

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE DICKSON STRING QUARTET AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the members of the Dickson family who are committed to their education and love for the art of music. That is why parents Raymond and Theresa Dickson chose to simultaneously enroll four of their children at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Music Majors Ashley, Benjamin, Brandon and Daniel Dickson receive lessons and recite together as a string quartet, under the tutelage of the "Arianna String Quartet", the University's quartet-in-residence. It is believed to be the only resident quartet in a public university in the United States. The Dickson family chose Florissant, Missouri to maintain a strong support structure for their University students.

Prior to moving to Florissant, Raymond, Theresa and their ten children had been living in Battle Ground Washington a suburb of Portland, Oregon for several years. The children were home-schooled. Most of them elected to learn an instrument. Over time, four of the eldest Dickson's began performing together as the Dickson String Quartet.

While honing their skills at the Britt Festival in Jacksonville, Oregon, they caught the collective ears of the Arianna String Quartet, who were guest instructors at the two-week string quartet academy. "When people hear them, I don't think they can help but be drawn in," Arianna violist Joanna Mendoza told University of Missouri-St. Louis Magazine.

The feeling was mutual for the Dickson's, who desired a continuation of their studies with the Arianna. Working with the university, members of the Arianna were able to create an opportunity for the four Dicksons to enroll together and learn as an ensemble with University of Missouri-St. Louis' resident quartet.

With the Dickson String Quartet ranging in age from 16 to 20 and never having attended a public school at the time of their enrollment at University of Missouri-St. Louis, Raymond and Theresa decided to move their family to maintain a support structure for the new university students.

The Dickson students have thrived at University of Missouri-St. Louis. They've quickly established a reputation as leaders and role models in the Department of Music and Pierre Laclède Honors College. They participate in several performance ensembles, play together as "the quartet for worship" at their local church and have several standing ovations through their performances as a sibling quartet.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to the Dickson family and I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring them.

JUSTICE AND EQUITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES MERCHANT MARINE

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today to correct an injustice that has been inflicted upon a group of World War II veterans, the World War II United States Merchant Mariners.

World War II Merchant Mariners suffered the highest casualty rate of any of the branches of service while they delivered troops, tanks, food, airplanes, fuel, and other needed supplies to every theater of the war.

Compared to the large number of men and women serving in World War II, the numbers of the Merchant Mariners were small, but their chance of dying during service was extremely high. Enemy forces sank over 800 ships between 1941 and 1944 alone.

Unfortunately, this group of brave men was denied their rights under the G.I. Bill of Rights that Congress enacted in 1945. All those who served in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force or Coast Guard were recipients of benefits under the G.I. Bill. The United States Merchant Marine was not included.

The Merchant Marine became the forgotten service. For four decades, no effort was made to recognize the contribution made by this branch of the Armed Services. The fact that Merchant Seamen had borne arms during wartime in the defense of their country seemed not to matter.

No legislation to benefit Merchant Seamen was passed by Congress until 1988 when the Seaman Acts of 1988 finally granted them a "watered down" G.I. Bill of Rights. Some portions of the G.I. Bill have never been made available to veterans of the Merchant Marine.

In addition, they still have not received proper recognition as veterans for Social Security purposes. If they had the "veteran" designation, their Social Security would be calculated as if they had earned \$160 more a month than they did earn during their time in service in the Merchant Marines. Of course, what this means is a smaller Social Security check, now that they are retired.

While it is impossible to make up for over 40 years of unpaid benefits, I propose a bill that will acknowledge the service of the veterans of the Merchant Marine and offer compensation for years and years of lost benefits. H.R. 23, the "Belated Thank You to the Merchant Mariners of World War II Act of 2011," will pay each eligible veteran a monthly benefit of \$1000, and that payment would also go to their surviving spouses. It will also give them the Social Security that they are due by providing them with the status of "veteran" under the Social Security Act.

The average WWII-era Merchant Marine is now well into his 80s. Many have outlived their savings. An increase in their Social Security

and a monthly benefit to compensate for the loss of nearly a lifetime of ineligibility for the G.I. Bill would be of comfort and would provide some measure of security for veterans of the Merchant Marine.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting and co-sponsoring this legislation. We can fix the injustices endured by our Nation's Merchant Marines by passing H.R. 23 as quickly as possible.

HONORING TANNER JOSEPH DALMAN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Tanner Joseph Dalman. Tanner is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Tanner has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Tanner has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Tanner has earned the rank of Senior Patrol Leader. Tanner has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Tanner designed and constructed an open shelter for Jesse James Park in Kearney, Missouri, a task that included many long weekends this past fall.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Tanner Joseph Dalman for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

THE SENIORS' HEALTH CARE FREEDOM ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Seniors' Health Care Freedom Act. This act protects seniors' fundamental right to make their own health care decisions by repealing federal laws that interfere with seniors' ability to form private contracts for medical services. This bill also repeals laws which force seniors into the Medicare program against their will. When Medicare was first established, seniors were promised that the program would be voluntary. In fact, the original Medicare legislation explicitly protected a senior's right to seek out other forms of medical insurance. However, the Balanced Budget Act

• 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.

of 1997 prohibits any physician who forms a private contract with a senior from filing any Medicare reimbursement claims for two years. As a practical matter, this means that seniors cannot form private contracts for health care services.

Seniors may wish to use their own resources to pay for procedures or treatments not covered by Medicare, or to simply avoid the bureaucracy and uncertainty that comes when seniors must wait for the judgment of a Center from Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) bureaucrat before finding out if a desired treatment is covered.

Seniors' right to control their own health care is also being denied due to the Social Security Administration's refusal to give seniors who object to enrolling for Medicare Part A Social Security benefits. This not only distorts the intent of the creators of the Medicare system; it also violates the promise represented by Social Security. Americans pay taxes into the Social Security Trust Fund their whole working lives and are promised that Social Security will be there for them when they retire. Yet, today, seniors are told that they cannot receive these benefits unless they agree to join an additional government program!

At a time when the fiscal solvency of Medicare is questionable, to say the least, it seems foolish to waste scarce Medicare funds on those who would prefer to do without Medicare. Allowing seniors who neither want nor need to participate in the program to refrain from doing so will also strengthen the Medicare program for those seniors who do wish to participate in it. Of course, my bill does not take away Medicare benefits from any senior. It simply allows each senior to choose voluntarily whether or not to accept Medicare benefits or to use his own resources to obtain health care.

Forcing seniors into government programs and restricting their ability to seek medical care free from government interference infringes on the freedom of seniors to control their own resources and make their own health care decisions. A woman who was forced into Medicare against her wishes summed it up best in a letter to my office, ". . . I should be able to choose the medical arrangements I prefer without suffering the penalty that is being imposed." I urge my colleagues to protect the right of seniors to make the medical arrangements that best suit their own needs by cosponsoring the Seniors' Health Care Freedom Act.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL COMMISSION ON PRESIDENTIAL WAR POWERS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce a bill that will create a national commission to examine fundamental questions regarding national security, civil liberties, and the rule of law. These include: What actions are permitted in the name of national security? What rights and liberties should a free people demand? Can the so-called Imperial Presidency be controlled?

These questions take on greater significance every year. The power of the Presidency seems to grow and grow under both parties, and the ability of our democratic institutions to constrain it seems more and more uncertain.

In the current political atmosphere, I believe that an expert commission with appointments made by both branches and individuals of both parties would be uniquely positioned to evaluate the issues and propose steps that the Congress can take to enhance both our liberty and our security for generations to come.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BALANCED BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to reintroduce legislation that will amend the United States Constitution to force Congress to rein in spending by balancing the federal budget.

We have a spending addiction in Washington, D.C., and it has proven to be an addiction that Congress cannot control on its own and which is bringing dire consequences. We have gone in a few short years from a deficit of billions of dollars to a deficit of trillions of dollars. We are printing money at an unprecedented pace, which presents serious risks of massive inflation. Our national debt recently surpassed an astonishing \$14 trillion and continues to rapidly increase, along with the waste associated with paying the interest on that debt.

Our first Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, warned of the consequences of out-of-control debt when he wrote: "To preserve [the] independence [of the people,] we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between economy and liberty, or profusion and servitude." Unfortunately, it increasingly appears that Congress has chosen the latter path.

Our current Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, issued a similar warning when she recently declared: "I think that our rising debt levels [sic] poses a national security threat, and it poses a national security threat in two ways. It undermines our capacity to act in our own interest, and it does constrain us where constraint may be undesirable. And it also sends a message of weakness internationally." Despite these warnings, Congress has refused to address this crisis.

Congress' spending addiction is not a partisan one. It reaches across the aisle and afflicts both parties, which is why neither party has been able to master it. We need outside help. We need pressure from outside Congress to force us to rein in this out-of-control behavior. We need a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution.

That is why I am introducing this legislation, which garnered 179 bipartisan cosponsors in the 111th Congress. This bill would amend the Constitution to require that total spending for any fiscal year not exceed total receipts and require the President to propose budgets to Congress that are balanced each year. It would also provide an exception in times of

war and during military conflicts that pose imminent and serious military threats to national security.

Furthermore, the legislation would make it harder to increase taxes by requiring that legislation to increase revenue be passed by a true majority of each chamber and not just a majority of those present and voting. Finally, the bill requires a 3/5 majority vote for any increases in the debt limit.

Our federal government must be lean, efficient and responsible with the dollars that our nation's citizens worked so hard to earn. We must work to both eliminate every cent of waste and squeeze every cent of value out of each dollar our citizens entrust to us. Families all across our nation understand what it means to make tough decisions each day about what they can and cannot afford and government officials should be required to exercise similar restraint when spending the hard-earned dollars of our nation's citizens.

