

HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN PORTAGEVILLE, MO

HON. JASON SMITH

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 2, 2018

Mr. SMITH of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor First Baptist Church of Portageville, Missouri on the occasion of its 150th Anniversary.

The church was founded on November 4th of 1868, when a small group in Portageville organized around a collective sense of faith and worship. The original congregation met in a log building erected in the 1850's, later moving into the local masonic lodge, which they shared with the freemasons. Since the early 1900's, First Baptist Church has met in one of three buildings at its current location.

First Baptist Church has the distinction of being the oldest church in the membership of the New Madrid Baptist Association, which is composed of the Southern Baptist congregations in New Madrid and Pemiscot Counties.

Today, the church has 306 members and is involved in local and nationwide missions. The church provides Bibles for distribution through the local RAIN (Reaching All In Need) Food Ministry, and also hosts weekly meetings for foster parent training.

For continuing its work of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ through 150 years of change and challenge, it is my great pleasure to honor First Baptist Church today before the United States House of Representatives.

TRIBUTE TO ELLA MAE WRIGHT

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 2, 2018

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, Ella Mae Wright passed away in Knoxville, Tennessee on September 27th, at the age of 101. She was a great wife, mother, business woman, and all-around good citizen of the type that has made this country great.

Mrs. Wright and her husband J.B. were married for 67 years. They founded Wright's Cafeteria which still today is one of Knoxville's most popular eating establishments. It was once described in a Knoxville newspaper as my "favorite restaurant."

Mrs. Wright's pride and joy were her three children, David, Janice, and Calvin, and her seven grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

She could often be found in the Cafeteria, greeting customers, most of whom she considered as longtime friends. She was always smiling and offering encouraging words to everyone.

During her 101 years, she lived her Christian faith every day and touched thousands of lives in good and positive ways. This Country is a better place today because of the life Ella Mae Wright led.

I wanted my colleagues and others to know about this good woman and great American.

HONORING GINA TAYLOR WITH CALIFORNIA'S THIRD DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 2, 2018

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Gina Taylor as a woman of the year. She is committed to serving children throughout her community and devotes her time to many volunteer organizations. As president of the Willows Unified School District Board she works with other board members to ensure the school district provides a safe and engaging learning environment where each student has the opportunity to realize their full potential, develop respect and tolerance for others, and ultimately become a productive member of the community. Ms. Taylor is an integral part of realizing the school district's mission of preparing today's students for tomorrow's challenges. The time she devotes to the school board is a true testament to how much she values education. Ms. Taylor was also a founding member of The Painted Ladies, a group that worked to fill the gaps in school budgets by cleaning and painting classrooms throughout the district. This work helped to provide a positive learning environment for countless students. She has also given her time volunteering for the Clover 4-H Club, the Glenn County 4-H Council, the Willows High Ag Boosters organization, and the Sober Grad event. Ms. Taylor is a dedicated community servant who can be depended upon to find a positive approach to each objective she pursues. Her accomplishments throughout Glenn County are truly remarkable.

CONSTITUENT COMMENTS ON SOBER LIVING HOME PROBLEMS

HON. DANA ROHRBACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 2, 2018

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise again regarding the hearing held by the Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice on September 28, 2018, on the issue of sober living homes. At that hearing, I had the privilege of testifying in support of my bill, H.R. 5724, to restore local oversight over sober living homes. As part of my testimony, I submitted to the Subcommittee letters from many of my constituents about problems with sober living homes caused by current federal law preventing appropriate local oversight. For the benefit of my colleagues and the American people, I include in the RECORD the eighth group of these constituent letters below:

These are examples of what our neighborhood has had to endure since the Sober living home has opened in our neighborhood. As some of the new tenants moved in they introduced themselves as a bunch of college students. These tenants moved out within two weeks. We believe this was a ploy by [REDACTED] get the start in the neighborhood without attracting attention. Since they moved in, our neighborhood has had to put up with cars parked illegally up and down the street. When confronted, the tenants of the house use profanity and extremely rude language and gestures.

