't until race riots erupted in Watts, Chicago, and Detroit in 1968 that our government began to take notice.

After the riots, President Johnson convened the Kerner Commission to investigate the root causes of the unrest. The Commission found a nation "moving towards two societies, one black, one white, separate and unequal." Tragically, this report could have been written last week. In the last 50 years, these structural injustices have barely budged. And black men are still being pushed out of American society.

According to a New York Times report published in April, there is an estimated 1.5 million black men aged 24–54 who are simply missing from civic life. Let me repeat—one in six black men have disappeared from civic life. 1.5 million black men missing—that can be hard to visualize.

So think about it this way:

There are more African-American men missing nationwide than there are African-American men residing in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, Houston, Washington D.C. and Boston, combined. Let me say that again: There are more African American men missing from our society than black men living in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, Houston, Washington D.C. and Boston—COMBINED.

Many have been lost to our jails and prisons, which disproportionately incarcerate black men. And others have lost their lives far too young. Some are the victims of homicide; others, the victims of a healthcare system that fails to care for them. This is tragic—but it's hardly surprising. The inequity of opportunity for black men starts at birth.

More than one in three black children are born into poverty. The cycle of poverty continues in school systems that institutionalize discrimination and racial bias. While black students represent just 18 percent of preschool enrollment, they account for 42 percent of preschool student expulsions.

We are talking about kids that are 2–5 years old—these kids don't even get a start, let alone a head start. And this crisis of inequality extends from education to the economy itself. Over the past four decades, the average unemployment rate for blacks has been DOUBLE the rate for white Americans.

And the current unemployment rate for black men over 20 stands at 10.2 percent—that's higher than the national average at the height of the recent recession. For many black men, it feels like there is a permanent recession. In the world's richest and most powerful nation, it is simply inexcusable for the inequities to persist.

Mr. Speaker—this must be our call to action.

We must come together like never before to address the systemic inequalities that are endemic in our nation—inequalities that leave black men behind.

We know that one in six African American men are missing because they are incarcerated or the victims of premature deaths. To start undoing this crisis, we need a coordinated approach including legislation, local programs and broad national initiatives.

We must re-double our support of the President's My Brother's Keeper initiative. I encourage everyone, especially my Congressional colleagues, to encourage your local leaders to engage in this initiative, which builds ladders of opportunity and unlocks the full potential of boys and young men of color through a collaborative public-private partnership.

We must also look for innovation solutions that are currently working in our communities and bring them to the national stage. I am proud that Oakland Unified School District, in my congressional district, is the first school district to have a dedicated department to address the needs of African American male students. And we need more like it across the country.

These national and local initiatives are working but Congress also has a role. It's past time for us to get serious about addressing the lack of opportunity for black men and boys in this country.

Right now—today—in this chamber, there is legislation that can and will start moving the needle.

Legislation that will create real, good-paying jobs—legislation that will give everyone a fair chance at a job—legislation that will ensure a college degree is within reach for everyone, regardless of where they were born or what race they are. Legislation that will bring health equity and reform our broken criminal justice system.

In my role as co-chair of the CBC Task Force on Poverty and the Economy and Chair of the Democratic Whip's Task Force on Poverty, Income Inequality, and Opportunity, I am proud to be working with more than 100 of my colleagues, to advance policies that give black men—and really all Americans—a fair shot.

This work includes the Half in Ten Act (H.R. 258)—which would develop a national strategy to cut poverty in half the next decade. That's

more than 22 million Americans lifted out of poverty and into the middle class in just the next 10 years by being strategic and coordinating our existing programs.

We also need to raise the minimum wage—and fight for a living wage because too many Americans are working full time and still struggling to make ends meet.

I am proud to cosponsor Congressman AL GREEN's The Original Living Wage Act (H.R. 122) and Congressman SCOTT's Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 2150), legislation that would increase the minimum wage for federal workers and the national minimum wage to \$12 by 2020, respectively. We also need to fight against the disparities that persist in our health care system. The Affordable Care Act was a good start but more is needed.

