

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF MARY A. PTASZEK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Mary Ptaszek, a woman who committed her life to serving her community and improving the lives of those who lived in it.

A dedicated servant to her community Mrs. Ptaszek served as precinct committeewoman for three different wards, and on the Democratic Executive Committee. A native of Cleveland, Mrs. Ptaszek committed her life to helping others. A devoted wife and sibling, Mrs. Ptaszek was a lifelong member of St. Barbara Catholic Church where she sang in the choir. When her mother passed away Mrs. Ptaszek became her family's matriarch, hosting large family gatherings at her home. Mrs. Ptaszek's caring touch was extended not only to her family but to the greater community as well. Her devotion to her community was evident as, even her final years, she would drive fellow seniors to their medical appointments or to the shopping centers.

Through politics Mrs. Ptaszek looked to better the lives of those around her. A kind-hearted, community minded woman Mrs. Ptaszek sought to use politics as a tool of good to create better communities.

Mrs. Ptaszek was a kind, dedicated, passionate woman who selflessly gave of herself to help others. Mr. Speaker, I ask my fellow colleagues to join me in celebrating the life and tremendous accomplishments of this truly remarkable woman who worked tirelessly on behalf of others.

IN HONOR OF EII, INC., AT THE INFENIUM LINDEN BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER, FOR RECEIVING APPROVAL FROM OSHA TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STAR VOLUNTARY PROTECTION PROGRAMS (VPP)

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2000

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor EII, Inc., at the Linden Business and Technology Center, located in Linden, New Jersey, for its exceptional employee safety and health programs.

EII, Inc.'s recent approval for participation in the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Voluntary Protection Programs (VPP) is a testament to a company that puts the well-being of its employees above the careless and irresponsible desire to increase profits at all costs—rare behavior at a time when profits often seem more important than people.

EII, Inc. is an electrical contractor providing maintenance and process support at the

Infenium Linden Business and Technology Center. EII, Inc.'s employees, all represented by their respective trade unions, include electricians, pipefitters, millwrights, and carpenters. Each employee has been incremental in OSHA's evaluation and approval of EII, Inc.

OSHA's recognition of EII, Inc. is the result of a special relationship that has developed between management and employees, a relationship established by the management's commitment to the safety and health of the hard working men and women at EII, Inc.

In addition, EII, Inc. is the only electrical contractor to receive VPP approval, with less than 20 construction companies participating nation-wide—only two of which are in New Jersey.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me as I honor EII, Inc., a company that truly understands the safety needs of its employees, and a company that puts people before profits.

IN MEMORY OF GINETTA SAGIN—PIONEER HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I wish to call the attention of my colleagues in the House to the passing of a dear, dear personal friend and a true giant in the struggle for human rights. Just a few days ago, on Friday, August 25, Ginetta Sagan died of cancer at the age of 75.

I know that all of my colleagues who had the good fortune to know and work with her, and I know there are many here today who share my tremendous feeling of loss for not only a stalwart defender for human rights and humanity around the world, but also a true and wonderful personal friend and outstanding human being.

Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States appropriately honored the lifetime achievements of this remarkable woman when he awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1994, the highest civilian honor our nation can bestow. Throughout her life, she has brought healing, justice, and mercy to the oppressed and has helped to change the thinking of those who are in positions of power and authority.

Born in Milan, Italy, to a Jewish mother and Catholic father, Ginetta Sagan first worked against the fascists at the early age of 17, bringing clothes and food coupons to Jews in hiding. Her mother and father were arrested by Mussolini's Black Brigade in 1943 and did not survive the war. In 1943, Ginetta—and she almost always went only by her first name—worked as a courier for the Italian resistance, using her nickname Topolino, or "Little Mouse." Ginetta was only 5 feet tall, but she had the energy and the power of a giant. She helped to transport more than 300 fugitives and thousands of pamphlets through the

Italian Alps, before she was betrayed and arrested in early 1945.

Mr. Speaker, for over a month and a half, she was beaten, burned, electrically shocked and raped. On April 23, 1945—the very day scheduled for her execution—she managed to escape with the help of the Italian Resistance and two friendly German officers. In the deep dungeons of her Fascist torturers, where all hope is lost and only pain and fear live, Ginetta Sagan found her deep and unshakable commitment to human rights. It was there that she found her incredible strength to work tirelessly on behalf of the downtrodden. When a guard tossed her a loaf of bread, she found a matchbox with a slip of paper hidden inside. Inscribed on this piece of paper was only one word, which epitomizes her whole life: the Italian word Coraggio—Courage. Ginetta later named the first newsletter for Amnesty International Matchbox, reflecting this very moving experience.