By amending the Constitution to require a balanced budget, we can force the Congress to control spending, paving the way for a return to surpluses and ultimately paying down the national debt, rather than allow big spenders to lead us further down the road of chronic deficits and in doing so leave our children and grandchildren saddled with debt that is not their own.

This concept is not new—49 out of 50 states have a balanced budget requirement.

Our nation faces many difficult decisions in the coming years, and Congress will face great pressure to spend beyond its means rather than to make the difficult decisions about spending priorities. Unless Congress is forced to make the decisions necessary to create a balanced budget, it will always have the all-too-tempting option of shirking this responsibility. The Balanced Budget Constitutional amendment is a common sense approach to ensure that Congress is bound by the same fiscal principles that guide America's families each day.

I urge support of this important legislation.

THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY PROTECTION ACT

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, the roots of our broken immigration and employer verification system can be traced to three underlying factors: too many unreliable documents, including the Social Security card; a faulty employment verification system; and lax enforcement. The cornerstone of any immigration and border security reform plan must include an effective employment verification system and enhanced enforcement of our immigration laws. My bill, H.R. 98, the Illegal Immigration Enforcement and Social Security Protection Act, provides a strong foundation on which to build upon.

The 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act created the I-9 system for employers to verify the work authorization status of prospective employees. Currently, there are 26 documents that individuals can use in 102 different combinations to establish work authorization status in the U.S. While well intentioned, this

program forces employers to be identification experts while allowing unscrupulous employers to hire illegal immigrants.

The 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act sought to improve reliability of the I-9 system by creating the Basic Pilot Program, now known as E-Verify, which allows employers, on a voluntary basis, to use an online system to verify the work authorization status of new employees by checking validity of the Social Security numbers with the Social Security Administration. The implementation of this program has been a step in the right direction. However, several studies have found that the E-Verify program is unable to detect identity fraud, allowing those with valid, but stolen documents, to secure employment.

H.R. 98 builds on the E-Verify program by creating an easy to use electronic verification system based on a secure, tamper-proof Social Security card, which employers can use to electronically verify the work authorization status of prospective employees. The new card includes a digitized photo of the cardholder, as well as an encrypted electronic signature strip, allowing employers to instantaneously verify a prospective employee's work authorization status with the Department of Homeland Security's Employment Eligibility Database, either through a toll-free number or electronic card-reader.

H.R. 98 also increases penalties for employers who hire illegal immigrants or fail to verify their employment eligibility by increasing fines to \$50,000 from \$2,000, applying jail sentences of up to 5 years per offense, and requiring the employer to pay for deportation. In addition, the bill adds 10,000 new DHS personnel whose sole responsibility will be to enforce employer compliance and prosecute those who illegally employ illegal immigrants.

Mr. Speaker, with newly improved document standards, employers will have a much higher degree of confidence in their hiring decisions. This will help to prevent the hiring of unauthorized workers and stop illegal immigration.

HONORING DANIEL FRANCIS
BURKE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Daniel Francis Burke. Daniel is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Daniel has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Daniel has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Daniel has earned the rank of Senior Patrol Leader. Daniel has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Daniel designed and constructed an open shelter for Jesse James Park in Kearney, Missouri, a task that included many long weekends this past fall.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Daniel Francis Burke for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

INTRODUCING THE SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFICIARY TAX REDUCTION ACT AND THE SENIOR CITIZEN'S TAX ELIMINATION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce two pieces of legislation to reduce taxes on senior citizens. The first bill, the Social Security Beneficiary Tax Reduction Act, repeals the 1993 tax increase on Social Security benefits. Repealing this increase on Social Security benefits is a good first step toward reducing the burden imposed by the Federal Government on senior citizens. However, imposing any tax on Social Security benefits is unfair and illogical. This is why I am also introducing the Senior Citizens' Tax Elimination Act, which repeals all taxes on Social Security benefits.

Since Social Security benefits are financed with tax dollars, taxing these benefits is yet another example of double taxation. Furthermore, "taxing" benefits paid by the government is merely an accounting trick, a shell game which allows members of Congress to reduce benefits by subterfuge. This allows Congress to continue using the Social Security trust fund as a means of financing other government programs, and masks the true size of the federal deficit.

Instead of imposing ridiculous taxes on senior citizens, Congress should ensure the integrity of the Social Security trust fund by ending the practice of using trust fund monies for other programs. This is why I am also introducing the Social Security Preservation Act, which ensures that all money in the Social Security trust fund is spent solely on Social Security. At a time when Congress' inability to control spending continues to threaten the Social Security trust fund, the need for this legislation has never been greater. When the government taxes Americans to fund Social Security, it promises the American people that the money will be there for them when they retire. Congress has a moral obligation to keep that promise.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to help free senior citizens from oppressive taxation by supporting my Senior Citizens' Tax Elimination Act and my Social Security Beneficiary Tax Reduction Act. I also urge my colleagues to ensure that moneys from the Social Security trust fund are used solely for Social Security benefits and not wasted on frivolous government programs.

INTRODUCING THE CAGING PROHIBITION ACT

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Caging Prohibition Act of 2011,

a much needed reform to our election system. I believe that we should continue to focus on improvements to our election system in this Congress leading up to the presidential cycle next year. As we begin to focus election fixes and greater voter protections, this legislation can make a critical contribution to such efforts. Prohibitions on voter caging will ensure that our democracy lives up to the belief that every eligible citizen is entitled to the right to vote.

Voter caging, though just recently given media attention, is a disenfranchisement tactic that has been around for over 50 years. This undemocratic tactic often involves sending mail to voters at the addresses at which they are registered to vote. Should such mail be returned as undeliverable or without a return receipt, voters' names are placed on a "caging list," that list then being used to challenge voters' eligibility.

Those suggesting that voter caging is necessary to weed out ineligible voters must recognize this practice is unreliable and dangerous for such purposes. Mail may be returned as undeliverable for any number of reasons unrelated to an individual's eligibility to vote. For example, mail is returned due to typos, transposed numbers, new street names, and improper deliveries.

Voters in my home state of Michigan have been subjected to voter caging controversies in the last two Presidential elections. In the 2008 Election, a voter caging strategy meant to politically capitalize on the subprime mortgage crisis was identified. Those voters whose homes had been subjected to foreclosure were targets for caging on the basis that they no longer resided at the addresses at which they registered to vote.

During the 2004 Election, challengers monitored every single one of Detroit's 254 polling stations. This strategy was consistent with a Michigan lawmaker's effort to "suppress the Detroit vote." It was widely accepted that this statement was synonymous with "suppress the Black vote," as Detroit is 83 percent African American.

Our most vulnerable voters—racial minorities, language minorities, low-income people, the homeless, and college students—always seem to be targeted for caging and other voter suppression campaigns. However, all voters are susceptible to voter intimidation and suppression. For example, during the 2004 election, Ohio and Florida caging lists included the names of soldiers whose mail had been returned as undeliverable because they were stationed overseas.

It is because no one is immune to caging and other disenfranchisement tactics, that I have introduced the Caging Prohibition Act. This bill is really quite simple, as it one, requires election officials to corroborate their caging documents with independent evidence before a voter can be deemed ineligible. And two, limits all other challenges that do not come from election officials to those based on personal, first-hand knowledge.

By eliminating caging tactics, we restore what has been missing from our elections—fairness, honesty, and integrity. I ask that my colleagues in the Congress join me in supporting the Caging Prohibition Act of 2011. Please stand with me in protecting the very core of our democracy.

HONORING ALAN ROBERT WILKIN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Alan Robert Wilkin. Alan is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Alan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Alan has earned the rank of Assistant Patrol Leader. Alan has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Alan helped record names and other information for Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Kearney, Missouri in an effort to help genealogists and locate one particular lost plot for the trustees.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Alan Robert Wilkin for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN MEMORY OF DR. DEAN WYATT

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to an outstanding public servant, Dr. Dean Wyatt. For 18 years, Dr. Wyatt worked as a public health veterinarian with the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. At great risk to his own career, Dr. Wyatt distinguished himself as an advocate of improved federal oversight of food safety and humane handling rules at regulated slaughter plants. His tragic death from a brain tumor is a terrible loss to the country.

I had the honor of receiving Dr. Wyatt's testimony before the House Oversight Committee's Subcommittee on Domestic Policy in March of last year. He stepped forward to call attention to animal cruelties that he had observed at federally regulated slaughter facilities and to deep-seated problems in USDA's enforcement of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act.

Even after he was diagnosed with his fatal illness, Dr. Wyatt continued to advocate for reform. His proposal to establish an ombudsman at the agency, which USDA is now implementing, is just one of many ways he has made a lasting impact.

Dr. Wyatt's truth-telling did not make him popular with his agency superiors. Indeed, over the years he endured their disapproval and condemnation. Yet he spoke up: not just for animals but also for fellow inspectors and veterinarians in USDA. He spoke up for all of those who are dedicated to ensuring meaningful compliance with the law, over the resistance of corporate interests and, at times, the agency itself. He remained true to his mission

until his death. He will be deeply missed, and his spirit will live on as an inspiration to those whose lives he graced.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY PRESERVATION ACT**HON. RON PAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to protect the integrity of the Social Security trust fund by introducing the Social Security Preservation Act. The Social Security Preservation Act is a rather simple bill which states that all monies raised by the Social Security trust fund will be spent in payments to beneficiaries, with excess receipts invested in interest-bearing certificates of deposit. This will help keep Social Security trust fund monies from being diverted to other programs, as well as allow the fund to grow by providing for investment in interest-bearing instruments.