For years, the Congressional tri-caucus has championed this effort by introducing The Health Equity and Accountability Act (HEAA). Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY will have the honor in introducing this important legislation this Congress and I am proud to co-lead this effort as co-chair of the CAPAC Health Task Force.

This important legislation builds on the Affordable Care Act and puts us on track to eliminate health disparities in our country.

Lastly, we need to empower communities to build greater trust between law enforcement and communities of color. And we need to address chronic recidivism, which would be a huge step towards returning some of our "missing" men home to their families and communities.

That is why Congress should pass the bipartisan Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act (H.R. 1232), which I am a proud cosponsor of, to stop the militarization of our nation's police forces.

We need to pass the Police Accountability Act (H.R. 1102) and the Grand Jury Reform Act (H.R. 429) so we can ensure that deadly force cases are heard by a judge and there is more accountability among police officers.

I was also proud to lead a letter, signed by 72 of my colleagues, urging the President to adopt a fair chance hiring policy at the federal level for individuals who have been previously incarcerated. A fair chance hiring policy would level the playing field and help stop the cycle of recidivism that's plaguing our communities.

This is simply the right thing to do: the federal government shouldn't put up barriers to work for those trying to rebuild their lives after making a mistake. It is vital that Congress acts to ensure the tragedies in Ferguson, Staten Island, Oakland—in my district—and now Baltimore are not repeated.

Mr. Speaker, we can end the phenomenon of the missing black male. We must keep calling for action.

As Dr. King said in his "Two Americas" speech that he gave on April 14th, 1968 at Stanford University: 'We must come to see that social progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and the persistent work of dedicated individuals.'

We must each be those dedicated individuals working for the social progress that is so desperately needed.

I urge my colleagues: act and act now—too much is at stake.

TRIBUTE TO THE DOWLING CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS GOLF TEAM

HON. DAVID YOUNG

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Mr. YOUNG of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Girls Golf Team from Dowling Catholic High School for winning the Class 5-A State Girls Golf Title on June 2nd, 2015 at Elmwood Golf Club.

Dowling Catholic High School has a proud tradition of strong athletic programs, with this being their 59th team state championship in school history. Members of the golf team include: Anne Gradoville, Allison Olberding, Erica Olberding, Hannah Toresdahl, Murphy Cavanaugh, Sydney Webb and Ella Dryer and Coach Ron Gray.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by these students demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. I am honored to represent them and their families in the United States Congress. I know all of my colleagues in the House join me in congratulating the Dowling High School Girls Golf Team on competing in this rigorous competition and wishing them nothing but continued success.

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 615, THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY INTEROPERABLE COMMUNICATIONS

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Concur in the Senate Amendment to H.R. 615, the Homeland Security Interoperable Communications Act for three reasons.

The bill would address interoperability among information technology systems and radio communications systems to exchange voice, data, and video in real time.

First, the bill will save lives of first responders and those they seek to help; Second, the legislation is necessary to create a seamless level of communication among Department of Homeland Security components that are first responders to a terrorist attack, natural or manmade disaster; and finally to meet the technological challenges of bridging the communication divide between different communications systems used by first responders within the Department of Homeland Security.

As a senior member of the House Committee on Homeland Security, I am well aware, as are many of my colleagues, of the essential and lifesaving role of communications during a crisis.

Because the tragedy of September 11, 2001, was compounded by communication failures among the brave first responders who entered the burning towers that comprised the World Trade Center it has been an imperative of the Homeland Security Committee to address first responder communication interoperability challenges.

The number of first responders lost on that single day was the greatest loss of first responders at any single event in U.S. History:

343 New York City Fire Department firefighters; 23 New York City Police Department officers; 37 Port Authority Police Department officers; 15 EMTs and 3 court officers were casualties of the attacks.

The need for this bill authored by Congressman PAYNE is evident.