After the war, Mr. Speaker, Ginetta attended the prestigious Sorbonne University in Paris. She continued her study of child development in 1951 at the University of Chicago, where she met and married Leonard Sagan, a medical student who later became a public health physician. After living in Washington, DC., Boston and Japan, the Sagens moved to my home state of California in 1968. Leonard Sagan died in 1977.

While living in Washington, DC., Ginetta began her lifelong work with Amnesty International, the London-based human rights organization. Ginetta helped found the United States chapter of this world-wide organization and, as its honorary chairwoman, worked tirelessly for its goals.

Mr. Speaker, Amnesty International annually awards a prize named in Ginetta's honor in recognition of her outstanding service and leadership on behalf of women and children's rights. Not surprisingly, as soon as she reached the Bay Area in California, she gathered like-minded activists and founded Amnesty International's Western Regional Office. In addition, Ginetta created the Aurora Foundation in order to investigate and campaign actively against torture in postwar Vietnam. The Foundation continues to play a crucial role in supporting human rights activists around the world.

Ginetta also actively campaigned against human rights abuses in Chile, Greece, Algeria, Poland, the Philippines and South Africa. In 1971, Ginetta organized a concert in Berkeley to raise funds for political prisoners in Greece. The concert, which featured her friend, folk singer Joan Baez, and Greek entertainer Melina Mercouri, drew some 10,000 people.

Mr. Speaker, the San Francisco Chronicle, in its obituary of her published on August 29, quotes Julianne Cartwright Taylor, chair of Amnesty International USA Board of Directors: "Her [Ginetta's] legacy is a constant reminder that our role is vital, and that without the work of human rights defenders, thousands upon thousands of individuals would be affected for the worst."

• 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.

In addition to her outstanding human rights work, this energetic woman found time to become an accomplished cook and cookbook author. She taught cooking classes for congressional spouses and was also an outstanding gardener. A species of orchids is named in her honor.

Mr. Speaker, Ginetta Sagan is survived by three sons—Loring, Duncan and Pico—as well as six grandchildren.

IN MEMORY OF KENNETH BLAND

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2000

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Kenneth Bland, who passed away on August 27, 2000. Kenneth was born on June 11, 1933 in Cadiz, Ohio to George and Bernice Bland.

Kenneth was a retired coal miner with Y&O Coal Company Nelms No. 2 mine near Cadiz. He served his country in the Army during the Korean war. Kenneth was the father and stepfather of six wonderful children; James, John, Jana, Jennifer, Robert and Lesley. Kenneth's family also included four grandchildren and two stepgrandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to pay my last respects to a man who gave so much of himself to his community, his area and his family. Kenneth will be missed by all whose lives he touched. I am honored to have represented him and proud to call him a constituent and a friend.

IN HONOR OF JOSEPH TAKACS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember Joseph Takacs, a man who devoted his life to the betterment of mankind, and the struggles of those who needed help the most.

Mr. Takacs led the autoworkers at General Motor's Fisher Body plant in Cleveland for more than 10 nonconsecutive years in the 1960's and 1970's. A courageous fighter for the working man, Mr. Takacs was one of 250 workers who staged a sit-in at General Motor's Cleveland plant that lasted from December 1936 into February 1937. Through the dedication and determination of Mr. Takacs and his striking colleagues a nationwide strike began. The strike forced the company to recognize the union as a bargaining agent for its hourly employees, even today, considered one of the greatest union victories.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Takacs was a dedicated man who committed his life to union reform, helping the poor, and fighting for the working men and women of this nation. Mr. Takacs was an inspirational leader and a mentor for generations to come. A champion of the causes of working people Mr. Takacs never turned his back on anyone. A leader dedicated to his fellow colleagues, during strikes, Mr. Takacs would beg for food to make sure that there was always food at the union hall.

Mr. Takacs, a past president of United Auto Workers Local 45, has served on the front lines of the battle for working families since the 1930's. I ask my distinguished colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of this truly remarkable man, who has dedicated his life to serving others.