The Social Security Preservation Act ensures that the government will keep its promises to America's seniors that taxes collected for Social Security will be used for Social Security. When the government taxes Americans to fund Social Security, it promises the American people that the money will be there for them when they retire. Congress has a moral obligation to keep that promise.

Everyone acknowledges that the federal deficits are unsustainable. Social Security reform is necessary to ensure the federal debt does not create a serious economic crisis that could devastate those, like Social Security recipients, living on fixed incomes. Preventing the use of Social Security trust fund monies for non-Social Security purposes is a necessary first step in reforming Social Security in a manner that does not hurt those currently relying on the system. I therefore call upon all my colleagues, to stand up for America's seniors and taxpayers by cosponsoring the Social Security Preservation Act.

VOTING OPPORTUNITY AND TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENT RIGHTS ACT**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Voting Opportunity and Technology Enhancement Rights or VOTER Act of 2011. I introduce this legislation, more than 200 years after the founding of our democracy, because we have yet to realize a government that is truly representative of the principle, "of the people, by the people." Not until every eligible voter has the opportunity to cast a ballot and have that ballot counted, will we have a truly democratic government.

Though the 2010 elections did not present the widespread irregularities and improprieties that were witnessed during the 2000 and 2004 elections, it was still an election in which voter disenfranchisement was attempted and accomplished. Voters' names were still missing from voter rolls. Voter harassment and intimi-

dation complaints were still registered with Federal officials.

In fact, over the years, the methods that are used to disenfranchise voters have become more sophisticated as evidenced during the 2008 Election. For example, in my home state of Michigan, in the midst of the current subprime mortgage crisis, a strategy to challenge a voter's eligibility based on home foreclosure status was devised.

In Virginia, a flyer telling Democrats to vote on Wednesday, November 5, 2008, circulated. Similar tactics were present last fall, with complaints coming in from areas as diverse as Harris County, Texas, and even the state of Kansas.

We should recognize that anything short of a perfect election system is unacceptable and work on a bipartisan basis in seeking corrective action. To that end, I have introduced VOTER so that we may work towards a more perfect system, one that reflects legitimacy, integrity, and inclusivity. VOTER will protect and expand voting rights in Federal elections, as well as ensure the proper administration of Federal elections.

VOTER will: (1) provide for a uniform Federal write-in absentee ballot; (2) require states to provide for a verified audit trail; (3) count provisional ballots cast in the proper state; (4) properly allocate voting machines and poll workers; (5) provide for election day voter registration; (6) protect against improper purging of registration lists; (7) mandate early voting; (8) require verification and audit ability for punch cards; (9) simplify voter registration requirements; (10) allow voter identification by written affidavit; (11) provide for a study of nonpartisan election boards; (12) strengthen the EAC with funding and resources; (13) mandate the use of publicly available open source software; (14) restrict voting machine companies from engaging in political activities; (15) give greater deference to voter intent during recounts; (16) prohibit deceptive practices and intimidation; (17) prohibit caging and other questionable challenges; (18) restore voting rights to former felons; and (19) treat Election Day as a Federal holiday.

Some of these initiatives have already been implemented by states, the success of which was observed during the 2010 elections. There are 32 states that currently provide early voting, including Florida, a state that witnessed over 1 million voters turn out to the polls the weekend before the 2008 election. There are also 29 states that currently provide no-excuse absentee voting by mail.

Such practices were critical to managing an unprecedented voter turnout in the 2008 elections. More than 130 million people turned out to vote, the highest turnout in any presidential election. With this many longtime and new voters engaged in the 2008 election process, I suspect that voter participation will only increase in 2012.

As such, we must pledge to fight for election reform this Congress. The right to vote and to have that vote counted is one of our democracy's most fundamental principles. It is with VOTER that I intend to protect this fundamental principle, and I ask that my colleagues in this Congress join me in this fight for fair and just elections.

SUPPORTING THE JAMES
ZADROGA 9/11 HEALTH AND COM-
PENSATION ACT

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act.

We all know where we were on that fateful morning. If we were lucky, we were safe and with loved ones and far from Ground Zero.

But there are thousands of others who were not so fortunate, and who are reminded of those attacks every day—whether that's because they lost a family member or a friend, or because they cannot breathe after spending weeks cleaning the rubble of our fallen Twin Towers.

It is those first responders whose health we have a solemn obligation to watch over, and they number in the thousands—over 13,000 sick World Trade Center responders, more than 53,000 whose health is being monitored and 71,000 who were exposed to poisonous toxins.

They are firefighters, police officers, EMTs, construction workers and volunteers—just people who saw a fire and ran towards it to see how they could help—ran into the fire—and they remain in need.

They come from every single state in the Union and nearly every Congressional District. The health of these men and women is truly a national duty. With this bill, we can fulfill that duty.

It establishes the World Trade Center Health Program to monitor and treat responders whose injuries were caused by exposure to airborne toxins or any other adverse condition resulting from the attacks, and ensures that there is a network of health care providers around the country to care for anyone enrolled in the program. The bill also sets up the World Trade Center Survivor Program to provide screenings, treatment and follow-up monitoring to survivors and those living in the surrounding areas.

No one asked these men and women to go do what they did. They shouldn't have to ask us for quality health care. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote yes.

THE UDALL-EISENHOWER ARCTIC
WILDERNESS ACT

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, on December 6, 1960, President Dwight D. Eisenhower set aside the core of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. In so doing, President Eisenhower began the bipartisan legacy of protecting this majestic national treasure. 20 years later, in 1980, Representative Mo Udall succeeded in doubling the size of the Refuge.

Now it is time that we finish the job these great Americans began 50 years ago. Now it is time to permanently protect the Coastal Plain. The Congress needs to pass legislation designating it as wilderness.

If we don't enact permanent protections for the Refuge, oil companies and their allies in Congress will continue to push for short-sighted plans to drill one of our last pristine wild places.

Just last year, the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster led to more than 4 million barrels of oil spilling into the Gulf of Mexico. It was the worst oil spill in the history of the United States. The blobs of oil washing up on Gulf beaches recalled the ghosts of Valdez, and of Santa Barbara.

As we learned from the BP oil spill, the oil companies are prepared to drill ultra-deep, but they are not prepared to do it ultra-safe. Or respond ultra-quick.

What we did discover is that their response plans for a Gulf oil spill included plans to evacuate walrus from the warm waters off Louisiana, even though they had not called the Gulf home for 3 million years.

This disaster was born from boosterism from the oil industry. Boosterism led to complacency. And complacency led to disaster.

When it comes to the Arctic Refuge, we've heard the same boosterism for years. The oil companies and their allies repeat a list of talking points: Drilling has a small footprint. It will not spoil habitats. Drilling can be done in an environmentally safe manner.

Now the oil companies and their allies want to open the Refuge and undo 50 years of protections and eons of solitude, all for less than a couple pennies at the pump more than two decades from now.

Instead of looking for the last drops of oil on Earth, we should be harnessing the wind and the sun to power our economy and create new, safe American jobs.

And unlike an oil well, you don't need a blowout preventer on a solar panel. There's no such thing as a "tragic wind spill."

When we look upon the Refuge decades from now, will we see a monument to America's commitment to our natural heritage, or will we see the abandoned wells and spilled oil as a monument to our insatiable thirst for oil? Will the Refuge remain a monument to America's wisdom or will our children and grandchildren only be able to see polar bears, caribou and other iconic animals carved in stone, monuments to our lack of foresight and innovation?

Now is the time to create a refuge for the American people from hundreds of billions of dollars we spend every year on foreign oil. Now is the time to create a refuge from the fossil fuel policies that have devastated the economy of the Gulf. Now is the time to protect the Arctic Refuge.

STATEMENT ON SENATOR
BARBARA MIKULSKI

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, today, Senator BARBARA MIKULSKI, my colleague from the State of Maryland, becomes the longest-serving woman Senator in American history. It's a fitting milestone for a public servant who has been a trailblazer for her entire career. From her beginnings as a social worker and community activist, Senator MIKULSKI's career has

always been motivated by a deep commitment to open doors of opportunity, to serve the people of Maryland, and to carry their voices to Washington.

In 1986, Senator MIKULSKI became the first Democratic woman elected to the Senate in her own right, as well as the first woman elected to statewide office in Maryland's history. Since then, her constituents have returned her to office four times—a sign of the seriousness and skill she brings to her work in the Senate. For decades, BARBARA MIKULSKI has been an inspiration and a role model to women in public life, mentoring generations of women leaders. I congratulate her on today's important milestone, and I wish her all the best in her continuing service to our State and its people.

INTRODUCING THE IDENTITY
THEFT PREVENTION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Identity Theft Prevention Act. This act protects the American people from government-mandated uniform identifiers that facilitate private crime as well as the abuse of liberty. The major provision of the Identity Theft Prevention Act halts the practice of using the Social Security number as an identifier by requiring the Social Security Administration to issue all Americans new Social Security numbers within 5 years after the enactment of the bill. These new numbers will be the sole legal property of the recipient, and the Social Security Administration shall be forbidden to divulge the numbers for any purposes not related to Social Security Administration. Social Security numbers issued before implementation of this bill shall no longer be considered valid federal identifiers. Of course, the Social Security Administration shall be able to use an individual's original Social Security number to ensure efficient administration of the Social Security system.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has a moral responsibility to address this problem because it was Congress that transformed the Social Security number into a national identifier. Thanks to Congress, today no American can get a job, open a bank account, get a professional license, or even get a driver's license without presenting his Social Security number. So widespread has the use of the Social Security number become that a member of my staff had to produce a Social Security number in order to get a fishing license!

