

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2023

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, due to my attendance at the Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government's hearing and the delay in recessing the hearing for votes, I missed the first 2 votes on Thursday, July 20, 2023.

Had I been present, I would have voted YEA on Roll Call No. 361 and NAY on Roll Call No. 362.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3935, SECURING GROWTH AND ROBUST LEADERSHIP IN AMERICAN AVIATION ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3941, SCHOOLS NOT SHELTERS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BRENDAN F. BOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2023

Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a segment of the White House's Statement of Administration Policy in regard to Section 813 of the Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act:

Maintaining Safe and Secure Airspace During Major Sports Events. While the Administration supports the goal of providing accessibility to and public use of the national airspace, it is concerned that provisions proposed in the bill could introduce unnecessary risks to those attending major sporting events if the effectiveness of safety and security buffers currently provided by temporary flight restrictions were to be decreased. To the extent that the proposed provisions are intended to accommodate airshows, the Administration urges the Congress to consider alternative methods to deconflict airshows and major sports events rather than potentially put aviation operations in close proximity to events attended by millions of Americans each year.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2023

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I inadvertently cast a "NO" vote for House Amendment No. 36 to H.R. 3935, but I intended a "YEA" vote on Roll Call No. 346.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TROY BALDERSON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2023

Mr. BALDERSON. Mr. Speaker, on Roll Call No. 352, I mistakenly voted No when I intended to vote Aye.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ZONING COMMISSION HOME RULE ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTONOF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2023

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce the District of Columbia Zoning Commission Home Rule Act. This bill would give the District of Columbia the authority to appoint all members of the D.C. Zoning Commission (Commission). Currently, the membership of the Commission consists of two federal officials (the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) and the Director of the National Park Service (NPS)) and three members appointed by the D.C. mayor, subject to D.C. Council approval. The federal officials are members even though the Commission has no authority over federal property.

Land use is a quintessential local matter in our country. Despite the D.C. Home Rule Act, which gave D.C. authority over local matters, 40 percent of the members of the Commission are federal officials, who are unaccountable to the nearly 700,000 residents who live in D.C.. The federal government would lose nothing under this bill because the federal government's land-use interests in the nation's capital are protected by federal law and federal agencies.

The Commission creates the zoning maps and regulations, which must "not be inconsistent with the comprehensive plan for the national capital." The mayor is responsible for the local elements of the comprehensive plan, subject to Council approval. The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), which is the central federal planning agency for the federal government in D.C. and approves federal projects here, is responsible for the federal elements of the comprehensive plan. This bill would not alter the comprehensive plan process or the authority of NCPC and the Commission.

This bill would immediately remove the AOC and the NPS Director from the Commission, and the Commission would, at least initially, consist solely of three mayoral appointees. D.C. would have the authority to reconstitute the membership of the Commission through local legislation.

This is an important step to increase D.C. home rule, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HONORING TEOFILO "TIO" ARCHULETA TACHIAS

HON. GREG STANTON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2023

Mr. STANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and legacy of Teofilo "Tio" Archuleta Tachias. Arizona owes a debt of gratitude to Tio, who we lost at the age of 87 on July 6. Tio was an Arizona trailblazer, a champion for the Hispanic and Native communities, and a consequential leader who broke economic, social, and political barriers to forge a stronger path forward for our state.

Born in Cabezon, New Mexico, Tio and his family moved to Flagstaff, Arizona when he

was six years old. He would soon find his passion for public service when he volunteered for former President Harry S. Truman's presidential campaign at only 12. Tio eventually ran for office himself and became the first Latino in Flagstaff who won a major election when he was elected to the Coconino County Board of Supervisors. He continued his public service career with the Arizona Board of Regents and was selected as its president in 1984.

Tio was always one to advocate for causes greater than himself, and he was regarded as a humble king maker who seldom spoke and was hard to dislike, even by his political adversaries. He showed people what "boots on the ground" really meant and made it his mission to reach people wherever they were. Tio channeled his talents to turn out historic numbers of Native American voters throughout Arizona and ensure thousands of people can exercise their right to vote. His organizing led to historic elections including that of former Arizona Governor Raúl H. Castro, the first Hispanic governor of our state, as well as helping to elect the first Native American and African American to the Coconino County Board of Supervisors.

