EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

INSPECTOR GENERAL PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. TED LIEU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 5, 2021

Mr. LIEU. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 23, the Inspector General Protection Act, a straightforward, bipartisan bill to protect the role of our inspectors general, Since Congress passed the Inspector General Act of 1978, inspectors general have played a crucial role in our democracy.

These government watchdogs root out waste, fraud, mismanagement, and abuse at all levels of government—saving the American taxpayer billions of dollars annually and ensuring government programs benefit the People. One Government Accountability Office study concluded that the 73 Offices of Inspectors General saved taxpayers $43.3 billion in 2009, marking roughly an $18 return for every dollar invested in our nation's inspectors general. By making inspectors general independent from the agencies they oversee, Congress signaled the importance of nonpartisan oversight that defines their role today. Our legislation, the Inspector General Protection Act of 2021, ensures the independence and integrity of our nation's inspectors general by combating two threats to these offices,

First, H.R. 23 requires notification to Congress in advance of an inspector general being placed on paid or unpaid non-duty status, or incurring a change in status. This ensures Congress is aware of any potential attempts to improperly sideline an inspector general. Second, the bill requires the President to report to Congress if an inspector general has not been nominated within 210 days after a vacancy occurs for the position, including the reasons a nomination has not been made and a target date for doing so. This reasserts Congress' oversight role and allows Members to question—on an informed basis—the decision of any future administration to leave core offices vacant, which has historically been an all-too-common practice among presidents of both parties.

I would like to express my gratitude to several individuals for this legislation. First, to the late Elijah Cummings, the kind and generous former Chairman of the House Oversight and Reform Committee, who worked tirelessly to ensure the United States Government worked for all people, including by doggedly rooting out waste and fraud. He first passed the Inspector General Protection Act through the Oversight and Reform Committee two years ago. Since then, the House has signaled its support for this legislation by passing the bill in numerous forms, including as part of the HEROES Act in May 2020.

Next, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, Representative JODY HICE from Georgia, for joining me in co-leading this bipartisan, commonsense legislation. Congressman HICE has been a valuable partner on numerous oversight initiatives, including our recent Oversight.gov Authorization Act, which was signed into law as part of the omnibus package last week. I thank him and his staff in the personal office and on Committee for their continued partnership. Finally, my thanks to Chairwoman CAROLYN MALONEY for her tireless work to hold those in power accountable to the people—including by supporting our many initiatives to strengthen our inspectors general.

Chairwoman MALONEY is an invaluable leader in the fight for good government. I urge my colleagues to support this narrowly tailored yet crucial legislation to protect our nation's inspectors general, saving the taxpayer billions of dollars and ensuring the government works for the people.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 11, 2021

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I was absent from the House Chamber on January 5, 2021, to attend a funeral in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted yes on Roll Call number 9.

HONORING BRENT GROOME

HON. TOM RICE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 11, 2021

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary South Carolinian, Brent Groome.

Mr. Groome has served Horry Telephone Cooperative and the region's telecommunications industry over the last three decades. He currently serves as Chief Executive of Corporate Communications and Government Relations but will be retiring this month. Throughout his tenure, Brent has served as a strong advocate for telephone and broadband advancements in South Carolina.

Brent has certainly achieved many accomplishments over his career. He has demonstrated consistent engagement and a commitment to excellence while serving on numerous industry boards during his career in telecommunications. Brent's commitment to the community goes beyond his career. He has been a tireless ambassador for many local non-profit and philanthropic organizations.

Madam Speaker, I join his family and the people of Horry Telephone Cooperative in recognizing Brent Groome. We thank him for his service and commitment to our community.

REMEMBERING FURMAN STEWART BALDWIN

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 11, 2021

Mr. SWALWELL. Madam Speaker, along with Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER, I rise to recognize the life of World War II veteran, Furman Stewart Baldwin, who passed away on December 7, 2020 at his home, in Millbrae, California.

Furman was born on August 27, 1922, in Buffalo, New York. As a child he spent time on school, working in his father's professional photo studio, and doing gymnastics. It was through gymnastics that he met the love of his life, Margaret, who everybody called Peg or Peggy.

In 1943, Furman and Peggy married, and he was commissioned as a U.S. Navy officer and pilot. He was active in the Pacific theater.