One of the most disturbing abuses of the Social Security number is the congressionally authorized rule forcing parents to get a Social Security number for their newborn children in order to claim the children as dependents. Forcing parents to register their children with the state is more like something out of the nightmares of George Orwell than the dreams of a free republic that inspired this Nation's founders.

Congressionally mandated use of the Social Security number as an identifier facilitates the horrendous crime of identity theft. Thanks to Congress, an unscrupulous person may simply obtain someone's Social Security number

in order to access that person's bank accounts, credit cards, and other financial assets. Many Americans have lost their life savings and had their credit destroyed as a result of identity theft. Yet the Federal Government continues to encourage such crimes by mandating use of the Social Security number as a uniform ID!

The Identity Theft Prevention Act also prevents the Federal Government from establishing any form of national ID. In 2005, Congress attempted to turn state driver's licensing into a national ID; however, resistance to this unconstitutional and costly mandate on the states has been so intense that today, for all intents and purposes, the Real ID mandate has been nullified. The Identity Theft Prevention Act simply puts the nail in the coffin of the Real ID and similar schemes, thus protecting Americans from having their liberty, property, and privacy violated by private and public sector criminals.

Some members of Congress will claim that the federal government needs the power to monitor Americans in order to allow the government to operate more efficiently. I would remind my colleagues that, in a constitutional republic, the people are never asked to sacrifice their liberties to make the jobs of government officials easier. We are here to protect the freedom of the American people, not to make privacy invasion more efficient.

Mr. Speaker, while I do not question the sincerity of those members who suggest that Congress can ensure that citizens' rights are protected through legislation restricting access to personal information, the only effective privacy protection is to forbid the federal government from mandating national identifiers. Legislative "privacy protections" are inadequate to protect the liberty of Americans for a couple of reasons.

First, it is simply common sense that repealing those federal laws that promote identity theft is more effective in protecting the public than expanding the power of the federal police force. Federal punishment of identity thieves provides cold comfort to those who have suffered financial losses and the destruction of their good reputations as a result of identity theft.

Federal laws are not only ineffective in stopping private criminals, but these laws have not even stopped unscrupulous government officials from accessing personal information. After all, laws purporting to restrict the use of personal information did not stop the well-publicized violations of privacy by IRS officials or the FBI abuses of the Clinton and Nixon administrations.

In one of the most infamous cases of identity theft, thousands of active-duty soldiers and veterans had their personal information stolen, putting them at risk of identity theft. Imagine the dangers if thieves are able to obtain the universal identifier, and other personal information, of millions of Americans simply by breaking, or hacking, into one government facility or one government database?

Second, the federal government has been creating proprietary interests in private information for certain state-favored special interests. Perhaps the most outrageous example of phony privacy protection is the "medical privacy" regulation, that allows medical researchers, certain business interests, and law enforcement officials access to health care information, in complete disregard of the Fifth

Amendment and the wishes of individual patients! Obviously, "privacy protection" laws have proven greatly inadequate to protect personal information when the government is the one seeking the information.

Any action short of repealing laws authorizing privacy violations is insufficient primarily because the federal government lacks constitutional authority to force citizens to adopt a universal identifier for health care, employment, or any other reason. Any federal action that oversteps constitutional limitations violates liberty because it ratifies the principle that the federal government, not the Constitution, is the ultimate judge of its own jurisdiction over the people. The only effective protection of the rights of citizens is for Congress to follow Thomas Jefferson's advice and "bind (the federal government) down with the chains of the Constitution."

Mr. Speaker, those members who are not persuaded by the moral and constitutional reasons for embracing the Identity Theft Prevention Act should consider the American people's opposition to national identifiers. The numerous complaints over the ever-growing uses of the Social Security number show that Americans want Congress to stop invading their privacy. Furthermore, according to a survey by the Gallup company, 91 percent of the American people oppose forcing Americans to obtain a universal health ID.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I once again call on my colleagues to join me in putting an end to the federal government's unconstitutional use of national identifiers to monitor the actions of private citizens. National identifiers threaten all Americans by exposing them to the threat of identity theft by private criminals and abuse of their liberties by public criminals, while diverting valuable law enforcement resources away from addressing real threats to public safety. In addition, national identifiers are incompatible with a limited, constitutional government. I, therefore, hope my colleagues will join my efforts to protect the freedom of their constituents by supporting the Identity Theft Prevention Act.

THE ANGELES AND SAN
BERNARDINO NATIONAL FOR-
ESTS PROTECTION ACT

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I have the honor of representing the Foothill communities at the base of the San Gabriel Mountains. Included in my district are the Angeles and the San Bernardino National Forests. These National Forests are two of the most widely visited forests in the Nation. In addition, they provide over 30 percent of the drinking water for Los Angeles County alone. Unfortunately, this area is also prone to devastating wildfires. Ensuring the public safety of our first responders and residents remains a top priority of mine. That is why I have been working for over a year with multiple parties on a proposal to assist our firefighters and preserve recreational activities in the region.

It is also vital that we continue to care for our natural resources. The Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests Protection Act,

which I am introducing today, adds approximately 17,700 acres of forest lands to the Cucamonga and Sheep Mountain Wilderness Areas. With their close proximity to dozens of communities, the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests provide residents with an opportunity to easily enjoy the public lands in their own backyard. It is my hope that this legislation will protect this area for the benefit of future generations.

Throughout this entire process, my number one focus has been to protect our firefighters and other first responders who are responsible for keeping lives, homes and communities safe from approaching fires. I have worked closely with the Los Angeles and the San Bernardino County fire departments and have incorporated their suggestions on how we can make their job easier and safer. I am pleased that this legislation has the support of both the Los Angeles County and the San Bernardino County fire departments as well as the support of local fire chiefs. I will continue to work with our fire departments to ensure they have the resources needed to do their job as safely and effectively as possible.

This legislation also calls on the Forest Service to reduce the severe maintenance backlog that exists in both the Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests and to restore valuable recreational opportunities that were lost in the devastating 2009 Station Fire. Numerous facilities and trail markers were damaged during this fire and my legislation calls on the Forest Service to restore the facilities impacted in the Station Fire. This will allow individuals and families to enjoy our public lands for many years to come.

I also want to take this opportunity to note that this legislation will not impact any existing private property or water rights in this area. Multiple recreational uses, including horseback riding as well as hiking currently occur in these National Forests and these activities must be allowed to continue.

As this legislation works its way through the legislative process, I will keep working with all of the interested parties to ensure that our first responders can safely and securely protect our communities from forest fires while also preserving recreational opportunities for everyone.

HONORING INLAND HOSPITAL

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Inland Hospital in Waterville, Maine.

Inland Hospital is a 48-bed, not-for-profit, community hospital that was founded in 1943 by a group of osteopathic physicians with a vision of providing compassionate care that focused on the whole patient, not just the disease. Today, that patient-centered approach is alive and well at Inland, where staff provide the kind of care we all want for our own families. Patients are treated with respect and dignity and benefit from an open communication process that delivers an extraordinary experience and the best possible medical outcome.

Inland Hospital has been recently recognized as one of the nation's top rural hospitals

by the Washington, DC based Leapfrog Group. The Leapfrog Survey, which launched in 2001, focuses on four critical areas of patient safety: the use of computer physician order entry to prevent medication errors, standards for doing high-risk procedures, protocols and policies to reduce medical errors and other safe practices recommended by the National Quality Forum and adequate nurse and physician staffing. In addition, hospitals are measured on their progress in preventing infections and other hospital-acquired conditions and adopting policies on the handling of serious medical errors, among other things.

Inland Hospital has displayed a tremendous commitment to providing the best quality health care for their patients. I am proud to congratulate the employees, providers, board members and volunteers for their dedication to providing the best care to our rural communities. Their skills, compassion and dedication make this hospital a well-deserved award recipient.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Inland Hospital for their devotion to ensuring that patients and families receive the best possible health care.

A TRIBUTE TO ROGER MILLIKEN

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, South Carolina has lost a titan of industry and a visionary to establish the modern Republican Party with the loss of Roger Milliken of Spartanburg.

On this historic day of swearing-in the largest number of Republican Congressmen from South Carolina is more than 130 years, it is fitting to recognize the benefactor of establishing the two-party system in our state with an editorial from The Spartanburg Herald-Journal published December 31, 2010.

ROGER MILLIKEN LEFT HIS IMPRINT ON MOST ASPECTS OF LIFE IN THE UPSTATE

ENDURING LEGACY

No one in the 20th century had the impact on Spartanburg that Roger Milliken did.

The businessman, philanthropist, political mover and conservationist, who died Thursday, affected most aspects of life in the Upstate.

Spartanburg has the business climate it enjoys today because of Milliken. He saw the potential in this area and brought his corporate headquarters and his research center here. Milliken's presence and leadership led to the tremendous investment that European textile equipment manufacturers made in Spartanburg, and that international presence helped bring BMW here.

Milliken doggedly fought to protect the nation's textile industry and American jobs from foreign competition. At the same time, he rebalanced his own business to adjust to world markets, finding new areas in which to compete. His foresight included knowing when to step down from the leadership of his company and paving the way for it to continue without him.

Milliken was a political leader, supporting candidates in local, state and national politics. Long before South Carolina enjoyed its early spot in the presidential primary season, national candidates came to Spartanburg, raising the community's pro-

file, because of the need to secure Milliken's support.

He invested in the educational life of this community. Wofford and Converse colleges would not be the institutions they are today without his generous support. He helped found Spartanburg Day School.

Milliken recognized that this region would need first-class air transportation to compete with other areas and attract industry. He helped establish Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport, and the airport commission, for the first time in its more than 50-year history, now has to look for a new chairman. It would be appropriate for the airport to be renamed in Milliken's honor.

