

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

NAFTA

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, twenty-three years ago, the North American Free Trade Agreement revolutionized trade and investment between the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. We share thousands of miles of border with Canada and Mexico. They are our neighbors and our natural partners in trade and security. This partnership has been shaped by NAFTA.

I am a strong supporter of free trade. America's strength is closely connected to its economic well-being. When we break down trade barriers, American trade and American jobs increase. Trade is the lifeblood of my great home state of Texas. Last year in Texas almost one million jobs were supported by trade.

Texas has been the top exporting state in the U.S. for 14 consecutive years. The overwhelming majority of Texas exporters are not big corporations: 93 percent of Texas exporters are small- and medium-sized businesses. In my district in Houston, over half of the economy depends on trade. Houston has one of the largest ports in the world and is the oil and gas capital of the world. And guess where we Texans export the most—Mexico and Canada. Our NAFTA partners. But, Texas is just one of the many states that rely on NAFTA to fuel its economy. Study after study has shown that increased trade leads to increased jobs for Americans. More jobs mean more wealth for the average American citizen.

NAFTA supports 14 million U.S. jobs. Thanks to NAFTA, trade between the U.S., Mexico, and Canada has tripled. Nearly every industry is affected in one way or another by NAFTA. The U.S. economy needs a strong NAFTA. But free trade agreements like NAFTA do more than just grow our economy. Trade is one of our best tools of foreign policy. We have seen the connection between free trade and freedom, opportunity, and prosperity again and again. When we signed NAFTA, Mexico was a developing country. Its economy was one of the most closed in the world.

Now, thanks in part to NAFTA, Mexico has an open economy valued at \$2.2 trillion. This growth has made Mexico a more stable neighbor. This increased trade between our three countries has also deepened our ties with Mexico and Canada, allowing us to work together on many critical issues.

Today, we cooperate with the Mexican government on issues of border security, immigration, and the fight against organized crime and drug trafficking. Our southern border security depends on our joint efforts with Mexico. Cooperation with Canada also improved due to NAFTA. Our forces train and work together to defend North America. We fight side by side against national security threats like ISIS and partner as NATO members. These are some

of the most critical issues to our national security and to the security of our world.

That brings me to the reason we are all here today; to address the renegotiation of this critical free trade agreement. A lot has changed in 23 years. The internet has transformed the way companies do business. Reforms in Mexico have created new opportunities for U.S. businesses. The renegotiation presents an opportunity to update the agreement in areas like energy, e-commerce, customs and trade facilitation, and many others to strengthen and promote trade. While there is a lot of opportunity to strengthen the agreement, there is also the risk of hurting U.S. businesses and workers.

Hundreds of thousands of jobs across North America could be at risk if we pull out of NAFTA, or if we weaken the agreement. We could also do damage to our partnerships with Mexico and Canada that have made North America so strong. There has been harsh criticism of NAFTA for decades. But we must separate the rhetoric from the facts. The fact is that NAFTA has benefited all three of our countries.

So, I encourage the administration to strengthen and modernize NAFTA. There is always room for improvement. We have a rare opportunity here to rewrite the rules of North American trade. But we must take this opportunity to rewrite them for the better. It is important to the U.S. economy and national security that throughout the renegotiations the administration focuses on reaching an agreement that promotes free trade.

We are sending a message to our current and future trading partners through this renegotiation. The U.S. should send a strong signal of our support for free trade. A strong U.S. economy depends on a strong framework for free trade. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses how the administration can strengthen NAFTA.

HONORING BENJAMIN DUNCAN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Benjamin Duncan. Benjamin is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1376, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Benjamin has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Benjamin has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Benjamin has served as the Senior Patrol Leader, become a Brotherhood Member of the Order of the Arrow, and earned the rank

of Fire Builder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Benjamin has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Benjamin designed and completed 15 wooden benches for an outdoor worship area for the Antioch Community Church in Kansas City, Missouri.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Benjamin Duncan for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

**CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1,
TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT**

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 19, 2017

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Republican tax bill and to the misguided priorities that the GOP has brought to policymaking this Congress.

There was a time when it was taken for granted that Congress would wait for Congress' independent scorekeeper to evaluate the impact of any legislation on the deficit or the budget before passing any laws. People knew that the deficit mattered to the government's ability to provide for our children and grandchildren, and to the economy their ability to provide for themselves. Republicans, especially, professed to know that the deficit mattered.

It was especially unthinkable that Congress would pass important legislation, like tax reform, without waiting for a cost estimate of the bill. As recently as March, my colleague Rep. BRADY said that economic growth from any tax reform package would need to be "not economic growth judged by us, but by the Independent Joint Committee on Taxation."

The GOP should care about the deficit. We haven't been able to reauthorize CHIP funding since it expired months ago, because Republicans won't support health insurance for children without funding offsets. If only they had the same concerns when it comes to tax cuts for their donors and for President Trump.

Republicans will start to care about the deficit again when Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, or other programs for the low-income are debated by Congress. Just like CHIP, these programs cost far less than the more than \$1.5 trillion that this tax cut will cost, but they might be too expensive for the GOP.

There was also a time not too long ago when Republicans, as much as Democrats, legislated for the common good, or at least their conception of it. It's clear that those times are past.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

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

HONORING THE LIFE OF GILBERTO
F. OLIVA, SR.

HON. MATT GAETZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the life of the premium cigar patriarch, Mr. Gilberto Oliva, founder of Oliva Cigar Co. Gilberto passed away peacefully in a hospital in South Miami on Saturday, December 16, 2017, surrounded by his family and close friends.