Furman finished his bachelor's degree after the war and started working in television, at WBEN in Buffalo. While working in live television at WBEN, eventually becoming a producer/director, he also went back to school; he earned a master's degree at the University of Buffalo.

After 15 years at WBEN, Furman became head of the Audiovisual Branch of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He received several awards at West Point, including the Department of Defense Thomas Jefferson Award for excellence in television production, before retiring in 1986.

Following retirement, Furman and Peggy enjoyed traveling the world together. When she developed health problems, Furman always stayed with Peggy; they eventually moved to the San Francisco Bay Area to be closer to their children.

After Peggy passed away in 2010, Furman enjoyed time with his friends and working on his computer. He even made video shows, ''Furman's Flicks,'' to entertain follow residents at his assisted living home.

Furman demonstrated the best the ''Greatest Generation'' had to offer. He is also remembered for his commitment to his family, his love of life, his artistic stained glass work, and the famous photo he took in 1947, ''Il Baccio.''

Meaning ''The Kiss,'' the photo shows a young boy kissing a young girl. Another young girl looks on, seemingly mad that the boy is not kissing her. The two-year-old boy in the picture was his son, Furman Stewart Baldwin, Jr.

Furman Baldwin, Jr., survives Furman, along with his other children, Claire Harrison, and Ronald, grandchildren Justine, Eric, and Alexandra, and great-grandchildren Melissa and Megan. Predeceasing him were his wife, son Frederick, and grandson Michael.

Our deepest condolences go out to Furman's friends and loved ones.

● 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.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 11, 2021

Mr. BRADY. Madam Speaker, I am proud to have worked side-by-side with President Trump to enact historic tax reform, free and fair trade with Mexico and Canada, the repeal of the ObamaCare mandate and taxes, a ban on surprise medical bills, and the first reform of the IRS in two decades. His policy achievements have lifted working families across America.

Distrust in America's election system has been growing for two decades and is only growing worse. That is the true threat to democracy. For that reason, I gave unwavering support for President Trump to pursue all legal avenues and investigations. On December 10, 2020, I joined 125 of my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives in signing the Amicus Brief to the Texas petition to the Supreme Court of the United States. The Texas suit presented election irregularities and advocated the Court hold states accountable for following their own election laws. Unfortunately, the Court refused to review the case.

Due to a COVID–19 diagnosis, I am unable to participate in today's proceedings in the U.S. House. If I were, I would remain true to the conservative Constitutional principles of states' rights, limited Congressional power over presidential elections, and the Electoral College by accepting the Electoral College votes as legally certified by each state.

Article II of the Constitution and the 12th Amendment are clear. As angry as we may be about this election, we do even more harm if we weaken the Constitution, allow Congress to seize more power to choose future presidents, and undermine the Electoral College.

If either party in Congress can simply ignore the elected slate of a state for political reasons, aren't we replacing 150 million votes with 535 in Congress? Doesn't that change ''We the People'' to ''We the Congress''? Democrats in the past have blatantly attempted to overturn elections in Congress and seize more of this electoral power for Congress. It was a violation of the Constitution then, and remains so today.

I deeply respect my fellow Republicans who see this issue differently.

I worry that if we help undermine the Electoral College out of frustration and anger, we lend fuel to the liberal national popular vote scheme, inevitably we will one day stand on the sidelines as voters in only the largest cities determine our President.

Our nation's founders rejected this as dangerous to our nation's governance. I do too.

The Electoral College ensures we have a President who is accountable to all the nation, and can be a Republican, a conservative, or a grassroots outsider if America so chooses.

IN HONOR OF SANDRA LEE FEWER

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 11, 2021

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sandra Lee Fewer as she departs the San Francisco Board of Supervisors after serving for four years, and after serving for a total of 12 years in elective office in San Francisco. The city is losing a tremendous advocate for small businesses, working families and struggling residents.

Sandra Fewer and her husband, John, have lived in the Richmond District of San Francisco for over 50 years. They have three children, Sara, Colleen, and Rory and the family has deep roots in the community. Her husband spent 35 years on the police force and retired from the Richmond District station.