He also left his mark on Spartanburg in a very visible way. He was passionate about trees, creating arboretums at his research center and on the Wofford campus. His Noble Tree Foundation has helped to improve the environment in many cities.

One of Spartanburg's most popular parks is not a public park at all. It is the grounds of the Milliken Research Center, a beautiful landscape planted with a multitude of diverse trees. It has been open to the public so that generations of Spartanburg families have been able to enjoy feeding ducks at the pond or walking the sunny grounds.

Many wealthy businessmen focus on building their companies, their wealth and their power. Milliken was accomplished in these areas, but he also focused on building this community and region.

His legacy includes the education and transportation systems we rely on today, an economic climate that enabled Spartanburg to weather the loss of the textile industry and even much of the beauty of this community.

Milliken left instructions that his epitaph would read simply, "Builder." It is accurate. More than anyone else in the previous century, Roger Milliken built Spartanburg.

INTRODUCING THE PRESCRIPTION DRUG AFFORDABILITY ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Prescription Drug Affordability Act. This legislation ensures that millions of Americans, including seniors, have access to affordable pharmaceutical products. My act removes needless government barriers to importing pharmaceuticals and it protects Internet pharmacies, which are making affordable prescription drugs available to millions of Americans, from being strangled by federal regulation.

The Prescription Drug Affordability Act brings competition to the market for pharmaceutical products by allowing anyone wishing to import a drug to simply submit an application to the FDA, which then must approve the drug unless the FDA finds the drug is either not approved for use in the U.S. or is adulterated or misbranded. This process will make safe and affordable imported medicines affordable to millions of Americans. Mr. Speaker, letting the free market work is the best means of lowering the cost of prescription drugs.

I need not remind my colleagues that many Americans impacted by the high costs of prescription medicine have demanded Congress reduce the barriers which prevent American consumers from purchasing imported pharmaceuticals. Congress has responded to these

demands by repeatedly passing legislation liberalizing the rules governing the importation of pharmaceuticals. However, implementation of this provision has been blocked by the federal bureaucracy. It is time Congress stood up for the American consumer and removed all unnecessary regulations on importing pharmaceuticals.

The Prescription Drug Affordability Act also protects consumers' access to affordable medicine by forbidding the federal government from regulating any Internet sales of FDA-approved pharmaceuticals by State-licensed pharmacists.

As I am sure my colleagues are aware, the Internet makes pharmaceuticals and other products more affordable and accessible for millions of Americans. However, the federal government has threatened to destroy this option by imposing unnecessary and unconstitutional regulations on Web sites that sell pharmaceuticals. Any federal regulations would inevitably drive up prices of pharmaceuticals, thus depriving many consumers of access to affordable prescription medications.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to make pharmaceuticals more affordable and accessible by removing barriers to the importation of pharmaceuticals and protecting legitimate Internet pharmacies from needless regulation by cosponsoring the Prescription Drug Affordability Act.

MARDEE XIFARAS: SOUTHCOAST WOMAN OF THE YEAR

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, the New Bedford Standard Times, an excellent newspaper, regularly recognizes leaders of the community that it serves by designating a SouthCoast Woman of the Year and a SouthCoast Man of the Year. This year's SouthCoast Woman of the Year is an extraordinary person, who is a leader in so many fields of endeavor that I think the Standard Times must have been tempted to call her "Women of the Year."

MarDee Xifaras is an able attorney, who has been a leader politically, economically, educationally, and in civic affairs in general. Most recently she has been a spearhead in getting the State of Massachusetts to take over the Southern New England Law School, creating for the first time in Massachusetts a state university law school, to the great benefit of the population of that area, and I believe to the practice of law in Massachusetts, by providing a source of socially-conscious graduates for years to come.

MarDee Xifaras is an extraordinary force for a wide range of good causes, and I am delighted that she has been recognized by the New Bedford Standard Times, but not surprised. I've had the benefit of her advice, counsel and friendship, as did my late and much-missed predecessor, Gary Studts, whose work in this body benefitted enormously from her input, as has mine.

Mr. Speaker, as an example of what citizenship is at its best, at a time when we very much need that, I ask that the New Bedford Standard Times article about Woman of the Year MarDee Xifaras be printed here.

[From SouthCoastToday.com, Jan. 2, 2011]

MARDEE XIFARAS: SOUTH COAST WOMAN OF THE YEAR

(By Jack Spillane)

A bogus study pretending to be an independent report. Last-minute telephone calls from an incumbent governor twisting arms.

The smearing of a small law school's reputation by people on the boards of competing larger schools.

And ultimately, the slurring of an entire region of the state as not having enough of a talent pool to merit a public law school.

Margaret "MarDee" Xifaras dealt with every conceivable insult and underhanded political tactic when it came to the unsuccessful 2004-2005 fight to merge the Southern New England School of Law with the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. But she did not get down into the gutter with her opponents.

Instead, Xifaras, the then-chairman of the SNESL board of trustees, went back to work running the small, private Dartmouth law school in the same determined way that it had operated for more than two decades.

She also went to work leading the effort to meticulously document the legal and financial case that would make a 2009-2010 effort to absorb the school into UMass Dartmouth unassailable.

MarDee Xifaras' leadership achieved what very few SouthCoast political or public officials of any kind have done over the last half century. She went up against the state's Boston-centric power establishment and won.

And she won hands down.

For her efforts coordinating the campaign to establish a state law school in Massachusetts, a school that has now been located in Southeastern Massachusetts, Margaret D. Xifaras is the 2010 Standard-Times SouthCoast Woman of the Year.

Nominations for the award came from the community and members of the newspaper staff. Recipients were selected by a newsroom committee.

LEARNING LESSONS

"Out of the '04, '05 negativity and bad experience, came some lessons," Xifaras remembered of that first law school fight.

The impulse of some might have been to sue the private law schools—Suffolk University and New England School of Law—that coordinated the effort to prevent UMass from competing with them.

Instead, Xifaras waited for an opportune time when the numbers worked for the establishment of a state law school. And then she coordinated with SNESL Dean Robert Ward and UMass Dartmouth Chancellor Jean MacCormack to devise a new financing plan under which the state law school would be a self-sustaining arm of the university, needing no assistance from the government.

Both savvy and practical, Xifaras hired O'Neil & Associates, the state's best-wired P.R. firm to help her navigate the state's notoriously provincial political waters. She also kept an eye on her own governing board, re-documenting for them once again the case as to why SNESL donating \$23.5 million worth of its own assets to the state made sense for the school's development in the long run.

Xifaras' skill in coalition-building ultimately helped UMass and SNESL build an iron-clad case that convinced Secretary of Education Paul Reville, Commissioner of Higher Education Richard Freeland, and finally Gov. Deval Patrick himself that a UMass law school was the right thing to do.

In effect, they convinced the powers-that-be to give access to legal education to middle- and working-class students previously disenfranchised in Massachusetts.

And they convinced them that the most cost-effective way to do it was by accepting SNESL's existing Dartmouth campus as a donation.

"If there's anything we were over the years, it was determined," said Xifaras.

THE STUDENT FACTOR

Xifaras and the UMass and SNESL boards had one more huge asset: the SNESL students themselves—the primarily working- and middle-class students who had risen up 25-odd years ago, and with the help of interested area lawyers, created a fledgling law school out of little more than their own imaginations and desire.

After being victimized by the 2005 stealth political campaign, the SNESL Student Bar Association hired one of the school's most successful graduates, Lee Blais, and sued Suffolk University, along with a onetime official of the Romney administration.

They sued for nothing less than public corruption.

They charged that Suffolk and a former Romney official turned lobbyist, Charles Chieppo, had colluded to try to keep the proposed UMass law school from competing with a lower-priced public school.

And though the case was never settled, the Board of Higher Education as much as admitted wrongdoing in the merger application process. It agreed to write a "letter of understanding" pledging the state to a fair, rigorous and documentable process when, and if SNESL and UMass ever tried to unite again.

"They succeeded because of the basic unfairness, and violation of due process that occurred," Xifaras said.

And because of the tenacity of the students and their lawyer.

"We didn't allow ourselves to get out-litigated," Xifaras said.

"Lee Blais, at every turn was doing depositions, fighting back motions to dismiss, fighting back motions for dismissal for lack of standing."

Blais may have been taking the depositions, but it was Xifaras, according to Blais, who was the general planning the battle.

"She's someone who can plot out a strategy and implement a strategy," he said. "She's one of the most effective leaders I've ever met."

Blais also credited Xifaras with having the necessary political skills and vision.

She understood the politics of the state of Massachusetts—who could help and who couldn't, what would work and what wouldn't, he said.

Further, she understood the great rationale for a public law school itself in Massachusetts—a school that could focus on the need for lawyers to devote some segment of their careers to public service.

"Her skills, not only in the area of politics, but in the area of public policy, are just incredible," Blais said.

THE POLITICAL MAVEN

Robert Ward, the longtime dean of SNESL, said Xifaras recommended a key change in approach for the second application.

It would be all about UMass and the need for a public law school, and not about addressing SNESL's need for American Bar Association accreditation (a process that usually demands the resources of a larger school.) "That subtle twist is the kind of thing that really good lawyers do," said Ward. "You look into the dominant narrative and, you sort of find a way to tell your story in a way that resonates."

At the time of the second merger application, the nation was consumed by a large debate over health insurance, Xifaras noted, and whether there should be "a public option" for health insurance. In the same way, she decided, UMass would argue for a public option for an affordable legal education.

Xifaras said the SNESL board had been inspired by the establishment of the state medical school in Worcester 40 years ago, also for students of limited means. And in 2009, the time was ripe for making an argument that Massachusetts needed an affordable, public law school, a school that, like UMass Medical, would train lawyers to dedicate at least part of their careers to public service.

