

from the influence of the other branches, as well as shifting popular opinion.

This insulation is referred to as judicial independence. It allows our Federal judges to make decisions based on what is right under the law, without facing politics, such as not getting re-elected; or, personal, such as getting fired or having their salary lowered.

As a member of the Judiciary Committee, I have often joined with the late Henry Hyde, then the chairman, who wanted to raise the salaries of our Federal judges.

So I think it is imperative to come before this body, my colleagues, to raise great angst when someone's ethnicity is called out as a reason that they cannot be fair.

I am appalled that we have come to this in 2016, where, if I were to symbolically ascend to a Federal bench, or maybe the colleagues who many of us and the Senate have supported and the President has nominated—the diverse bench that represents Asians, Hispanics, African Americans, and women and men, Anglos, Caucasians—anyone would raise a question.

I have been before a court and not welcomed the decision. There have been many reasons why I was not pleased with that decision. But I could not raise the question of race.

And so I think it is worth condemning that we would have this kind of public discourse where the race of a Federal judge is raised. Remember what I said: judicial independence warrants that we, in fact, cannot intimidate the bench and not, in fact, deny the freedom of the court to decide cases based on facts and the law, not based on public opinion, the views of special interests groups, or even a judge's own personal belief.

The right of every citizen to a fair trial is a cornerstone of our democracy. Why should anyone be diminished, and why should the petitioner independently attempt to intimidate based on race? It is appalling. It is absurd.

So I ask all of my colleagues, as protectors of the Constitution and people who are here making laws, to independently go out to the highways and byways of life and condemn those words. Need I say who it is? Condemn those words and condemn this kind of discourse.

I would offer to say that anyone who has said those words and who pretends to put themselves forward to uphold this Constitution is disqualified and unfit.

I would hope that we will have an independent executive under the Constitution, an independent legislative branch, and, of course, an independent judiciary—one of which I respect with the highest of authority.

I will close by simply saying I have won cases; I have saved a hospital. I have lost cases. I have been affected by cases in my redistricting and denied the rights of the Voting Rights Act. But I will never undermine and dimin-

ish the Constitution for right cases and wrong cases, ever.

I ask my colleagues to condemn those actions.

□ 1115

CONGRATULATING ARMANDO VALLADARES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my dear friend and a true patriot, Ambassador Armando Valladares, for being awarded the Canterbury Medal, the highest honor bestowed by The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty.

Armando Valladares spent 22 years in Castro's gulags. He endured unconscionable torture while in prison. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because Armando refused to put a sign on his desk saying that he supported Fidel Castro.

No matter how much abuse he endured in prison, Armando fought his jailers every day. He protected his conscience from the constant and ongoing attacks of the brutal Communist dictatorship.

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan installed Armando Valladares as our U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Human Rights Council.

Earlier this year, Ambassador Valladares wrote about President Obama's misguided and dangerous overtures to the Castro regime—one-sided negotiations. In a recent op-ed that Armando Valladares wrote, he said: "In agreeing to meet with Raul Castro, Obama rewards a regime that rules with brutal force and systematically violates human rights."

Ambassador Valladares, thank you for your courage. Thank you for your principled stand against the Castro regime. Godspeed, my friend.

COMMEMORATING DEERING ESTATE'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 100th anniversary of one of south Florida's most notable cultural, historical, environmental, and archaeological treasures, the Charles Deering Estate, located in my beautiful congressional district.

Charles Deering, the first chairman of the board of International Harvester, bought the property in the year 1916. Now, as a jewel of the Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces system, the 44-acre Deering Estate serves as a center of community life in the very groovy village of Palmetto Bay.

It also conserves globally endangered native plant communities and is a focal point for the ongoing Biscayne Bay coastal wetlands restoration that aims to re-create more natural freshwater flows and to slow saltwater intrusion into our drinking water sources as sea levels rise. And the sea levels are, indeed, rising due to global climate change.