Her children attended public schools and Sandra spent those early years as a PTA President for 12 terms. She also participated in school site councils, teacher appreciation days and organized numerous school events. As her participation in the community grew, so too did the recognition that she was a natural leader. She was elected to the Board of Education in 2008 and re-elected in 2012. In 2014, she served as Board President.

There is so much about Sandra that can be summed up in a single word: Heart. For example, from 2001 to 2009 she served as the Executive Director of Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth. This organization advocates for young people across multiple issues impacting them in San Francisco, and before many major policymaking bodies. Homelessness, closing the school achievement gap, and hunger were just a few of the causes she and student advocates took up.

She was elected to the Board of Supervisors in 2016, took office in 2017, and became the first female to represent her district. As a Supervisor, Sandra was described by a local business owner as an outstanding advocate for small businesses. This observation was made before the pandemic.

Now, as she walks through the Richmond, she can see struggling small restaurants and stores that are boarded up. Recently, San Francisco offered these companies loans and grants, which Sandra supported. One Richmond, an organization that she created, encourages residents to shop locally. It also encourages neighbors to help neighbors by volunteering in the community. Its motto is, ''Have you done your One Richmond thing today?''

Sandra takes seriously her job of helping those who need the most help. For example, she successfully pushed to obtain a state grant to create a nonprofit affordable housing developer that will someday build needed housing in her district. She supported creation of a public bank by the City of San Francisco in order to provide banking services and economic development to communities ignored by traditional banks.

She supported Proposition E that will facilitate the building of affordable housing and housing for educators throughout San Francisco. 65% of her constituents are renters and she's offered them protections through her votes on the board and through these difficult times of the pandemic. Long after her term in office, her legacy of offering aid to those in need will produce results for those she served.

She indicates that when she leaves office she will garden and renew her friendships, many ''on hold'' due to her board duties these past three years. Gardening will join meditating as a hobby that she enjoys more frequently with John.

Soon, this woman of Washington High School, City College, Golden Gate University, and the fictional but illustrious Richmond District School of Hard Knocks, from which she graduated magna cum laude, will leave the public stage. She departs having earned decades of well wishes built from a lifetime of community service. On her website, she stated that as a Supervisor she would be a caretaker for the residents of the Richmond District. She also noted that she understood that elective office is a trust. She amply demonstrated both during her time on the board.

Madam Speaker, I salute San Francisco Supervisor Sandra Lee Fewer upon her departure. We may someday see her on Clement Street in one of the small shops or restaurants, and we'll wonder what she's doing. Make no mistake. Whatever her more obvious activity is at that moment, Sandra's broader purpose will be as it always has been: To remain a member of her community and a friend to all of goodwill.

IN HONOR OF MR. DAN RIVERA OF LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. LORI TRAHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 11, 2021

Mrs. TRAHAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the leadership and legacy of a great leader and friend, Mayor Daniel ''Dan'' Rivera, who will retire as the 59th Mayor of the City of Lawrence, Massachusetts. Mayor Dan Rivera is leaving his second four-year term in office early to become the President and CEO of MassDevelopment; the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' finance and economic development agency.

Mayor Rivera was born in New York City to a single mother who emigrated from the Dominican Republic in search of a better life for her family. His mother moved to Lawrence, Massachusetts to find work as a seamstress in the area's mills, and it was in Lawrence that Mayor Rivera was raised and began his career as a public servant.

After graduating from Lawrence High School, Mayor Rivera enlisted in the United States Army and became a Military Police Officer, serving in Germany, Iraq, and Kuwait. After his multiple tours overseas, Mayor Rivera returned home to attend the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Indeed, he became the first person in his family to graduate from college—something that he and I have in common.

Prior to being elected as the City's mayor, he worked tirelessly to improve the growth and economic development of the Merrimack Valley for its residents. As an economic development director for Congressman Marty Meehan, Mayor Rivera continued to bring critical investments to his hometown and communities across the Merrimack Valley.

Not long after, he was elected to the Lawrence City Council where he served as the Chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee. He provided key leadership in adjusting the City's budget in order to restore key services and personnel. Then-Councilor Rivera worked to diversify the Lawrence Police Department by making it a majority-minority department with 53% of the officers making up individuals of color and tripling the number of women on the force, more accurately representing the people of Lawrence.