

HONORING THE LIFE OF CAROL CONNOLLY, POET LAUREATE OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life of an extraordinary woman, Carol Connolly, Poet Laureate of Saint Paul, Minnesota. Carol passed away on November 23rd at the age of 85.

Carol lived her entire life to the fullest in her beloved hometown of Saint Paul, and there was no greater joy than her family, raising 7 children and nurturing 15 grandchildren and great grandchildren. In addition to being the heart of a large, loving family, she was active as a catalyst, connector and collaborator for her dynamic community. One of her dear friends aptly observed that “all roads to and from Saint Paul lead through Carol Connolly.” Inspired by the peace and civil rights movements, she was busy throughout her life volunteering for countless organizations, causes and candidates, not to mention running for political office herself. She truly became the change for good that she wanted to see in the world.

Her artistic side shined just as bright, writing and publishing countless poems, plays and columns—and mentoring new writers along the way. At the 2006 ceremony where she was named Poet Laureate, she read one of her poems that captures the essence of this great American city where “neighborhoods are the foundation of our freedom,” “a place where, regardless of background, neighbors care for neighbors and the greatest strength is found in coming together: “A storm thunders along the river as it roams through the city, home to some of us for 2,000 years. Home to others of us who left our native lands to escape famine, or war, or worse, and we are all immigrants.”

Carol’s boundless generosity and care for others touched the lives of so many—from her family and friends to strangers. Through her poetry, humor, advocacy and contagious enthusiasm and support for the arts and art makers in our community, she was determined to make the world a better place, and she did. Above all, she was a devoted and beloved mother and grandmother, sister and aunt. It was always clear how deeply she valued the lives of people around her.

It was an honor to call Carol a friend and a neighbor for many years. Her selfless encouragement of others, especially of writers and women running for office, continues to inspire me and so many others throughout our community.

Madam Speaker, please join me in celebrating the outstanding life of Carol Connolly, Poet Laureate of Saint Paul, Minnesota.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 6395, WILLIAM M. (MAC) THORNBERRY NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2020

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address section 1242 of William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2021, Clarification and Expansion of Sanctions relating to Construction of Nord Stream 2 or TurkStream Projects.

On July 20th of this year during House consideration of this bill, I rose in opposition to the amendment that added this provision to the NDAA, which targeted the Nord Stream 2 project with additional sanctions. I was concerned that these sanctions would target the wrong entities. Rather than deterring Russia and Putin, I was worried that it would be used to target European or American companies.

Fortunately, through the conference process, in which I was a conferee as Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, we were able to improve on the language that passed the initial House and Senate bills. The conferees decided to include an exception for certain governments and governmental entities. This change was an important and appropriate fix to ensure our allies and partners would not be targeted by sanctions under this provision.

As a conferee on this provision, I want to make clear that the term “government” means any level of government in those countries, including local and municipal governmental entities or authorities, and the term “business enterprise” does not include any entity that performs any public functions or otherwise has any public responsibilities.

I also want to commend my fellow conferees for agreeing to expand and include new language requiring, before the imposition of any sanctions pursuant to this provision, consultations by the Secretary of State with the governments of Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and member countries of the European Union. It is imperative that these consultations are true exchanges of views with the governments described, including EU member countries and institutions, conducted well before any sanctions would be imposed. The consultations must be deliberative and meaningful, and should take place at the Foreign Minister level or higher. Simple notification of a determination to proceed with the imposition of sanctions is not a consultation and would not fulfil the requirements of section 1242.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation to my House and Senate colleagues for working with me to make sure this extremely difficult issue is handled with precision. In this revised provision, I think we got much closer to that goal.

BENEFICIARY ENROLLMENT NOTIFICATION AND ELIGIBILITY SIMPLIFICATION ACT OF 2020

SPEECH OF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2020

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2477, BENES Act of 2020, which has been amended to include H.R. 5534, the Comprehensive Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage for Kidney Transplant Patients Act. I advanced both bipartisan bills through my Health Subcommittee and I’m proud to support them on the Floor today.

The BENES Act introduced updates the Part B enrollment process for the first time in 50 years. It requires Medicare to notify people nearing eligibility about their rights and responsibilities, protecting beneficiaries from a lifetime of financial penalties for failure to enroll promptly.