Tio mentored an entire generation of political leaders in Arizona, but above all, he cherished his role as a father, grandfather, great grandfather, and even great-great grandfather. Our community is fortunate to have bore witness to Tio's legacy and know that his impact will be felt by generations through the many lives he touched.

I thank you Tio, and Godspeed.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF RUTH ALVIA MUNCHUS BAKER

HON. MARC A. VEASEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2023

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life and legacy of Ruth Alvia Munchus Baker, a pillar of our Fort Worth community.

Ruth Alvia Munchus Baker was born June 16, 1931, in Fort Worth and completed her education at historic I.M. Terrell High School. In 1948, she began a devoted marriage and partnership with Herbert Baker and later became the proud mother of five daughters.

Mrs. Baker began working outside her home as her children entered school. She was employed in her family business at Baker Funeral Home for more than sixty years, serving in many roles, including receptionist, musician, lady attendant, beautician and cosmetologist, board member, and co-owner. Mrs. Baker was revered as a friendly and knowledgeable employee who knew how to do nearly every task associated with funeral services. Blessed with a long life, Mrs. Baker continued working for her family business well into her ninety-second year.

Mrs. Baker was also a woman of faith. Ruth began her journey starting at a young age at Saint John Missionary Baptist Church on Baptist Hill. She later would become a founding member of the Beth-Eden Baptist Church in Fort Worth. Later, she united with Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, where she served as a Trustee, Sunday School teacher, member of the Choir, Brownettes and General Mission.

In 2019, she united with Baker Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church under the pastoral leadership of Reverend Walter McDonald. There, Mrs. Baker was a Class Leader, member of the Church School, Prayer, and Daily Devotion ministries, while also participating in the monthly food give-away and in the Lay Organization.

My thoughts and prayers are with all those who knew and loved Mrs. Baker, particularly her extensive, loving family. May her memory last forever.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3935, SECURING GROWTH AND ROBUST LEADERSHIP IN AMERICAN AVIATION ACT, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3941, SCHOOLS NOT SHELTERS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2023

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 597, the rule providing for consideration of the reauthorization bill for the Federal Aviation Administration, H.R. 3935.

The rule blocks a large number of amendments that would make important reforms, including two germane amendments I offered that are critical to ensuring the Transportation Security Administration can continue to carry out its mission to secure aviation.

The first amendment would add the text of my legislation, the “Fund the TSA Act” (H.R. 3394).

TSA is facing major budget challenges as it works to implement essential reforms to pay and labor rights for its workforce.

That amendment would provide TSA with the funding it needs by making a modest increase to passenger security fees and ending the diversion of fee collections from TSA’s coffers.

The other amendment would add the text of my “Rights for the TSA Workforce Act” from the 117th Congress.

For too long, TSA workers have labored under unfair working conditions and on little pay, leading to low morale and high attrition.

Though the Biden-Harris Administration has thankfully taken action to address those disparities, the ongoing changes must be codified to ensure their permanence.

My amendment would do so by putting that workforce under the same personnel management system used by most Federal agencies.

TSA’s security efforts underlie the entire aviation system, so as we work to reauthorize the FAA and modernize that aviation system, it is a shame that Republicans’ Leadership refuses to allow this body to consider desperately needed changes to support the TSA.

Additionally, I am concerned that the rule precludes consideration of a bipartisan amendment submitted by the gentleman from Michigan, Congressman BERGMAN, to keep the retirement age of pilots at 65.

The current retirement age conforms with international standards, and Congress should maintain it to ensure the continued safety of aviation passengers.

Finally, I have strong concerns with section 813 of the underlying bill, and this rule does nothing to address those concerns.

Section 813 would severely weaken the existing regime for applying temporary flight restrictions to protect major sports events across the country.

Since the FAA established flight restrictions over open-air stadiums after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, they have helped protect millions upon millions of Americans attending large-scale events, with minimal disruptions to general aviation.

Section 813 risks undermining this long-successful security program by introducing a broad, complex, and unnecessary waiver program for aircraft, including drones, to fly near, over, and above crowded stadiums.

To the extent some may have concerns regarding scheduling conflicts between sporting events and airshows, a much more tailored solution could be developed.