Mr. Speaker, the Deering Estate's future will be just as important as its past to all of south Florida. The Deering Estate is indeed a jewel in our already beautiful south Florida treasures.

BREAKING THE PROMISE

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, the House is expected to take up the PROMESA bill today regarding the Puerto Rican debt crisis. This bill has serious implications to every taxpayer in the country.

PROMESA applies a form of chapter 9 bankruptcy to the general obligation bonds of Puerto Rico that are guaranteed by the Commonwealth's constitution.

Article VI, section 8 of Puerto Rico's constitution explicitly provides that "interest on the public debt and amortization thereof shall first be paid."

Well, this bill ignores the Puerto Rican constitution and breaks that promise, and here is why this is so important to the rest of the country:

Every State government has similar constitutional provisions that guarantee its general obligation bonds. This is what allows States to borrow at extremely low interest rates: because their debt is constitutionally guaranteed and, therefore, the risk of default is extremely low.

If Congress is willing to undermine a territory's constitutionally guaranteed bonds today, there is every reason to believe it would be willing to undermine a State's guarantee tomorrow. This, in turn, invites credit markets to question such guarantees as being no longer secured on constitutional bedrock but, rather, dependent upon the shifting whims of Congress. This, in turn, means the value of these bonds is devalued, and interest rates paid by taxpayers on that debt will increase.

The Governors of six States have already raised this warning, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, whose credit is directly undermined by PROMESA, wants out of the bill for the same reason.

Now, PROMESA could have respected the \$18 billion of constitutionally guaranteed debt and focused instead on restructuring the \$54 billion of Puerto Rican municipal debt that is not constitutionally guaranteed. After all, there is no reason to treat San Juan's municipal debt any differently than San Jose's. But constitutionally issued debt is fundamentally different, and its reliability must be maintained. Tellingly, supporters of this bill voted down just such an amendment in committee.

Supporters have said they have addressed this concern by inserting instructions to the control board to "respect the relative lawful priorities in the constitution, other laws or agreements." But ironically, one of those

“other laws” the control board is instructed to respect is the government’s repudiation of that debt.

Furthermore, the same section instructs the control board to provide “adequate funding for public pension systems” and includes other contradictory instructions. The only possible interpretation of these provisions is that the sanctity of the sovereign debt is subject to balancing and, therefore, subordination to junior claims by the control board.

Just last week, Treasury Secretary Jack Lew and the White House admitted that this was both the intent and effect of the bill.

Meanwhile, another provision of PROMESA prevents lawful bondholders from enforcing their claims in court for a period of 6 months but doesn’t prevent the government from paying out junior claims during this period. Indeed, in anticipation of this bill, the new budget for Puerto Rico increases general fund spending, while it radically reduces its debt service payments.

Honoring the rule of law and maintaining the Commonwealth’s full faith and credit guarantee would be a powerful signal to bond markets that the United States stands by its promises, even when it is inconvenient.

Under current law, it is in the interest of both sides, debtor and creditor, to work out terms that both can live with to restructure and repay this debt. Indeed, until the prospect of a congressional rescue arose, Puerto Rico was negotiating terms of a debt restructuring with the mutual consent of its creditors.

It is also in the interest of the people of Puerto Rico to uphold the full faith and credit clause of their constitution, which will be vitally important for them to reenter the credit market once their affairs are put back in order.

Puerto Rico faces both crisis and opportunity: a crisis born of slavish devotion to failed leftist economic policies, and an opportunity to replace those policies with proven free market solutions that can create a fresh start for the people of Puerto Rico and shine as a beacon of hope for other similarly afflicted States.

I fear the net result of this legislation will be to spread the crisis to other States with heavy debts by increasing their debt service costs.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO J. RANDY JACKSON

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my friend, a friend of Georgia’s Third Congressional District, and a friend of all Georgia, J. Randy Jackson, chief administrative officer for Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia, who tragically passed away on the afternoon of May 20, 2016.