While most beneficiaries are still automatically enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B at age 65 because they’re receiving Social Security benefits, a growing number of Americans are not.

In 2016, only 60 percent of Medicare-eligible 65-year-olds were taking Social Security, compared to 92 percent in 2002.

The federal government provides virtually no notification to people who are nearing Medicare eligibility about their responsibilities, including if they must actively enroll.

If you do not enroll in Part B at age 65, then you are required to pay a Part B Late Enrollment Penalty that accrues at 10 percent of the current Part B premium for every year a person should have been—but was not—enrolled in Part B.

The BENES Act requires the federal government to notify people nearing Medicare eligibility about their rights and responsibilities.

The BENES Act also allows coverage to begin more quickly post-enrollment, with Medicare coverage beginning on the first of the month or the first of the following month when a person enrolls.

The BENES Act has been championed by the Medicare Rights Center and over 70 other organizations dedicated to helping Medicare beneficiaries. I’m proud that the House is finally taking this much needed vote and I look forward to this important bill being passed by the Senate and signed into law.

As part of this bill, the House will also pass the Comprehensive Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage for Kidney Transplant Patients Act, championed by Representatives KIND and BURGESS for many years. I’m proud to be an original sponsor of this commonsense policy that will save money and, more importantly, lives.

Today, while Medicare covers a lifetime of dialysis, but kidney transplant recipients currently lose their Medicare coverage 36 months after transplant. Without Medicare coverage for needed immunosuppressive drugs, transplant patients risk losing their new kidney. This legislation closes that gap by continuing coverage for kidney transplant recipients which a nonpartisan HHS analysis found would save 375 kidney transplants each year.

Like the BENES Act, advocates have been fighting for this immunosuppressive coverage

for years. I thank the members of the Honor the Gift coalition for their dedication to helping kidney transplant recipients stay healthy and well, and I urge my colleagues to support these commonsense bills to improve the Medicare program for seniors and kidney patients.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEBBIE DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

Mrs. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, while proxy voting for other members on the floor, I failed to cast my own vote on H.R. 8354—Servicemembers and Veterans Initiative Act of 2020. Had I voted, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 239.

HONORING MAURICE R. “HANK” GREENBERG

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, it is incumbent upon us to acknowledge patriots who have fought to secure and strengthen the cherished liberties that every American citizen holds dear. Maurice R. ‘Hank’ Greenberg is one of those patriots who has devoted his life to embracing and advancing the American spirit.

Hank’s father died when Hank was six years old. The family moved to upstate New York to a dairy farm where a very long and back breaking day’s work was a common reality. Like so many others, he and his family were barely scraping by. Soon, America was at war.

At 17, Hank left high school, enlisted in the Army and was attached to the 5th Ranger Battalion which stormed the beaches of Normandy. Later, Hank was a member of the forces that liberated the concentration camp at Dachau. Hank remained in the U.S. Army Reserves as a first Lieutenant. When the Korean War broke out, Hank returned to service, rising to the rank of Captain. For his extraordinary military service and sacrifice in the European Theater and Korea, Hank was awarded the Bronze Star and the Award for Meritorious Unit Commendation. He was also bestowed with the prestigious Commandeur of the French Ordre National de la Legion d’Honneur.

Between his years of military service, Hank finished high school, college and then law school. He credits the G.I. Bill with the opportunities he has had in his life. “It helped me build AIG (American International Group)” he said, which, under his leadership, became the largest insurance company in the world. Hank is currently chairman and Chief Executive Officer of C.V. Starr, a diversified financial services firm.

Hank’s service in our Armed Forces warrants our gratitude. His years as an American and international corporate leader, a visionary of globalization, an innovator, and philanthropist who has changed lives for the better in the United States and around the world are equally stellar and illustrious. And, at the age of 95, Hank is as involved as ever.

Hank is the Honorary Vice Chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations and Vice Chairman of The National Committee on United States-China Relations. He is the past Chairman and Director of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Personally, and as Chairman of the Starr Foundation, one of the largest private foundations in the United States, Hank oversees disbursement of major financial support to institutions worldwide. I have personally seen the transformational change he has made in the lives of thousands of older adults at the Hebrew Home at Riverdale, a nationally renowned center for the aging, which I have had the great honor to represent for my 32-year term. In acknowledgment of Hank’s longstanding support, the Hebrew Home has named its campus the Maurice R. and Corinne P. Greenberg Campus.