As it stands, section 813 degrades homeland security, and I oppose its inclusion in the bill.

I include in the RECORD a letter from the National Football League, Major League Baseball, the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association expressing opposition to section 813.

I also include a Statement of Administration Policy from the Biden-Harris Administration, which states the following: “While the Administration supports the goal of providing accessibility to and public use of the national airspace, it is concerned that provisions proposed in the bill could introduce unnecessary risks to those attending major sporting events if the effectiveness of safety and security buffers currently provided by temporary flight restrictions were to be decreased. To the extent that the proposed provisions are intended to accommodate airshows, the Administration urges the Congress to consider alternative methods to deconflict airshows and major sports events rather than potentially put aviation operations in close proximity to events attended by millions of Americans each year.”

With that, I urge my colleagues to oppose H. Res. 597.

JULY 18, 2023.

Dear Members of Congress:

We write to urge you to oppose the weakening of a law that protects the millions of sports fans and spectators who attend professional and collegiate sporting events each year. The current statutory ban on aircraft—including unmanned aircraft systems (“UAS”) or drones—flying over large stadium sporting events throughout the country provides necessary safety and security protections against real and potential threats.

We are deeply concerned about section 813 of the House version of the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) Reauthorization Act. If adopted, the language would establish a broad and complex waiver program that would permit countless aircraft to fly near and over stadiums during games, putting millions of fans at risk, and unnecessarily so. Congress wisely eliminated a similar waiver program back in 2003, after discovering troubling and persistent failures, gaps, and vulnerabilities in the process for conducting background checks and issuing waivers.

The FAA first established flight restrictions over large stadium sporting events immediately following the terrorist attacks of

September 11, 2001, in response to concerns about terrorists using aircraft as weapons. Congress subsequently twice codified and strengthened these restrictions, providing specific criteria for aircraft operations permitted within the flight restricted area. Section 813 would effectively eliminate the specific criteria and replace it with an open-ended waiver program.

The long-standing, congressionally mandated flight restriction enhances the safety and security of large stadium events, while minimizing the disruption to the National Airspace System (“NAS”). Specifically, airspace over large stadiums—with a seating capacity of 30,000 people or more and where a NFL, MLB, and NCAA Division 1 football games or major motor speedway events, such as NASCAR and INDYCAR races, are taking place—is closed to all aircraft from one hour before until one hour after a major sporting event. The flight restrictions extend to three nautical miles from the center of the stadium and from the surface to 3,000 feet above the stadium. The flight restrictions do not apply to authorized aircraft, such as Department of Defense, law enforcement or air ambulance flight operations, or those in contact with air traffic control for take offs and landings at nearby airports, among others.

Having devoted substantial resources to secure our stadiums on the ground, we regard the stadium flight restriction as essential to safeguarding the airspace overhead. Moreover, given the proliferation of UAS in our NAS, as well as the continuing need to remain vigilant to other current and emerging risks, the stadium flight restriction is as vital now as ever to our national security and public safety. We believe section 813 complicates the airspace over stadiums, compromises public safety and security, and courts potential disaster.

We, therefore, urge you to uphold current law and maintain existing flight restrictions that protect the safety and security of millions of fans who attend large stadium sporting events every year.

Sincerely,

CATHY LANIER,
Chief Security Officer,
National Football
League.

DAVID THOMAS,
Vice President, Secu-
rity and Ballpark
Operations, Major
League Baseball.

BILL RHODES,
Managing Director,
Security, National
Association for Stock
Car Auto Racing.

DAN GAVITT,
Senior Vice President,
National Collegiate
Athletic Association.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY
H.R. 3935—SECURING GROWTH AND ROBUST LEADERSHIP IN AMERICAN AVIATION ACT

The Administration supports enactment of a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill and applauds the bipartisan work of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The Administration is focused on ensuring that the aviation sector works well for the American people, and reauthorizing the FAA in a timely manner will help achieve that goal. H.R. 3935, the Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act, would enhance aviation safety; invest in, and improve on-the-job safety for, our aviation workforce; integrate into the national airspace system new entrants such as Advanced Air Mobility and Commercial Space operators; strengthen passenger rights; and improve our aviation infrastructure.