The neighborhood is on constant alert due to activity on our street and in and out of the house all hours of the night and day. Specifically, one-night last week a tenant walked out with a backpack around 1:00 a.m. and met with a stranger who was dropped off in our neighborhood earlier. The two were observed cooking heroin. The police were called and showed up. The two ran off along with a third person waiting in the sober liv-

ing house back yard. When the police arrived this person and the one doing the drugs went home to home trying to get into houses. All of this was verified and collaborated via the many cameras in the neighborhood. One vehicle kept at the house, which is usually parked on the street, appears to be a drop point. People drive up and place something in the trunk and later a tenant will pick up whatever has been dropped off and bring it into the house.

Our entire neighborhood has turned into a place where we do not feel safe. Our children must call before they come home so we can escort them into the house. The house has two aggressive pit bulls who have gotten out and pinned a neighbor inside her car unable to leave. When animal control arrived, the dog was put in the house and one tenant said to the officer it's not my dog and left.

These are examples of what our neighborhood has been dealing with. Some other concerns are the property values as several long time homeowners are already talking about selling to get away from the element that has moved in. This home in question is less than 1000 feet from a school. The school has been notified and parents that drop off their kids for school will be notified about this house. This can negatively affect the attendance of the school.

The local police say there is nothing they can do, the city council tell us there is nothing we can do, this is our neighborhood and should not be driven out because of greed, or loopholes in the laws and insurance scams. We would hope Congress would give the local city's authority to regulate and set rules for these kind of houses, and the ability to shut them down for illegal activity.

LESS TAIT,

Huntington Beach, California.

My parents purchased their home in Huntington Beach, CA in 1977. I grew up in Huntington Beach, went to college and returned to the city to build my life. I purchased my residence in Huntington Beach in 2000. My family has loved living in Huntington Beach. However, our lives drastically changed in the last year.

The couple that lived next door to my parents purchased their home 41 years ago as original owners. They raised three children in the home like my parents. They unfortunately passed away recently, and their children sold the home in November 2017. For months the home was under construction, but my parents didn't think much of it. Then earlier this year we noticed the neighbor had a large white commercial style van outside, installed a fire sprinkler system with a red bell above the front door, and divided the bonus room into two rooms. We discovered from the person renovating the home that instead of a large family, it was going to house single people. The property records show the home was purchased by a lawyer representing a LLC business and that LLC business was owned by a business called [REDACTED]. We assume it is a sober living home for men, but it may be some other type of facility operated by [REDACTED].

On February 24, 2018 was the first time I experienced a problem. I went over to visit my parents from 8:30 am to 9:30 am. I sat in a chair in the family room. We had the windows closed. I smelled a strong smoke smell in the home. I didn't know where it was coming from. I left after one hour and had a headache for six hours after.

From February 24, 2018 to April 8, 2018, I visited my parent's home about ten times. Every time I visited I smelled smoke in the home, backyard and/or front yard and experience health symptoms (burning eyes, coughing, shortness of breath, headache and/or feeling of sickness). I did not smell smoke or experience health symptoms prior to February 24, 2018. I experienced these symptoms even with the operation of multiple HEPA filters purchased to get rid of smoke.

On Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018, at about 10:30 pm I came to pick up some food. During the ten minutes I was at my parent's home I coughed the entire time. I was not coughing before coming to the home and didn't cough after I returned to my car.

There was some pollutant entering my parent's home and garage from next door that caused me to cough. During this visit I didn't smell smoke, so it may have been a different chemical coming from next door.

I am very concerned about the health impacts of the second-hand smoke and chemicals I am being exposed to in my parent's home. I filed a complaint with the City of Huntington Beach code enforcement on April 8, 2018 following my Easter Sunday experience. Due to the symptoms my parents were experiencing, my mom contacted the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and filed multiple complaints about the smoke; however, SCAQMD inspection staff stated they cannot take action against a residence, even though the sober living home is a business. Typically, SCAQMD will issue a notice of violation for businesses causing air pollution and nuisance. My parents also filed complaints with the City of Huntington Beach code enforcement. In addition, they have been filing complaints with the operator of the home, [REDACTED]. The operator has made small changes, but my family is still significantly impacted by the smoke and/or chemicals (a sweet smell presumably vapes from e-cigarettes) nearly 24 hours a day, every day.

