

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TOWN OF CLINTON, NEW JERSEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the town of Clinton in Hunterdon County, New Jersey. Established as a separate municipality in 1865, Clinton has a rich history and is known for its natural beauty and sense of community.

The 2010 Census counted the town's population at 2,719.

As the recently deceased Clinton town historian and longtime mayor, Allie McGaheran, has written, the area was settled on the convergence of two rivers, the Spruce Run and the south branch of the Raritan, surrounded by excellent farmland, attracting English and German settlers. One of those settlers, David McKenny, built two mills directly across the river from each other.

These treasured mills—the first dating to 1810—now the Red Mill Museum Village and the Hunterdon Museum of Art, were owned by Daniel Hunt, the namesake of the town's first moniker, Hunt's Mill. These mills have been the center of Clinton's economic and cultural life for two centuries.

Later, mill owners John Taylor and John Bray championed renaming the town after DeWitt Clinton, the builder of the Erie Canal and Governor of New York.

A limestone quarry, located immediately behind the Red Mill, brought another wave of settlers, including Irish immigrants crossing the ocean to establish a better life for themselves and their families in the new world.

The present municipal building, a handsome Victorian structure, was the residence of John Leigh, a brick maker and farmer who served as the town's second mayor. The Lehigh Valley Railroad provided passenger and freight access, contributing greatly to the growth and wealth of the town in the 19th century.

Clinton has a large historic district that is on the State and national historic registers. There are five historic sites: the two mills; the music hall that entertained generations of residents; the original Grandin Library, named for artist and philanthropist Elizabeth Grandin in the last century; and the quarry.

The 150th anniversary of Clinton is being celebrated with parades, farmers' markets, art displays, performances, and other community events.

I thank and congratulate Megan Jones-Holt for her work as chair of the 150th anniversary committee. She and her husband, former mayor and current Hunterdon County Freeholder Matt Holt, do so very much for the town civically.

Clinton is governed by the town form of government, with a mayor and six council members. Mayor Janice Kovach and the governing body of the

town are greatly involved in the year-long festivities. Clinton is served by a dedicated volunteer fire company and rescue squad. Its beautiful and historic churches are an integral part of the community.

The Clinton-Glen Gardner School District educates children through the eighth grade. High school students attend North Hunterdon High School in neighboring Clinton Township, one of our State's strongest public elementary and secondary schools. My twin brother, Jim, and I are proud graduates of the high school.

My own family has been involved in the history of Clinton for many generations. My great uncle was president of the local bank, and my father practiced law in the town for 70 years.

In his essay, "The Inspiration of Clinton," Stephen Shoeman notes: "Everybody in Clinton smiles. Everybody is friendly. America is beautiful because of Clinton, New Jersey, and the other towns and villages just like it."

This year's celebration comes 1 year after the tricentennial of Hunterdon County, a yearlong retelling of Hunterdon County's storied founding and its 300-year journey in advancement from the English colonies in North America to its present-day status as one of America's premier places to live and work.

Clinton's history is ingrained in the fabric of Hunterdon County. We have also just celebrated New Jersey's 350th anniversary.

Public-spirited residents have worked to keep Clinton beautiful and the epitome of small-town American life. Their efforts maintain a charming and vibrant merchant district, excellent public schools, meaningful cultural events, and significant engagement in public affairs.

The town of Clinton thrives on neighborly camaraderie. I am deeply honored to represent the town here in the House of Representatives. And all who love Clinton congratulate the town on its landmark celebration.

TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the near hysteria over trade promotion authority and the pending Trans-Pacific Partnership, the so-called TPP, is unfortunate because it is so misguided. The stakes are too high to get it wrong, and the negative arguments are unfortunate because they are so wrong.

Being against TPP, which has yet to be finished, is premature, at best. Being against the TPA is misguided because those provisions guarantee people will actually know the details and have stronger tools to evaluate whether it is worthy of support.

The trade agenda and the role of America in the global economy has

been front and center in Congress over the last few weeks, and well it should be. The United States has an opportunity to make further inroads in 95 percent of the markets that are outside our borders and to be able to gain that access under more favorable terms.