SAINT THOMAS EPISCOPAL
PARISH GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2000

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate the members of St. Thomas Episcopal Parish on their 50 years in the South Florida community. St. Thomas Episcopal Parish will celebrate its 50th anniversary on Sunday, October 1st, with commemorative worship service and festivities.

I commend Rev. Roger M. Tobin for his selfless work and service to parishioners. He and the members of the parish should be proud to know that they have long served their community with selfless devotion and will continue to do so for the next 50 years.

It is an honor for me to represent St. Thomas Episcopal Parish in the United States Congress. The parish and the members stand as an example of unity and strength in our community and I am proud to offer my felicitations today.

I also want to recognize the parish's 50th Anniversary Committee for their hard work and dedication to making the 50th anniversary celebration a success. These special individuals include: Committee Chair, Virginia Wheeler; and Committee members Virginia Elias, Blossom Hibbe, Jim Karousatos, Bob McCammon, Betty Melfa, Pam Normandia, Sam Normandia, Holly Ostlund, Polly Patterson, Diana Propeck, Mary Lou Shad, Roxanne Singler, Frank Stuart, Susie Westbrook; and Honorary member, the Rt. Rev. Calvin O. Schofield, Jr.

I ask my congressional colleagues to join me in congratulating St. Thomas Episcopal Parish on its golden anniversary and in wishing the parishioners much continued success and longevity.

THE APPOINTMENT OF BILL LANN
LEE AS ASSISTANT ATTORNEY
GENERAL FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud to the recess appointment of Bill Lann Lee as assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. Bill Lann Lee is a true civil rights crusader, and his appointment reflects the Clinton-Gore administration's unflinching commitment to protecting the civil rights of all Americans by rigorously enforcing our nation's civil rights legislation.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Lee's personal experiences with discrimination as an Asian-American have driven him to fight passionately for

the last quarter century to secure the civil rights of all Americans. Bill Lann Lee's deep and personal commitment to civil rights and his outstanding record of service make him an exemplary choice for this critical position. In Bill Lann Lee all Americans can rest assured that they have a true civil rights crusader looking out for their civil rights, forcefully advocating fair affirmative action policies for all those discriminated against. The appointment of Bill Lann Lee as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights brings to this critical position a proven civil rights leader with a deep and personal commitment to protecting the rights of all Americans.

Bill Lann Lee's personal drive in civil rights advocacy was fueled by the experiences of his father, a proud but poor Chinese immigrant. Bill Lann Lee grew up knowing his father fought for freedom abroad in World War II even though he was denied dignity and freedom here at home because of his ethnicity. Inspired by that kind of unshakeable patriotism, Bill Lann Lee set out to establish a legal career in which he could fight to protect all Americans from the kind of discrimination his father experienced. Today he says, "Whenever I work on cases for women, for minorities, for individuals who need help, I sincerely feel that they are people like my father." Bill Lann Lee's desire to protect everyone from discrimination is a personal one, and it is this kind of commitment that makes him an outstanding choice for Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

Mr. Speaker, Bill Lann Lee brings a strong work ethic and record of service to his new position. He who grew up near Harlem's 125th street, and spent hours sorting piles of dirty clothes in his family laundry. He experienced racism because of his Asian-American background, but he had the courage and determination to work beyond that bias and excel in the classroom. Because of his hard work, he had the opportunity to take advantage of a scholarship for minorities and attended Yale University, graduating Phi Beta Kappa.

He went on to Columbia Law School, where he studied with Jack Greenberg, a veteran civil rights lawyer who succeeded Thurgood Marshall as director-counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. Because of Bill Lann Lee's hard work, he received an excellent education and laid the foundation for an outstanding legal career at the forefront of Civil Rights advocacy. It is from this position that he has spent the last 25 years continuing to work hard to protect the civil rights of all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, for the past 25 years of his distinguished legal career, Bill Lann Lee has been an advocate for civil rights enforcement, leading the fight for health care accessibility, public transportation equity, fair employment and housing rights and school desegregation. He worked for the NAACP since 1974 and the Center for Law in the Public Interests since 1983 where he served for five years as supervising attorney for Civil Rights Litigation. Among his most noteworthy victories are a 1985 case that provided housing for Los Angeles area residents displaced by the Century Freeway; a 1987 case that broke down barriers to the hiring and promotion of women and minorities at Lucky Stores, a retail chain in California; and a 1991 case that led to the expansion of California's efforts to screen underprivileged children for lead poisoning.