My parents are elderly, have medical conditions that are known to be exacerbated by smoke and chemicals (which are also covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act), and are constantly being exposed to indoor and outdoor air pollution from the smoke and chemicals originating from next door. I am worried about my parent's health and if the exposure from the sober living home will cause premature death. My niece and nephew are toddlers and I am concerned about their health when they come visit their grandparents. We smell the chemicals in the living room and kitchen where we spend most of our family time. We are unable to use bedrooms in the home because those rooms are filled with air contaminants and are now unsuitable for sleeping. The sober living home next door has caused significant stress and caused emotional toll for my family.

Second-hand smoke has proven health impacts and according to the Centers for Disease Control "There is no risk-free level of second hand smoke exposure; even brief exposure can be harmful to health." In addition, the California Air Resources Board has identified second hand smoke as a "Toxic Air Contaminant". Reports are now coming out about the health impacts of e-cigarettes.

In addition to having a sober living home next door to my parents, eight homes down the street is a detox home owned by [REDACTED]. The neighbor of this home is the child of another original family in the neighborhood. The current family has young children and has been negatively impacted by the detox home from smoking, bad language, and too many vehicles parking. In addition, the parents have found needles at the local park, so their children no longer visit the park.

In the last couple months, I have noticed groups of people standing on the curb in my condo complex smoking. In eighteen years of living at my residence, I have never seen this before and the general population smoking rates in California are decreasing. I would not be surprised if there is a detox or sober living home in my condo complex, but my homeowner association says they are "not allowed to ask." The property next to mine is currently on the market and I have decided if a detox or sober living home moves next door, I will sell my property and "cash out." I do not want to handle the stress of another detox or sober living home.

Yesterday, I was driving down [REDACTED]. (a major street in Huntington Beach). In a one mile stretch between [REDACTED], I saw three addiction treatment centers on one side of the road. Most likely each one of them has a network of detox and sober living homes nearby. Huntington Beach is now known on the Internet as the national "Rehab Rivera."

Huntington Beach property values are going to be drastically impacted. Realtor Magazine published an article on October 17, 2014, stating there is an eight to 17 percent

reduction in home values when homes are within one-eighth of a mile from a residential treatment center. When my parents attempt to sell their home and they disclose there is sober living home next door and a detox home eight homes down the street, it is common sense that the home will have a lower value. If they don't disclose the location of the homes, they can be sued by the buyer for non-disclosure. It is a lose-lose situation for the large number of families that have detox and sober living homes in their neighborhood.

When the health insurance runs out or a person is kicked out for breaking the house rules, they are left on the sidewalk. Many of these people become homeless since they don't have the money to pay for transportation home. In addition, when addicts relapse they can commit crimes to get money for the next fix. I have noticed a significant increase in number of homeless people in the city and heard reports from neighbors of an increase property crime. Huntington Beach used to pride itself as being one of the safest cities in America and that was a major reason my family chose to live in this community.

The sober living home next door to my parents has totally changed my family's quality of life. Detox and sober living homes should not be in residential areas. They should not be able to destroy other residents' health, quality of life, and property values. In addition, Huntington Beach should only have the necessary facilities to serve our local population.

PREETI GHUMAN,
Huntington Beach, California.

I live next door to a home rented out to [REDACTED], a sober living business, in Huntington Beach, CA, for one year & seven months. The clients are brokered from all over the United States. The owner is making \$9,000 in monthly rent compared to the average of \$3500.

A second home just sold in August on my side of the street—three doors down and is also a so called sober living home.

Never know who is coming and going—more than 6 in the home—not counting the manager (who has a job and is not monitoring the group on a regular basis). Fourteen last summer.

One death in March—went unnoticed in the house for eight hours before authorities were notified. Two drug overdoses—last one in July called 911 himself.