Businesses large and small that want to sell their products overseas run into much more difficult barriers, procedures, and costs than people who sell their goods to America, which has one of the most open markets in the world.

In Oregon, there are two competing narratives: those who are opposed to further competition for American goods in American markets, fearing a loss of business and jobs; and those who see significant opportunity selling goods and services abroad, creating more family-wage jobs at home.

The people I talk to in Oregon who are in business overwhelmingly support that access. They feel they have far more to gain than they have to lose, selling more wine, bicycles, agricultural products, and small tools. They think they can compete overseas, creating family-wage jobs at home, if that playing field is level.

There are others who are deeply concerned that this perceived leveling of the playing field will not be achieved. They are concerned about a lack of labor and environmental standards overseas.

Having spent time with the people who are negotiating the agreements, having reviewed documents myself, and working to reflect Oregon values and interests, these agreements, I am confident, hold promise for Oregon. But it is too soon to tell for sure because the agreement is still being negotiated, and people like me are still trying to influence it to make it stronger still. For instance, I have provisions I am working on in both the House and the Senate to provide an enforcement mechanism.

As the agreement potentially enters its final stages, where there are some of the more difficult concessions with decisions yet to be made, the United States and other countries are reluctant to show their full hand while things are in flux.

That is why the trade promotion authority that is working its way through the Senate—and may be in front of the House early in June—is so important.

This trade promotion authority is a significant enhancement over any similar provision in the past. It guarantees that the entire country—not just Congress—will be able to examine all of the provisions 2 months before the President even signs the agreement and for months after that, before Congress votes. The authority also sets out provisions that speak to the concerns I have heard about for years about the weaknesses in NAFTA, not having enforceable, strong provisions for environment and labor.

That is why I thought it was important to vote to establish these rules

which were significantly strengthened and made more transparent as a result of the tremendous efforts on behalf of my friend and colleague from Oregon, Senator RON WYDEN, in the Senate.

If an agreement is reached under these new rules, we will have the strongest standards ever to evaluate a trade agreement, and everyone in America will be able to evaluate for themselves, not conjure up some sort of speculation. They will have months to do what I am going to do: see if this agreement is in the best interest of the people in Oregon who I represent. If it is, then they, like I, will support it. If it is not, then I will do, as I have sometimes done in the past, and vote “no” on things I don’t think measure up.

The time to draw the lines in the sand “yes” or “no” is after an agreement is reached, not before. And thanks to the new trade promotion authority, everyone will have an opportunity to make that judgment for themselves well in advance of any decision that Congress makes.

SYRIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I remember a few years ago visiting Israel, standing in the Golan Heights and looking to the border of Syria. At this time, our guide began talking about the peaceful protests in Syria, the beginning of an era of discontent.

As I looked into the seemingly peaceful area, I never imagined the carnage that was to come: children who on that day attended school, filled with hope for the future and with dreams of becoming a businessman, a policeman, an architect, or any of the host of things building in the minds of such a young person at that age; children and parents who did not know that in a few short years, their lives would be cut down by a ruthless dictator, bent on keeping power at all cost.

As the peaceful protests built in strength, Bashar al-Assad responded in violence. And so began what history will likely judge to be the start of among the most brutal times in Middle East modern history.

Bashar-al Assad began using barrel bombs indiscriminately against innocent people and infamously gassed thousands who struggled to get that last breath of life, only to choke to death, completely aware that that breath would be their last.

As family members died, others joined a group later dubbed the Free Syrian Army, a group the President referred to as a bunch of pharmacists, lawyers, and businessmen, all standing up to reclaim what was theirs rightfully, which was a free Syria. And they fight bravely for a free Syria today.

Through the carnage of this terrible war, a more nefarious group began to assemble, a group not concerned with

human carnage but inspired by it; a group not fighting to protect life but fighting to cut it down; and a group not inspired by freedom of religion but inspired by a hollow and a shallow world view. The group today is now known as ISIS.