Already, the new public law school has awarded 35 scholarships for that purpose.

"It was up to MarDee to rethink the rationale of going forward," Ward said.

"There has to be someone to find the right note. And that, again—because of her political savvy—that's what happened," he said.

UMass Dartmouth Chancellor Jean MacCormack said that while it was clear that SNESL's \$23.5 million campus and experienced law-school faculty offered an opportunity to the university, the university brought to SNESL the size and the resources necessary to win accreditation.

But Xifaras' charisma and political skills, MacCormack said, allowed the vision to happen. "She's incredibly optimistic in the face of huge obstacles," she said.

And the dividends of the state law school being located in Southeastern Massachusetts will be even more apparent in the future, MacCormack predicted.

"This is going to be a legacy activity," she said. "You're going to see more people coming to the South Coast. Already, of these students, 50 percent of them come from out of state."

A PERSONAL BATTLE

Winning the battle to establish a state law school was impressive under any circumstances, but few knew that Xifaras won it while beating back a flare-up of the breast cancer she first defeated some 14 years ago.

Xifaras, 65, is amazingly matter-of-fact about her life-or-death battles.

Although she admits to some personal, private moments of emotion, in the end, she said she simply didn't want to waste time or energy feeling sorry for herself.

She just did what needed to be done with the cancer—on the first round she had chemotherapy, radiation therapy and a stem-cell transplant—and last year, she had two more nodes removed.

Xifaras maintains a busy work schedule that's complemented not just by her effort to establish the law school, but by her long-time work as a sought-after political operative for the Democratic Party.

She has played key campaign management roles in the presidential efforts of everyone from Ted Kennedy to John Kerry to Barack Obama, not to mention local political efforts like the congressional campaigns of Paul and Niki Tsongas.

On top of all that, Xifaras works in a busy law practice (she's one of Mayor Scott Lang's law partners), and fills in as grandma for her daughter Amy, a law school student with a four-month old.

By the way, that's a throwback to Xifaras' own career when back in the mid-1970s she used to put in 10-plus hour days traveling back and forth to Boston University law school, while she had two children still in diapers and one who was in pre-school.

"I think back on it—if this alternative (a local law school) had been available to me at that time, clearly I would have gone," she said.

Xifaras said she didn't need to attend a big-name school for the public-service career she had in mind. She needed a school like UMass Law.

"My orientation was always more of a community-based orientation. Doing regular work for regular folks in a terrific, down-to-earth setting," she said.

BELOVED BY HER PEOPLE

If you ask the people who've worked closely with MarDee Xifaras how she pulled off leading the charge for the state law school, or any of her other impressive life accomplishments, they'll tell you she just has this remarkable ability to "connect" with people.

By the way, Xifaras has also been a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa; a fellow at the Fletcher School of Diplomacy at Tufts; an MBA from UMass Dartmouth; a grassroots political organizer and one of the moving forces behind Gerry Studds' first anti-war campaign for Congress.

Xifaras is startlingly, and charmingly, straightforward. She seems to understand that human beings are not perfect entities, and she has the ability to meet them where they live and inspire them to be better.

"It is the privilege of a lifetime to work with her," Ward said; "The quality of my life improved dramatically when I met her."

Jay Lynch, Xifaras' vice chairman on the SNESSL board, said that often it was only Xifaras' personal connections that kept the public law school dream alive.

"She never gave up on it," he said.

Xifaras succeeds, Lynch said, because she reaches people. She never badmouths folks, even opponents—either in public or in private—he noted.

"I think it was her unique ability to connect with everyone involved," he said.

Perhaps the most impressive endorsement comes from Michelle Keith, a 2009 graduate of SNESSL, and one of the mid-life law students for whom Xifaras seems to have fashioned the public law school.

Keith met Xifaras at a Women's Bar Association event, one of the many ongoing community events that Xifaras has made sure take place at SNESSL over the years.

Keith, a homemaker who had home-schooled her two children; said she went to SNESSL because she loves both Greater New Bedford and the school's public service ethic. She passed the bar on her first try.

She compares MarDee Xifaras to George Bailey in the Christmas film classic "It's a Wonderful Life." And she calls SNESSL the "Savings and Loan" bank that, in the classic movie, granted mortgages to low-income and middle-class people.

Xifaras, Keith said, really looks out for the school's students and advocates with them for public service to the community.

"There's a lot of successful people out there, but they go about it without any sense of honor," she said.

MarDee "has an inherent sense of honor and that's rare."

HONORING ROBERT JOSEPH PENCE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Robert Joseph Pence. Robert is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Robert has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Robert has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Rob-

ert has earned the rank of Assistant Patrol Leader. Robert has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Robert aided the City of Kearney, Missouri by repainting many of the town's fire hydrants.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Robert Joseph Pence for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING A REMARKABLE PUBLIC SERVANT, THE HONORABLE TOM VANDERGRIFF

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember a remarkable public servant, the Honorable Tom Vandergriff. Judge Vandergriff began his 55 year long public service career as the youngest elected mayor of Arlington, Texas. There he made great strides to bring economic opportunity and expansion to the area with the luring of a General Motors plant, Six Flags theme park, and by bringing the Texas Rangers to the city.

These developments were no small task as it took thirteen years to bring Major League Baseball to North Texas and the positive effects can be felt through the vitality of Arlington as well as the Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex to this day.

Six years later, he went on to become the first Congressman of the 26th district of Texas in 1983. Although he only served one term, he played a fundamental role in establishing the office and representing the district.

For more than 25 years, Vandergriff served as County Judge of Tarrant County which includes more than 1.7 million residents and is one of the most populous in the United States. He retired from his role in 2007.

It is my great honor to recognize Judge Tom Vandergriff for his dedication, innovation, and insight that he has contributed to the North Texas region. I will always remember those exciting radio broadcasts when Judge Vandergriff was "the voice of the Texas Rangers" in the 1970s. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends. He was a great public servant, and all North Texans are thankful for his servitude.

CREATING JOBS, NOT EXPLODING THE DEFICIT

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, day one of the 112th Congress and House Republicans are already violating their campaign promises and the needs of the American people. The set of rules they introduced today will explode our debt and deficit, kill our economic recovery and make the House of Representatives less transparent.

Like a lemming, the set of budget rules contained in this package will push us further off the deficit cliff. It breaks the promise so many

of us made to reduce the deficit and control the debt by refusing to pay for tax cuts for the wealthiest of Americans and forces future generations to foot the bill. Over the cliff like a lemming; but I suppose there is nothing like a little lemming to go with tea.

Instead of transparency, this set of rules confers "King for a Day" status to one Member of the House of Representatives—allowing him to set the entire budget for the federal government without any public input.

The last time this country allowed that was never. Only before we were a country did a king set our budget. And now Republicans are set to give this authority again to one person, the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, a person I admire as a Member of Congress—as a King, not so much.

And, in the next few days, the new House majority wants to repeal help for seniors on prescription drugs and take away consumer protections from families battling insurance problems. This effort will add \$143 billion to the deficit over the next ten years.

This is all happening while we should be focusing on the economic recovery that is underway thanks to the tough decisions that the last Congress made. We need to redirect our focus to the economy and stop exploding the deficits and debt.

INTRODUCING THE SOCIAL SECURITY FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS ONLY ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Social Security for American Citizens Only Act. This act forbids the Federal Government from providing Social Security benefits to non-citizens. It also ends the practice of totalization. Totalization is where the Social Security Administration takes into account the number of years an individual worked abroad, and thus was not paying payroll taxes, in determining that individual's eligibility for Social Security benefits.

Hard as it may be to believe, the United States Government already provides Social Security benefits to citizens of 17 other countries. Under current law, citizens of those countries covered by these agreements may have an easier time getting Social Security benefits than public school teachers or policemen.

Obviously, this program provides a threat to the already fragile Social Security system, and the threat is looming larger. The prior administration actually proposed a totalization agreement that would have allowed thousands of foreigners to qualify for U.S. Social Security benefits even though they came to, and worked in, the United States illegally. Adding insult to injury, this proposal could have allowed the Federal Government to give Social Security benefits to non-citizens who worked here for as little as 18 months. Estimates of what this totalization proposal would cost top \$1 billion per year.

Despite a major public outcry against extending Social Security benefits to those who entered this country illegally, a version of this proposal actually passed the other body in the

109th Congress. That the executive branch would propose, and part of the legislative branch would endorse, using Social Security monies to reward those who have willingly and knowingly violated our own immigration laws is an insult to the millions of Americans who pay their entire working lives into the system and now face the possibility that there may be nothing left when it is their turn to retire.

Even if the current Congress rejects all proposals to allow those who entered the country illegally to receive Social Security benefits, the only way to guarantee a future administration will not revive this scheme is for Congress to put an end to totalization once and for all. I therefore call upon my colleagues to stop the use of the Social Security Trust Fund as yet another vehicle for foreign aid by cosponsoring the Social Security for American Citizens Only Act.

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR
H.R. 44, THE GUAM WORLD WAR
II LOYALTY RECOGNITION ACT

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced H.R. 44, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act, a bill that would implement the findings of the Guam War Claims Review Commission. Since being elected to the House of Representatives 8 years ago, I have introduced a version of this legislation in each Congress. Last Congress, this bill titled H.R. 44 passed the House on four separate occasions, once as standalone legislation and three times as part of the annual National Defense Authorization Acts.