Drug deals—at night
Needles thrown in my backyard
NOISE—any time—day & Night
Loud music, talking, screaming, cursing
Physical fights spilling onto street
Cars/motorcycles—on the street (3-7 at any given time)
Sex in cars
Cigarettes butts thrown all around my property.

Cigarette smoke—cannot sit outside, front & back
Trash overflowing from trash cans—maggots, flies, stench
Gum-wads spitted on my driveway
Trash in front of our house/street
House across the street fell out of escrow twice after learning of SLH presence—Our property values going down

No longer live on a beautiful, peaceful, quiet street where my grandchildren can visit.

JEANNE KULPINSKI,
Huntington Beach, California.

1) All of them involve sketchy loud and obnoxious yelling, or very loud talking.

2) They are up late hours.

3) Others have saws going at 7 am to cut gates in fences. They don't care about neighbors. Not invested in neighborhood since they're transients.

4) And the 3 are ALL together with the corporate office in one of them too. So, the other 2 are acting in their BEST BEHAVIOR so they're not bothering the boss and get kicked out!

5) Biz belong in commercial areas, not residential!

6) And they need Local control & regulation like ALL BIZ have to have! Why do they get special exception?

The law needs to be changed to fix the lack of supervision & abuses!

1) Require city code enforcement & PD to monitor and cite violations for abuses.

2) 3-Strikes & ur out of biz! SLHs would bring the hammer down on violating clients to avoid losing that free \$ gig.

3) Ban leaving those clients who run out of insurance \$, being kicked out on the curb. Use that obscene \$ to pick them up and transition them safely back to the real world. Sober transition houses.

4) Ban more than 1 SLH in a single-family tract home.

#NoBizInResidential!

BRUCE WAREH,
Huntington Beach, California.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF MR. FIRMAN BALZA

HON. MIKE GALLAGHER

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 2, 2018

Mr. GALLAGHER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of the life, legacy, and service of Green Bay native, Mr. Firman Balza.

Mr. Firman Balza was one of America's last surviving servicemen from the infamous attack on Pearl Harbor. Answering the call from his country, Firman signed up for the 34th Division of the U.S. Naval Reserves in Green Bay in 1940 at the age of 17. He entered the Navy a few months later and was assigned to the USS *Maryland* in April of 1941. The USS *Maryland* would leave for Pearl Harbor in July of 1941; Firman was aboard the vessel as a gunner's mate first-class at the time of the attacks.

The morning of December 7, 1941, Firman was preparing for Mass when he saw the first Japanese bombers flying overhead. Mass that morning would have been aboard the USS *Oklahoma*. The USS *Oklahoma* was moored next to the USS *Maryland* in the harbor when it suffered major damage and capsized. Firman bravely ran into the face of danger and took up arms as he defended the base with anti-aircraft guns. He later helped pull his deceased brothers-in-arms from the sunken ship. Four hundred-sixty men perished on the *Oklahoma* that day, and the *Maryland* lost five.

During the four days following the attacks, Firman and his fellow soldiers rescued 32 men from the hull of the *Oklahoma*. Firman continued his brave service to the country for three years on the USS *Maryland* participating in Guadalcanal, the Battle of Tarawa, and the Battle of Kwajalein Atoll. After the war, Firman was assigned to the USS *Bayfield* APA 33 and was sent to the Marshall Islands for atomic bomb tests at Bikini Atoll. On February 7, 1947, he was discharged from the Navy after six years and seven days on active duty.

Firman was one of more than 16 million ordinary people who did extraordinary acts during World War II. His willingness to begin sharing his story in 2003 at the age of 80 allowed many across Wisconsin, including students across northeast Wisconsin, to hear his account of that day. It was in 2003 that he first visited the Punch Bowl Cemetery in Hawaii and realized he wanted to be a voice to tell part of the story of those 2,335 servicemen and women who perished on that day of infamy. If Firman left one message with all he spoke to, it was "Truly, man has got to learn to get along with each other."

Mr. Balza was 95 when he passed away on October 10, 2018. He was born September 25, 1923, to Theophile and Mary Balza, the