The City of Houston covers over a 1000 square mile region in Southeast Texas. It has a night-time population of nearly two million people, which peaks with over three million daytime inhabitants.

The City of Houston's 9-1-1 Emergency Center manages nearly 9,000 emergency calls per day. The volume of emergency calls can easily double during times of inclement weather or special City social/sporting events like Hurricane Ike in September 2008; and Katrina as well as Rita, which occurred in September and October of 2005.

Annually, one out of every ten citizens uses EMS.

There are over 200,000 EMS incidents involving over 225,000 patients or potential patients annually. On the average, EMS responds to a citizen every 3 minutes. Each EMS response is made by one of 88 City of Houston EMS vehicles.

In 2013, the City of Houston's fire Department lost Captain EMT Matthew Renaud, Engineer Operator EMT Robert Bebee, Firefighter EMT Robert Garner and Probationary Firefighter Anne Sullivan when they responded to a hotel fire.

Throughout the history of the Houston Police Department over 110 officers have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Each member of the House of Representatives knows of the loss of a first responder who was going to the aid of those in harm's way. This bill will offer additional resources to the first responders of the Department of Homeland Security.

The bill amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to include among the responsibilities of the Under Secretary for Management responsibilities with respect to policies and directives to achieve and maintain interoperable communications among the components of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

The Under Secretary of Homeland Security would submit to the House and Senate Homeland Security Committees a strategy, which shall be updated as necessary, for achieving and maintaining interoperable communications, including for daily operations, planned events, and emergencies, with corresponding milestones, that includes:

An assessment of interoperability gaps in radio communications DHS components, as of this Act's enactment date;

Information on DHS efforts and activities, including current and planned policies, directives, and training, since November 1, 2012, to achieve and maintain interoperable communications, and planned efforts and activities to achieve and maintain interoperable communications;

An assessment of obstacles and challenges to achieving and maintaining interoperable communications;

Information on, and an assessment of, the adequacy of mechanisms available to the Under Secretary to enforce and compel compliance with interoperable communications policies and directives of DHS;

Guidance provided to DHS components to implement interoperable communications policies and directives;

The total amount of funds expended by DHS since November 1, 2012, and projected future expenditures, to achieve interoperable communications; and

Dates upon which DHS-wide interoperability is projected to be achieved for voice, data, and video communications, respectively, and interim milestones.

The bill ensures that the Department of Homeland Security would conduct a survey of intra-agency efforts or task forces that have been delegated responsibilities for achieving and maintaining interoperable communications, and report on the status of these efforts, including:

Progress on each interim milestone; information on any policies, directives, guidance, and training established by the Under Secretary of Homeland Security; an assessment of the level of compliance, adoption, and participation among the DHS components with the policies, directives, guidance, and training established by the Under Secretary; and information on any additional resources or authorities needed by the Under Secretary.

This bill will ensure that the Department of Homeland Security's first responders are prepared to meet the challenges of manmade or natural disasters.

I ask my colleagues to join me in voting in favor of H.R. 615.

RACHAEL TURNER TOPS THE CHARTS

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Rachael Turner for her continued success in Nashville as a country music artist. To find such success in Nashville's competitive country music scene is an amazing accomplishment.

Rachael, a Fort Bend Christian Academy graduate and Sugar Land native, has shown remarkable artistic ability and charisma while finding great success in the music industry. Rachael signed with Rustic Records where her two most recent singles, "Matches and Moonshine" and "Meet Me in the Middle" have both made it in to the top 50 on the Music Row Charts. She most recently performed at the annual CMA music festival in Nashville. We hope to see you take the Houston Rodeo stage next.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, congratulations again to Rachael for taking the country music industry by storm.

PROTECTING SENIORS' ACCESS TO MEDICARE ACT OF 2015

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 18, 2015

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, Medicare and Social Security are our nation's sacred trusts with seniors and disabled Americans. Senior citizens in New Jersey and