

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

LONG-TERM CARE VETERANS CHOICE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 7158, the Long-Term Care Veterans Choice Act, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts and agreements for the payment of care in non-Department of Veterans Affairs medical foster homes for certain veterans who are unable to live independently.

Medical foster homes are private homes where a trained caregiver provides services to a few individuals. These facilities serve as an alternative to nursing homes, providing residents with the comfort of home with medical attention readily available.

Medical foster homes and caregivers must meet specific criteria to ensure that veterans receive the same level of care that would be provided in traditional Veterans Affairs facilities or nursing homes.

Caregivers must demonstrate the ability to provide care and supervision 24/7, communicate significant changes in a veteran's status, and have caregiving experience, along with other requirements.

The home where a veteran would be living must go through inspection with a VA multidisciplinary team, provide a home-like environment, meet National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Life Safety Code, and more.

The medical foster care program started in 2008 and has served over 1,000 veterans nationally. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the demand for medical foster homes is highest in rural areas, where veterans want to stay in the communities in which they are comfortable.

The Department of Veterans Affairs says that the home environment enriches the lives of veterans and their caregivers. Veterans who live in this type of setting tend to have fewer hospitalizations than those in institutional care or who live alone.

This program is providing our nation's veterans with a sense of belonging and community while also providing them with the medical care they need. Many veterans that are in medical foster homes report feeling like they are part of a family and supported.

It is estimated that there are 46,000 veterans in nursing homes across the country. Nursing homes do provide patients with the medical attention they need, but many patients miss the aspect of living in their community, in a home, and with family.

This bill would provide veterans from my home of Houston, Texas with the option to stay in their communities and be part of a family while receiving 24/7 care. Instead of stripping these veterans from their commu-

nities this bill will provide them with a way to be better engrained in their communities.

The Long-Term Care Veterans Choice Act would provide veterans who want to be at home with the ability to seek care that provides that level of support and familiarity.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 7158, Long-Term Care Veterans Choice Act. With the passage of this bill, we can give a sense of family back to many veterans who have been longing for a sense of normalcy.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF MAYOR RICK BONILLA ON THE CITY COUNCIL OF SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2022

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize my friend and colleague Mayor Rick Bonilla as his service on the San Mateo City Council comes to a close. Rick's record of accomplishment is impressive.

Rick and his wife Suzanne first moved to San Mateo in 1991. From 1998 to 2011, he was employed as a Field Representative by the Northern California Carpenters Regional Council. His time in public service began in 2001 when he was appointed to the Bay Meadows and Transportation Corridor Citizen's Advisory Committee. Bay Meadows was the largest redevelopment project in modern San Mateo history, and it was key to revitalizing the old site of Bay Meadows Racetrack. Rick offered his vision for land use and transportation, helping to shape the development into today's hub of high-tech industry, housing, local commerce, and recreation.

In 2006, he was appointed to the San Mateo Public Works Commission where he served for six years. He was then appointed to the Planning Commission where he served until 2015 when he was appointed to the San Mateo City Council. He was elected to his full term in 2017.

Rick Bonilla has embraced his public duties with vigor. For many years, he served as the council's representative on the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG, General Assembly). At ABAG, Rick sat on the all-important Regional Planning Committee. This committee established the methodology for determining each city's required housing allocation throughout the nine county San Francisco Bay Area. The numbers that arise from this methodology profoundly influence the cost of living for millions of Bay Area residents. Rick is a very strong advocate for housing, and also sits on the board of the Housing Endowment and Regional Trust (HEART).

Peninsula Clean Energy is our local government agency responsible for buying electricity

for nearly all businesses and residences in San Mateo County. Rick was instrumental in forming this agency and sits on its board. The agency is at the center of greening San Mateo County by offering rebates across many items that can be electrified, including vehicles and appliances, and by offering clean electricity at a price below that offered by our local public utility.

Rick also represents the council on the San Mateo County Council of Cities, the San Mateo-Foster City Public Financing Agency, and is a board member and Vice Chair of the South Bayside Waste Management Authority. He sits on the Congestion Management and Environmental Quality subcommittee of the City/County Association of Governments, and on a subcommittee of the League of California Cities. He is also responsible for four internal council committee appointments and is the chief representative to my office from the San Mateo City Council.