Randy was the first American employee hired for Kia’s plant in Georgia. He not only became the public face for Kia Motors in Georgia, but an advocate for the continued creation and development of employment opportunities for Georgians.

When he came to Kia, and when Kia came to West Point, Georgia, West Point was a struggling city affected by the textile plant closings. But under Randy’s leadership ability to bring people together for the good of all, both Kia and West Point have thrived. Today, Kia is responsible for 15,000 jobs at the plant and in the surrounding community.

Mr. Jackson played a key role in hiring thousands of those employees. A passionate worker, his enthusiasm for Kia and creating jobs cultivated a workplace that both blended corporate business and human needs.

Randy had an almost unique way about him. Somehow, he was able to be comfortable and at ease while projecting that he had full control over every situation that might arise. Randy’s way was a remarkable blend of personality, caring, and expertise.

Randy’s presence was felt beyond the walls of Kia—and will be for many years to come. He was, for example, involved in the THINC Academy, which strives to support the education of future generations of good employees.

While Randy Jackson was a dedicated company man, he was also a devoted family man. He is survived by his wife of 35 years, Deborah Jackson. He was the proud father of two children, James Randall Jackson, Jr., of Kentucky, and Jennifer Caley Jackson of Milner, Georgia. His parents, James Edward and Pauline Greer Jackson of Macon, Georgia, and a sister, Delbra Jackson Hayes, of Perry, Georgia, also survive him. Mr. Jackson was a very loving and doting grandparent to his granddaughter, Scarlett Anne. Mr. Jackson also had softness in his heart for his beloved Rat Terrier, Rambo Brodie.

Randy lived a life of hard work and love. He inspired those around him “to make every day better than yesterday.” His loss will be long felt at Kia and in the entire community. He made both better from his presence.

At the plant, they talk about the Kia Way, emphasizing teamwork and problem solving to make progress. We all know that Randy’s way was the Kia Way. The community and the plant will go on; the plant he helped to make sure that it would, but it won’t be quite the same without him.

Thanks, Randy, and until we meet again.

HONORING PORT ALLEGANY, PENNSYLVANIA, ON ITS 200TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to observe the 200th anniversary of the community of Port Allegany, McKean County, in Pennsylvania’s Fifth Congressional District.

Port Allegany was founded in 1816 as Canoe Place, located just 30 miles from the headwaters of the Allegheny River. True to its name—Port Allegany, which was bestowed in 1838—the settlement served as a port along the river for Native Americans and pioneers who would stop to build or repair canoes before traveling along the river.

Later in its history, Port Allegany became known for its glass manufacturing.

The first plant of the Pittsburgh Corning Corporation was constructed there in 1937, and glass block used in construction all over America are still built there.

Today you can still find people enjoying the outdoors in the settlement first known as Canoe Place. Tourism is a big part of the town’s economy, with visitors enjoying canoeing, kayaking, and fishing.

The celebration of Port Allegany’s anniversary will kick off Sunday and run through June 18 with plenty of activities, including an ice cream social, Pioneers Day picnic, a car cruise, and wagon rides.

HONORING FORMER OIL CITY POLICE OFFICER STANLEY FEDOREK

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Stanley Fedorek, a former police officer in Oil City, located in Venango County in Pennsylvania’s Fifth Congressional District. Mr. Fedorek was recognized just this week as the oldest member of the Fraternal Order of Police in Pennsylvania at the age of 98.

Fedorek has been a member of the Fraternal Order of Police for 68 years and received a certificate of appreciation and a commemorative letter from the organization.

Mr. Speaker, Stanley Fedorek is also a veteran, serving as a first sergeant in the United States Army in Italy during World War II. He joined the Oil City Police Department following his discharge and served as an officer up until 1968. He later worked security at Mellon Bank.

Mr. Fedorek has only missed two meetings in his time as a member of the Fraternal Order of Police, and he was still driving himself to those meetings at 95 years of age.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. Fedorek for his service to the Oil City community and to our Nation.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o’clock and 30 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.