This bill would implement the recommendations of the Guam War Claims Review Commission, which was appointed by Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton and established by an Act of the 107th Congress (Public Law 107-333). The Review Commission, in a unanimous report to Congress in June 2004, found that there were significant disparities in the treatment of war claims for the people of Guam as compared with war claims for other Americans. The Review Commission also found that the occupation of Guam was especially brutal due to the unflinching loyalty of the people of Guam to the United States of America. The people of Guam were subjected to forced labor, forced marches, internment, beatings, rapes and executions, including public beheadings. The Review Commission recommended that Congress remedy this injustice through the enactment of legislation to authorize payment of claims in amounts specified. Specifically, the bill would authorize discretionary spending to pay claims consistent with the recommendations of the commission.

It is important to note that the Review Commission found that the United States Government seized Japanese assets during the war and that the record shows that settlement of claims was meant to be paid from these forfeitures. Furthermore, the United States signed a Treaty of Peace with Japan on September 8, 1951, which precludes Americans from making claims against Japan for war reparations. The treaty closed any legal mechanism for seeking redress from the Government

of Japan, and the United States Government has settled claims for U.S. citizens and other nationals through various claims programs authorized by Congress.

The House of Representatives has continually been supportive of this legislation, passing the bill with bi-partisan support in 110th and 111th Congresses. The issue continues to stall in the Senate despite support from the administration and supportive Senators. In the 111th session of Congress, I worked to add the text of H.R. 44 to the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2010. This was unsuccessful because of the objections of Senators regarding the precedent that this legislation may establish notwithstanding the findings of the Guam War Claims Review Commission, which found that no new precedent was being made and that its recommendations were based on similar claims programs for similar circumstances. However, as a compromise, report language was added to the final statement of managers which called for additional hearings to review Guam War Claims matter in the 2nd Session of the 111th Congress. The House Armed Services Committee upheld its commitment and held a hearing on December 2, 2009 to further investigate the purpose and need for enacting H.R. 44. Last year, I worked again to include compromise language for H.R. 44 in National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2011. Given the time constraints for floor time at the end of the session, the Guam War Claims provision had to be removed by the Senate in order for the final defense authorization bill to pass by unanimous consent in the Senate.

However, during negotiations on the defense authorization bill for fiscal year 2011 there was agreement that payment of claims to descendants of survivors of the Japanese occupation who suffered personal injury should be removed from the legislation. I accepted this compromise because I felt it was important to bring closure to this issue and that the objections to this provision by some Senators cannot be overcome at this time. As such, the bill I introduce today is compromise language that removes such claims payments and reflects the agreed upon compromise reached during negotiations on last year's defense authorization bill.

Congressional passage of this bill this Congress has a direct impact on the future success of the military build-up. The need for Guam War Claims was brought about because of mishandling of war claims immediately following World War II by the Department of the Navy. The long-standing inequity with how Guam was treated for war reparations lingers today. If we do not bring this matter to a close I believe that support for the military build-up will erode and impact the readiness of our forces and the bilateral relationship with Japan.

Mr. Speaker, resolving this issue is a matter of justice. This carefully crafted compromise legislation addresses the concerns of several Senators, and has the approval of both Senator JOHN MCCAIN and Senator CARL LEVIN. This bill represents a unique opportunity to right a wrong because many of the survivors of the occupation are nearing the end of their lives. It is important that the Congress act on the recommendations of the Guam War Claims Review Commission to finally resolve this longstanding injustice for the people of Guam.

THE FAIR AND SIMPLE TAX ACT
OF 2011

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, our top priority is to get our economy going again. Helping families keep more of their hard-earned money and providing businesses with additional resources to invest in their operations will help create jobs and get our economy back on track.

The Fair and Simple Tax (FAST) Act is a commonsense plan that will provide certainty in the tax code and a boost to the economy. The bill cuts the current 6-bracket tax structure in half and employs three simple rates of 10, 15, and 30 percent. By reducing marginal rates and preserving major deductions, including mortgage interest, charitable, state and local taxes, the child tax credit and the personal exemption, the FAST Act provides working Americans with more money for their needs.

The FAST Act also addresses the need to get our economy moving again by providing important investment incentives and creating new opportunities for workers and job creators alike. As American businesses continue to participate in the global economy, the FAST Act makes domestic employers more competitive by reducing the corporate tax rate from the highest in the world to a more competitive rate. In order to encourage innovation and boost entrepreneurship, the FAST Act provides a permanent extension of the Research and Development Tax Credit. In addition, under the FAST Act, the tax code rewards, not penalizes, success by reducing the individual capital gains tax rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and indexing the tax for inflation.

The FAST Act is based on the principle that Americans deserve a tax code that is fair and easy to understand. This year, Americans are projected to spend \$392 billion preparing their taxes. To make this process easier, the FAST Act creates a simple, one-page tax filing form that employs the simplified marginal rate structure.

This bill brings a sense of fairness to the tax code by permanently repealing the Death Tax and indexing the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) to inflation. In doing so, the FAST Act ensures that fewer taxpayers will be impacted by the AMT each year. In addition, the bill permanently extends the 2001 and 2003 tax relief measures.

As Americans seek to save money for retirement, education and other needs, the FAST Act provides incentives to encourage individuals to save more. The FAST Act creates three new, tax-free savings accounts: the Retirement Savings Account, the Lifetime Savings Account, both providing a \$5,000 tax-free contribution, and the Lifetime Skills Savings Account, which provides a \$1,000 tax-free contribution. Each provides Americans with additional ways to save money for their future needs.

Americans should have more control, not less, over their health care expenses. That is why the FAST Act creates a \$7,500 tax deduction for individuals and a \$15,000 tax deduction for families who do not have access to employer-sponsored health coverage. This expanded deduction provides individuals and

families with additional assistance to purchase health care and allows unspent funds to be allocated to a Health Savings Account (HSA).

Mr. Speaker, the FAST Act reforms the tax code to provide permanent tax relief and clarity for American families and businesses, while encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship vital to our economic recovery. I encourage all my colleagues to join me in this pro-growth economic policy.

HONORING SEBASTICOOK VALLEY
HOSPITAL

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Sebasticook Valley Hospital in Pittsfield, Maine.

Founded in 1963, the Sebasticook Valley Hospital was started by local citizens who were concerned about the health and well-being of their families, neighbors and employees of the region. The hospital continues to honor that legacy and commitment by being accountable at all levels of the organization in meeting the changing health care needs of the local communities. Sebasticook Valley continues to strive for improvement in services and to ensure that their patients receive the best possible service for their health care needs.

Sebasticook Valley Hospital has been recently recognized as one of the nation's top rural hospitals by the Washington, DC-based Leapfrog Group. The Leapfrog Survey, which launched in 2001, focuses on four critical areas of patient safety: the use of computer physician order entry to prevent medication errors, standards for doing high-risk procedures, protocols and policies to reduce medical errors and other safe practices recommended by the National Quality Forum and adequate nurse and physician staffing. In addition, hospitals are measured on their progress in preventing infections and other hospital-acquired conditions and adopting policies on the handling of serious medical errors, among other things.

Sebasticook Valley Hospital has displayed a tremendous commitment to providing the best quality health care for their patients. I am proud to congratulate the employees, providers, board members and volunteers for their dedication to providing the best care to our rural communities. Their skills, compassion and dedication make this hospital a well-deserved award recipient.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in recognizing Sebasticook Valley Hospital for their devotion to ensuring that patients and families receive the best possible health care.

INTRODUCING THE IDENTITY
THEFT PREVENTION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the Identity Theft Prevention Act. This act pro-

tections the American people from government-mandated uniform identifiers that facilitate private crime as well as the abuse of liberty. The major provision of the Identity Theft Prevention Act halts the practice of using the Social Security number as an identifier by requiring the Social Security Administration to issue all Americans new Social Security numbers within five years after the enactment of the bill. These new numbers will be the sole legal property of the recipient, and the Social Security administration shall be forbidden to divulge the numbers for any purposes not related to Social Security administration. Social Security numbers issued before implementation of this bill shall no longer be considered valid federal identifiers. Of course, the Social Security Administration shall be able to use an individual's original Social Security number to ensure efficient administration of the Social Security system.

Mr. Speaker, Congress has a moral responsibility to address this problem because it was Congress that transformed the Social Security number into a national identifier. Thanks to Congress, today no American can get a job, open a bank account, get a professional license, or even get a driver's license without presenting his Social Security number. So widespread has the use of the Social Security number become that a member of my staff had to produce a Social Security number in order to get a fishing license!

One of the most disturbing abuses of the Social Security number is the congressionally authorized rule forcing parents to get a Social Security number for their newborn children in order to claim the children as dependents. Forcing parents to register their children with the state is more like something out of the nightmares of George Orwell than the dreams of a free republic that inspired this nation's founders.

Congressionally mandated use of the Social Security number as an identifier facilitates the horrendous crime of identity theft. Thanks to Congress, an unscrupulous person may simply obtain someone's Social Security number in order to access that person's bank accounts, credit cards, and other financial assets. Many Americans have lost their life savings and had their credit destroyed as a result of identity theft. Yet the federal government continues to encourage such crimes by mandating use of the Social Security number as a uniform ID!

The Identity Theft Prevention Act also prevents the federal government from establishing any form of national ID. In 2005, Congress attempted to turn state driver's licensing into a national ID, however, resistance to this unconstitutional and costly mandate on the states has been so intense that today, for all intents and purposes, the Real ID mandate has been nullified. The Identity Theft Prevention Act simply puts the nail in the coffin of the Real ID and similar schemes, thus protecting Americans from having their liberty, property, and privacy violated by private and public sector criminals.

Some members of Congress will claim that the federal government needs the power to monitor Americans in order to allow the government to operate more efficiently. I would remind my colleagues that, in a constitutional republic, the people are never asked to sacrifice their liberties to make the jobs of government officials easier. We are here to protect

the freedom of the American people, not to make privacy invasion more efficient.