Now that I've listed Rick's committee assignments, let me take a few moments to speak about Rick Bonilla, the person. He is deeply dedicated to economic opportunity for all persons. Over the years, my staff and I have had countless conversations with Rick about opportunities for high school students to join the skilled trades, the need to build enough housing so that broad segments of the population could afford to live in San Mateo, racial justice, and the need to protect and promote democracy. Rick would regularly attend my town halls and illustrate for the public the connection between local decisions and national issues, providing insights that attendees would not otherwise receive. He also participated as a guest during one of my telephone town halls.

Social justice is a particular passion for Rick. He is also dedicated to promoting public safety and ensuring that residents feel safe when interacting with the San Mateo Police Department.

As he leaves the city council, Mayor Bonilla has a lot of accomplishments of which he may be proud. On all major issues impacting San Mateo for nearly two decades, he's played a role in creating the prosperous future that emerged from those choices. Whether it was Bay Meadows, bicycle paths, the minimum wage or investments in parks, police and the environment, Rick always asked whether the decision made that night would withstand the test of time. He is thus a remarkable leader, dedicated not only to those who currently live in San Mateo but to generations yet to come.

I wish Rick Bonilla well in the years ahead. I know that his wife, retired special education teacher Suzanne Flecker, will want to get him out of their house because the man really has a lot of energy. I therefore look forward to seeing Rick around the Peninsula as he goes to public meetings, continues his volunteer work, and impacts San Mateo's civic life for years to come.

• 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.

BLAIR OAKS FOOTBALL STATE
CHAMPIONSHIP**HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2022

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Blair Oaks Falcons Football Team on their victory in the Class 2 State Championship.

Blair Oaks claimed the Class 2 title in 2004, 2006, 2018, and now in 2022. To secure their win, the Falcons endured a grueling 15-week season and won in a nail-biting game with a fourth quarter defensive stop. The Falcons should be commended for all their hard work throughout the past year and for bringing home the state championship to their school and community.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing the Blair Oaks Falcons for a job well done.

RECOGNIZING STEPHEN P. DAILEY, P.E., GENERAL MANAGER OF THE FAIRFAX DRAINAGE DISTRICT OF WYANDOTTE COUNTY

HON. SHARICE DAVIDS

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2022

Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Stephen P. Dailey, Professional Engineer and General Manager of the Fairfax Drainage District of Wyandotte County for his exemplary professional accomplishments.

Mr. Dailey's career in public service began after graduating from the University of Missouri-Kansas City with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering and becoming licensed as a professional engineer. He spent 14 years in the municipal well drilling industry prior to his time at Fairfax Drainage District.

Throughout Mr. Dailey's 30-year tenure as General Manager, he was responsible for protecting investments amounting to nearly \$6 billion in a 2,000-acre industrial park. He oversaw preparations and guided flood control operations for multiple record-breaking high-water events, a highlight that only begins to scratch the surface of 3 decades working in honorable service to Kansas.

Beyond supervising operation and maintenance of complex flood projection system comprised of 5 miles of levee, over 100 relief wells, 12 pump stations and a computerized communications network, Mr. Dailey spent 27 years serving on the Fairfax Industrial Association Board of Directors and over fifteen years as an active board member and committee chair of the Missouri and Associated Rivers Coalition, promoting water resource management for effective flood control and navigation works.

I've also had the pleasure of working with Mr. Dailey while in Congress. Last year, I had the pleasure of sponsoring community project funding to perform maintenance of the Fairfax Jersey Creek Upper Levee. I commend Mr. Dailey for his dedication to our state and to

our country, and the 120-plus businesses in the Kansas City, Kansas community he has tirelessly worked to support and protect.

STEVE CHABOT APPRECIATION**HON. JOE WILSON**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2022

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, throughout my service in Congress, I have been grateful to serve with Representative STEVE CHABOT of Ohio, including our time together on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. I will never forget our CODELS including to both Russia and China, with the bipartisan House Armed Services delegation in 2002. He is a valued public servant, and I am eternally grateful for his more than 20 years of service to Ohio's 1st congressional district and to the nation.