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Mr. Speaker, before the world paid any attention, this group occupied not just parts of Syria, but also Fallujah, an area fought with American blood and treasure to bring peace and stability to the people of Iraq. The border of Syria and Iraq was torn down, and the world continued to sleep.

I called for America to lead airstrikes against this fledgling group at that time numbering in the low four figures. The reaction I received was not unexpected: people angry that I was interested in starting “Iraq War III.” Yet as this cancer continued to grow, the carnage became worse, and today we find ourselves engaged in limited action against a group growing in numbers faster than they are being dispatched by our airplanes.

Americans feel saddened that the areas that our brave military members fought so hard to win was being thrown away to political expedience, and I am one of those people. I spent a little bit of time in Iraq, on behalf of the United States Air Force, flying airplanes, and I just saw a week ago or a few days ago that Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province, where we saw so much success in the Sunni awakening, has fallen to ISIS.

Now, by the way, Anbar and Ramadi serve as a transportation center for getting goods from Jordan and Syria into Baghdad and are resupply routes for ISIS. So we are seeing not overmuch success in Iraq. But lest we think this fight is limited to just Iraq, all we have to do is look all over the world and all over the Middle East and see ISIS’ influence, from folks arrested near my district in the United States attempting to join and support ISIS, to the problems we see in Lebanon and in Saudi Arabia, and as we see ISIS grow and develop in Libya. This is something that, Mr. Speaker, the President has got to get a control on and reassert American leadership.

We also see that these terrorist groups, these jihadist groups, are coming under the umbrella of ISIS, whether it is al Shabaab, Boko Haram, or al Qaeda in Yemen, or we see the Taliban beginning to join under this supposedly successful group.

What is it we need to do to push them back? In Iraq, I believe we need to use the number of troops and the amount of military force necessary to destroy ISIS and not just necessary to follow the President’s promise of no troops on the ground. I don’t think we need another 200,000 troops in Iraq, and I haven’t heard a single person actually ever suggest that, but we need to use what is necessary to push this back.

By the way, the American military is fierce and desperate to do what needs

to be done, and they are ready to do what the American people and the President calls on.

Lastly, ISIS must be destroyed in Syria; and you can not destroy ISIS in Syria without destroying the incubator of ISIS, who is the evil dictator, Bashar al Assad. There are negotiations in progress now, but until the Syrian people know that the American people stand behind them through a no-fly zone and other means, ISIS will not be destroyed in Syria until that point.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the President to stand up.

REESTABLISH THE GOLDEN FLEECE AWARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, at a time when our Nation is currently over \$18 trillion in debt, we must carefully scrutinize our government programs to ensure that we are funding essential programs, policies, and projects while eliminating frivolous and wasteful spending.

Every day in the news, Americans hear of government waste, fraud, abuse, and regulations that are hindering our small businesses and costing American taxpayers billions of dollars that could be better spent in creating jobs and boosting our economy.

Today, I rise to establish the Golden Fleece Award to once again uncover and bring public attention to the wasteful spending across our Federal Government. The Golden Fleece Award will highlight some of the most egregious examples of government waste of hard-working taxpayers’ dollars and will shed new light on some of the rampant, unnecessary spending by our Federal agencies.

The inspiration behind the Golden Fleece Award was pioneered by the Democratic U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, Bill Proxmire, in March 1975. For the next 13 years, Senator Proxmire went on to issue bulletins announcing a monthly Golden Fleece Award. The Golden Fleece Award became a staple in the U.S. Senate during this time. Senator Robert Byrd once stated that the awards were “as much a part of the Senate as quorum calls and filibusters.”

Mr. Speaker, the Golden Fleece Award will once again serve as an important reminder that taxpayers need to watch, control, and provide the necessary reforms, through this Congress, about Federal spending and regulations.

I will utilize social media and the Internet to provide a unique platform for my constituents to share with me examples that they spot, that they see, of waste of our Federal Government resources by using, #goldenfleeceoversight on Twitter, or emailing me at goldenfleece@mail.house.gov. I have