As a young tobacco farmer in Cuba, Gilberto built his endeavors on the blueprint of the American Dream. As an early adult, he moved from his family farm to pursue tobacco trading. The growing conflict under the Cuban dictatorship forced Mr. Oliva to flee to Nicaragua where he became a pioneer in tobacco cultivation.

While Nicaragua was his home, Gilberto's business grew all over the world, including Honduras, Mexico and the Philippines. His product quickly became known around the world for its quality. In 1995, he established his own brand of cigar, and in 2006, he launched the Oliva Serie V, which Cigar Aficionado Magazine named Cigar of the Year in 2014.

In early 2016, Mr. Oliva was honored by the Asociación Nicaragüense de Tabacaleros, the Nicaraguan Tobacco Association, with a lifetime achievement award. Yet for all his many successes, he never forgot his roots. He yearned for a free Cuba, and he instilled in his children a respect for personal responsibility and hard work.

Gilberto is succeeded by his wife Carmen, his five children—including my former colleague and friend, Florida House Representative Jose Oliva—and his fourteen grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I want to recognize the life of Gilberto F. Oliva. He was a great man, a world leader in the field of cigar manufacturing, and the patriarch of a wonderful family.

JIM CRITCHLEY'S RETIREMENT

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize and celebrate Fire Chief, Jim Critchley, on his retirement from the Tucson Fire Department.

Fire Chief Critchley began his Emergency Service career in 1982 with an EMT class. He worked in a few private agencies as an instructor, firefighter, EMT and security guard. He joined the Tucson Fire Department in 1988 and was promoted through the ranks first as a Paramedic, Captain, Training Captain, Operations Battalion Chief, Training Chief, Operations Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief of Training and Emergency Management and then, in 2011, became the Fire Chief.

Since 1992, Mr. Critchley has been an active representative on the State Fire Training Association and the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association. He served on the Western Fire Chiefs

Association board as State Director, Vice President and President from 2003 through 2012. He also served on the International Association of Fire Chiefs board until 2014.

Fire Chief Critchley received a MBA from the University of Arizona, a Bachelor's degree in Fire Service Management from the Arizona State University, and an AAS in Fire Science from Pima Community College. In 2008, he was selected as Chief Fire Officer of the Year by the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association. Most recently in September 2017, Jim was inducted into the Arizona Fire Service Hall of Fame. Jim is married and has three children. We would like to thank Fire Chief Jim Critchley for his service and dedication to the city of Tucson and the state of Arizona.

HONORING JACEN HAEFNER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jacen Haefner. Jacen is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 264, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jacen has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jacen has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jacen has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jacen Haefner for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

**IN RECOGNITION OF THE NORTH
CAROLINA A&T FOOTBALL TEAM
FOR THEIR HISTORIC SEASON
AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
WIN**

HON. TED BUDD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. BUDD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the undefeated MEAC and 2017 Celebration Bowl Champions. I'm speaking of course of the North Carolina A&T Aggie football team.

Last week, as time expired in the Celebration Bowl, the Aggies made their nation proud with a last second touchdown to secure their second Celebration Bowl victory in just three years. And with that win, the Aggies became the first MEAC team to go undefeated as they won their second HBCU national title under head coach Rod Broadway.

Mr. Speaker, 'A Champion Has Risen' indeed, and that champion, is the A&T Aggie Football Team.

Congratulations to the esteemed Dr. Harold Martin, Sr., to Coach Broadway and his team, and also to the offensive and defensive MVP's

of the game, Marquell Cartwright and Mac McCain for their performances.

I am honored to represent this historic and honored institution in Washington, and they have made me, their community, and most importantly, the 'Aggie nation' proud with their win.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in honoring North Carolina A&T for their historic season and national championship win.

SAUDI TEXTBOOKS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is time to hold the Saudis accountable for playing the role of both arsonists and firefighters when it comes to terror. Saudi Arabia is a crucial ally in counterterrorism. Yet at the same time, their educational curriculum promotes hatred and violence towards other religions. This is the very rhetoric that breeds terrorism.

For nearly 15 years, Saudi Arabia has pledged to remove all extremist content from their school textbooks. Yet to this day textbooks include material that, for example, encourages "fighting" any infidel who refuses to submit to the supremacy of Islam. Another example comes from a textbook on Islamic culture that teaches that "Christianity in its current state is an invalid, perverted religion." A high school textbook on monotheism further calls all "infidels," as "enemies of Islam and its adherents."

And this is just a taste of the extremist content in Saudi textbooks. A tenth-grade textbook claims that Zionism spreads "drugs and sexually transmitted diseases . . . in many Islamic countries." Even more, a middle school textbook glorifies jihad, instructing students that those fighting jihad "should be given transportation, weapons, food and anything else they may need to continue their jihad." Content in Saudi textbooks is so extreme that ISIS used official Saudi textbooks for its schools in 2015 until they could publish their own materials.

The problem is compounded when we realize that these textbooks are not just used in the Kingdom. Saudi educational materials are exported throughout the world. This kind of indoctrination at home and abroad runs counter to Saudi Arabia's efforts in counterterrorism and our crucial cooperation with Saudi Arabia in the fight against terrorism. Saudi Arabia cannot be allowed to continue promoting textbooks that include language that is intolerant, furthers conspiracy theories, and encourages violence towards others.

That's why Representative KEATING and I, as Ranking Member and Chair of the Terrorism Subcommittee, have introduced H.R. 4549, the Saudi Educational Transparency and Reform Act. This bill will require the State Department to conduct an annual review of Saudi Arabia's textbooks. This review will show if Riyadh is fully implementing its repeated commitments to removing extremist content. It will also help the U.S. decide if we should continue issuing a waiver for Saudi Arabia as a country of particular concern for its religious freedom pursuant to the International Religious Freedom Act. Terrorism has