Throughout his life, STEVE has been a dedicated public servant. Prior to being elected to Congress in 1994, he served as a City Councilman in his hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio, and as a Hamilton County Commissioner for five years each.

During his time on the House Committee on Small Business, including as Chairman, STEVE has been a positive force for change, advocating for taxpayers, protecting small businesses, and fighting back against excessive government spending and regulations. He was a pivotal member in the implementation of the Paycheck Protection Program, which aided small businesses and saved over 50 million jobs nationwide.

As co-chairman, his service for country caucuses made a difference for appreciative allies from Taiwan to Turkey. He tirelessly promoted warm relations with valued allies.

As a Senior member on the House Committee on the Judiciary, he sponsored legislation to combat the opioid epidemic, defend the rights of the unborn, fight against internet child exploitation, and increase resources for those facing mental health challenges.

Today I am grateful to honor his service to the American people and wish him and his wife Donna the best in their future endeavors.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF THE HONORABLE ERIC RODRIGUEZ, COUNCILMEMBER, CITY OF SAN MATEO, UPON THE CONCLUSION OF HIS PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 5, 2022

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Eric Rodriguez as he steps down from the San Mateo City Council after serving for five years and ten months, with one year as Mayor.

Eric grew up in neighboring Belmont. Upon moving to San Mateo, he eventually served as his neighborhood's representative to the San Mateo United Homeowners Association and

as a member of the Aragon Neighborhood Association Board of Directors from 2013 through 2016. In 2015, he was appointed to the planning commission, serving until 2017.

In that year, he was elected to the San Mateo City Council. In his candidate's statement he argued for effective traffic planning to reduce gridlock, preservation of the neighborhood character of San Mateo, quality public safety and parks and recreation services, affordable housing and fiscal accountability. He received 6,266 votes.

Nowhere in his candidate statement did the word "COVID" appear.

Eric led San Mateo as Mayor from December 2020 to December 2021. These harsh times of pandemic required city services to be largely delivered remotely, city workers to support public health by arranging for testing and then early public vaccination sites, and an all-hands-on-deck approach to preserving public health. This included the difficult decision to enforce shut-down orders for public places. As the vital restaurant industry began to be devastated by the disease, Eric and his colleagues swiftly approved outside dining and offered financial support. When racial tensions rose because of actions in other cities that sparked nationwide outrage, Mayor Rodriguez spoke out on YouTube and stated that San Mateo stood united against hatred and all forms of racism. He also spoke in favor of the Police Athletic League (PAL), stating that building relationships between young people and the police was part of the solution to keeping fairness in the community.

During his time in office, Eric was a strong advocate for affordable housing developments to reduce income inequality in San Mateo. To his credit and that of his colleagues, a city parking lot near Caltrain is now under construction. Kiku Crossing is a 7-story apartment building that will offer 225 homes for those earning low incomes, and a new publicly accessible parking garage. This development could have been contentious, but Eric and his colleagues spent many hours educating the public about the benefits of this project.

Also begun during his term of office was a billion dollar+ upgrade to the city's wastewater treatment plant. It takes quite a bit of time to bring this kind of project to the stage of construction, but Eric and his colleagues supported an upgrade that is a credit to the objectives of the Clean Water Act and that will be a vital piece of public infrastructure for decades to come.

In his private life, Eric is presently the CEO of a health information website that he co-founded. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Police Activities League and the Rotary Club of San Mateo. He is a graduate of the Stanford Graduate School of Business where he received his M.B.A., and the University of California at Berkeley where he received his Bachelor of Science degree. He and his wife Shirley have one child, son Tyler. Now that he is leaving public life, there will be more personal time to enjoy with his family.

When the call of elective public service is made, most people turn a deaf ear. It then falls to a few to assume the reigns of authority, pursuant to endorsement via elections, and to bear the full commitment of time, energy and emotion on behalf of creating a better community for all. Eric Rodriguez answered the call, and the people of San Mateo are better because of his service. I wish Eric and his