Let us acknowledge the extraordinary accomplishments of a great American and veteran, a champion of freedom, a patriot, a man who has been able to unite countries and human beings for the betterment of our greater good.

IN HONOR OF KARYL MATSUMOTO

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Karyl Matsumoto as she completes her remarkable service on the South San Francisco city council. She served a record 23 years, including four terms as Mayor. When you do the math, Karyl has been on the council for nearly $\frac{2}{3}$ of her years as a resident of South San Francisco. One has to ask if she ever had a moment to simply take a leisurely walk along the bayfront.

South San Francisco has changed remarkably since Karyl joined the council. Its population grew by 10,000 to a total of 68,000. In the Oyster Point area, biotechnology powerhouse Genentech and sister companies are rapidly replacing traditional uses such as warehouses, food factories, airline-related businesses and transportation enterprises. The Caltrain station is moving and apartments are being constructed by the hundreds within walking distance of this location and the city’s BART station. The city has also become more diverse, with approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of its residents being of either Asian or Latino descent.

Karyl has contributed to many of these changes. For example, she has served for over a decade on boards of the county’s transportation authority and Samtrans, the provider of bus services and management of the local train service. In South San Francisco, she strongly advocated for moving the train station. Her years as a Samtrans director are among her proudest achievements. She sought to build the bus service into one that takes care of San Mateo County’s wage earners, while also adapting the system to offer new express service, such as the pre-COVID line from Foster City to San Francisco.

It costs a lot to live in San Mateo County. Average rent in South San Francisco is \$3,000 per month. Karyl Matsumoto realized that it was impossible for many to survive if they had to earn \$120,000 per year or more just to pay rent and avoid debt. She was the

first on her council to propose an increase of the minimum wage to \$15 per hour starting January 1, 2021, and her colleagues adopted that proposal. She also championed affordable housing and balancing jobs with housing in order to protect lower-income residents.

During the course of her multi-decade-long public service career, Karyl Matsumoto has served on over 30 community groups and boards of nonprofits. Examples include the Peninsula Family YMCA, the San Mateo County Japanese American Citizens League, the Skyline College President’s Council Advisory Board, and the United Way Community Impact Committee. She also founded the city’s youth commission.

She worked for our esteemed colleague Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO when Congresswoman ESHOO served on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, and for former State Senator Quentin Kopp. She co-founded the South San Francisco Community Outreach Program to bring together residents, businesses and advocacy groups on behalf of seniors, residents with special needs and other vulnerable residents.

As a councilwoman, Karyl Matsumoto was fiscally conservative and supported building the city’s tax base to provide funds for such largescale community efforts as the new 911 and police operations center. She also serves as one of two liaisons with the school district and on the Caltrain Modernization committee, keeping an eye on the progress of a \$2 billion electrification project for our regional train system.

As she makes her case to colleagues, Karyl is known for saying, “Ergo,” and if she forgets someone’s name while making a point you might hear her say “Whosewhatis” as a placeholder. These endearing mannerisms signal that a significant point is about to be made because Karyl doesn’t let anything—even a momentary mind freeze—get in the way of the public’s interest.

Madam Speaker, I can say without fear of contradiction that Karyl Matsumoto has made a tremendous difference in South San Francisco and throughout the county. We know her as an eager public servant who has a vast knowledge of the history of her city and of public policy. When she leaves, decades of perspective will go with her. All of us in the community thank her for a job well done and hope she can relax and leave the hard work of civic policymaking to others. After decades at the wheel, Karyl is getting off the bus. Her final stop, a stop called “success,” is just beyond the bus door.

RECOGNIZING WILSON COUNTY SHERIFF JOE D. TACKITT, JR.

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Sheriff Joe D. Tackitt, Jr. after 28 years of dedication and service to Wilson County, Texas.

Sheriff Tackitt was elected in 1992 and over the course of his career, he worked tirelessly to keep his community safe. Through his hard work and efforts, he helped bring the Criminal Justice Center to Wilson County and improved