Mr. Speaker, while I do not question the sincerity of those members who suggest that Congress can ensure that citizens' rights are protected through legislation restricting access to personal information, the only effective privacy protection is to forbid the federal government from mandating national identifiers. Legislative "privacy protections" are inadequate to protect the liberty of Americans for a couple of reasons.

First, it is simply common sense that repealing those federal laws that promote identity theft is more effective in protecting the public than expanding the power of the federal police force. Federal punishment of identity thieves provides cold comfort to those who have suffered financial losses and the destruction of their good reputations as a result of identity theft.

Federal laws are not only ineffective in stopping private criminals, but these laws have not even stopped unscrupulous government officials from accessing personal information. After all, laws purporting to restrict the use of personal information did not stop the well-publicized violations of privacy by IRS officials or the FBI abuses of the Clinton and Nixon administrations.

In one of the most infamous cases of identity theft, thousands of active-duty soldiers and veterans had their personal information stolen, putting them at risk of identity theft. Imagine the dangers if thieves are able to obtain the universal identifier, and other personal information, of millions of Americans simply by breaking, or hacking, into one government facility or one government database?

Second, the federal government has been creating proprietary interests in private information for certain state-favored special interests. Perhaps the most outrageous example of phony privacy protection is the "medical privacy" regulation, that allows medical researchers, certain business interests, and law enforcement officials access to health care information, in complete disregard of the Fifth Amendment and the wishes of individual patients! Obviously, "privacy protection" laws have proven greatly inadequate to protect personal information when the government is the one seeking the information.

Any action short of repealing laws authorizing privacy violations is insufficient primarily because the federal government lacks constitutional authority to force citizens to adopt a universal identifier for health care, employment, or any other reason. Any federal action that oversteps constitutional limitations violates liberty because it ratifies the principle that the federal government, not the Constitution, is the ultimate judge of its own jurisdiction over the people. The only effective protection of the rights of citizens is for Congress to follow Thomas Jefferson's advice and "bind (the federal government) down with the chains of the Constitution."

Mr. Speaker, those members who are not persuaded by the moral and constitutional reasons for embracing the Identity Theft Prevention Act should consider the American people's opposition to national identifiers. The numerous complaints over the ever-growing uses of the Social Security number show that Americans want Congress to stop invading their privacy. Furthermore, according to a survey by

the Gallup company, 91 percent of the American people oppose forcing Americans to obtain a universal health ID.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I once again call on my colleagues to join me in putting an end to the federal government's unconstitutional use of national identifiers to monitor the actions of private citizens. National identifiers threaten all Americans by exposing them to the threat of identity theft by private criminals and abuse of their liberties by public criminals, while diverting valuable law enforcement resources away from addressing real threats to public safety. In addition, national identifiers are incompatible with a limited, constitutional government. I, therefore, hope my colleagues will join my efforts to protect the freedom of their constituents by supporting the Identity Theft Prevention Act.

INTRODUCTION STATEMENT: H.R. 40 THE COMMISSION TO STUDY REPARATION PROPOSALS FOR AFRICAN-AMERICANS ACT

HON. JOHN CONYERS, Jr.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to re-introduce H.R. 40, the Commission to Study Reparations Proposals for African-Americans Act. Since I first introduced H.R. 40 in 1989, we have made substantial progress in elevating this issue in the national consciousness. Through legislation, state and local resolutions and litigation, we are moving closer to a full dialogue on the role of slavery in building this country.

At this time, however, I must acknowledge the passing of a major voice in the reparations debate, Dr. Ronald Walters. From his position in the academy—Professor at the University of Maryland and head of its African American Leadership Institute—Dr. Walters led the debate on reparation that touched both the grassroots and scholarly communities. His wisdom and clarity will be missed, but never forgotten.

As evidenced by recent events, the sin of slavery is one that continues to weigh heavily upon us. Following the lead of other churches, the Episcopal Church formally apologized for its role in slavery on October 4, 2008. Florida became the sixth state to apologize for slavery on March 26, 2008, following Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, Alabama and New Jersey. During the internationally renowned Sundance Film Festival, *Traces of the Trade*, a documentary in which descendants of the largest U.S. slave trading family confront this painful history, screened in January of 2008.

In the 110th Congress, the House passed a slavery apology bill on July 29, 2008, in which the House issued a formal apology for slavery. The Senate followed on July 18, 2009, with the passage of S. Con. Res. 26 which was sponsored by Tom Harkin of Iowa. Moreover, in recognition of the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade on January 1, 1808, both the House and Senate passed legislation creating a commemoration commission, which was signed into law on February 5, 2008, and is currently awaiting funding. I believe that such Federal efforts are significant steps toward proper acknowledg-

ment and understanding of slavery and its implications, but our responsibilities on this matter are even greater.

The establishment of a commission to study the institution of slavery in the United States, as well as its consequences that reach into modern day society, is our responsibility. This concept of a commission to address historical wrongs is not unprecedented. In fact, in recent Congresses, commission bills have been put forward.

In 1983, a Presidential Commission determined that the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II was racist and inhumane, and as a result, the 1988 Civil Liberties Act provided redress for those injured by the internment. However, the internment of Japanese Latin Americans in the United States during World War II was not examined by the Commission, resulting in legislation calling for a commission to examine this oversight. Legislation establishing a commission to review the injustices suffered by European Americans, European Latin Americans, and Jewish refugees during World War II has also been proposed.

H.R. 40 is no different than these other commission bills. H.R. 40 establishes a commission to examine the institution of slavery and its legacy, like racial disparities in education, housing, and healthcare. Following this examination, the commission would recommend appropriate remedies to Congress, and as I have indicated before, remedies does not equate to monetary compensation.

In the 110th Congress, I convened the first Congressional hearing on H.R. 40. With witnesses that included Professor Charles Ogletree, Episcopal Bishop M. Thomas Shaw, and Detroit City Councilwoman JoAnn Watson, we began a formal dialogue on the legacy of the transatlantic slave trade. This Congress, I look forward to continuing this conversation so that our Nation can better understand this part of our history.

Attempts to eradicate today's racial discrimination and disparities will be successful when we understand the past's racial injustices and inequities. A commission can take us into this dark past and bring us into a brighter future. As in years past, I welcome open and constructive discourse on H.R. 40 and the creation of this commission in the 112th Congress.

INTRODUCTION OF A 3-PART BALANCED BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to re-introduce legislation that will amend the United States Constitution to force Congress to rein in spending by balancing the federal budget.

We have a spending addiction in Washington, D.C., and it has proven to be an addiction that Congress cannot control on its own and which is bringing dire consequences. We have gone in a few short years from a deficit of billions of dollars to a deficit of trillions of dollars. We are printing money at an unprecedented pace, which presents serious risks of massive inflation. Our national debt recently

surpassed an astonishing \$14 trillion and continues to rapidly increase, along with the waste associated with paying the interest on that debt.

Our first Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, warned of the consequences of out-of-control debt when he wrote: "To preserve [the] independence [of the people,] we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between economy and liberty, or profusion and servitude." Unfortunately, it increasingly appears that Congress has chosen the latter path.

Our current Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, issued a similar warning when she recently declared: "I think that our rising debt levels [sic] poses a national security threat, and it poses a national security threat in two ways. It undermines our capacity to act in our own interest, and it does constrain us where constraint may be undesirable. And it also sends a message of weakness internationally." Despite these warnings, Congress has refused to address this crisis.

Congress' spending addiction is not a partisan one. It reaches across the aisle and afflicts both parties, which is why neither party has been able to master it. We need outside help. We need pressure from outside Congress to force us to rein in this out-of-control behavior. We need a balanced budget amendment to our Constitution.

That is why I am introducing this legislation, which is a common sense, 3-part balanced budget Constitutional amendment. This bill would (1) amend the Constitution to require that total spending for any fiscal year not exceed total receipts; (2) require that bills to raise revenues pass each House of Congress by a 3/5 majority; and (3) establish an annual spending cap such that total federal spending could not exceed 1/5 of the economic output of the United States.

The bill would also require a 3/5 majority vote for any increases in the debt limit.

The legislation provides an exception in times of war and during military conflicts that pose imminent and serious military threats to national security.

Our federal government must be lean, efficient and responsible with the dollars that our nation's citizens worked so hard to earn. We must work to both eliminate every cent of waste and squeeze every cent of value out of each dollar our citizens entrust to us. Families all across our nation understand what it means to make tough decisions each day about what they can and cannot afford and government officials should be required to exercise similar restraint when spending the hard-earned dollars of our nation's citizens.

By amending the Constitution to require a balanced budget, establish measurable spending limits, and make it harder to raise taxes, we can force the Congress to control spending, paving the way for a return to surpluses and ultimately paying down the national debt, rather than allow big spenders to lead us further down the road of chronic deficits and in doing so leave our children and grandchildren saddled with debt that is not their own.

49 out of 50 states have a balanced budget requirement, and it is time that the federal government had one too.

Our nation faces many difficult decisions in the coming years, and Congress will face great pressure to spend beyond its means rather than to make the difficult decisions

about spending priorities. Unless Congress is forced to make the decisions necessary to create a balanced budget, it will always have the all-too-tempting option of shirking this responsibility. A Constitutional balanced budget

requirement, combined with the spending and tax limitations in this legislation, will set our nation's fiscal policies on the right path. This is a common sense approach to ensure that

Congress is bound by the same fiscal principles that guide America's families each day.

I urge support of this important legislation.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose

of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, January 6, 2011 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JANUARY 7

9:30 a.m.

Budget

To hold hearings to examine the United States economic outlook focusing on challenges for the monetary and fiscal policy.

SH-216