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RECOGNIZING ARMED FORCES DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my strongest support for H. Res. 377, a bill that recognizes Armed Forces Day and commends the exemplary service of the members of the United States Armed Services. I would like to say a special thanks to Chairman SKELTON and Ranking Member MCHUGH, as well as to the Members and staff of the House Armed Services Committee for their tireless efforts in support of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who are bravely defending us at home and abroad.

Today, it is appropriate that we take a moment to recognize and say thank you to the members of our Armed Forces for their dedication, sacrifice, and honor. Each and every day, they keep this great nation safe and protect the freedoms that we enjoy every single day. We are proud of all of our servicemen and women and are eternally grateful for their efforts in the Global War on Terror. Furthermore, let us not forget those who have given their lives in service to our freedom, and let us say a gracious thank you to them for their willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice for liberty.

Madam Speaker, the families of those who serve our country on the front lines also deserve the admiration and appreciation of each and every citizen. These family members often watch their loved ones travel to far away lands in support of a cause and an ideal so much greater than any one individual. Indeed, our democratic form of government is testament to the courage and valor of our Armed Forces. The support given to our servicemen and women by their loved ones is irreplaceable, as it is the foundation for the bravery inherent in those who labor steadfastly in the defense of liberty.

I believe that the brave men and women who sacrifice for our present freedoms deserve our fullest support. Our nation's servicemen and women represent the best our country has to offer, and they must be treated with the respect and honor they deserve. As we ask these courageous soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines—and their families—to do more and more, it's only right we continue doing all we can for them. Recognizing Armed Forces Day in 2009 is just one small reminder of the superior job our troops perform for America at home and abroad, and it is my hope that we will continue to do all we can and more for the members of our Armed Forces.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

21ST CENTURY GREEN HIGH-PERFORMING PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2187) to direct the Secretary of Education to make grants to State educational agencies for the modernization, renovation, or repair of public school facilities, and for other purposes:

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2187, the 21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act. As the only former state schools chief serving in Congress, I know that one of the biggest challenges we face in North Carolina, and across the country, is the lack of adequate facilities for learning to take place. This bill will put the federal government in partnership with local school districts to improve our schools and make them safer, healthier, and more green places for our children. However, this bill is about more than building schools. In this time of economic crisis, our efforts should be focused on helping people in our communities. And this bill does that by focusing on three things: jobs, jobs, and jobs.

First, the bill will create jobs in our communities in the short term. School construction and modernization projects enabled by this legislation will put people to work in construction, renovation, and planning. Across the country, hundreds of projects are ready to go immediately if given the green light with funding, and that means employment in 30 or 60 or 90 days from the time this bill gets funded.

Second, the bill lays the foundation for the clean energy jobs we need in the future. The green building projects enabled by this legislation will provide a model for innovation in the future. We will put people to work improving energy efficiency and applying new sources of energy to our needs, creating high tech jobs and new industries that will apply American ingenuity and know-how. This will also reduce our dependence on foreign sources of energy.

Third, the bill invests in the next generation so that they are prepared for the jobs of the 21st Century. There really is no substitute for bricks and mortar when it comes to quality schools and to meeting the educational goals of our communities. Funding in this bill will move our kids out of trailers, from facilities that put our children's health and safety at risk, into quality classrooms where they can focus on learning. And it will free up local funds to be used to improve classroom education.

This bill is about jobs today, jobs tomorrow, and jobs for the future. It addresses our most important priorities in unemployment, energy, and education. It is a good bill, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

HONORING DIANE POLICELLI

HON. THADDEUS G. MCCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 14, 2009

Mr. MCCOTTER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor and acknowledge Diane Policelli,

upon her receipt of the Tribute to Women Award, presented by the Michigan Federation of Republican Women.

Diane Policelli has selflessly dedicated herself to serving her community and actively promoting the values and ideals of the Republican Party. Since retiring from her career with Ford Motor Company, she has become dynamically engaged in her neighborhood. A certified member of the Community Emergency Response Team, Diane frequently supports the city and Police and Fire departments during emergency situations. She is a Board member and chief fundraiser for the Livonia Public Schools Foundation, as well as the Vice President of the Civic Library Commission. In these roles, she dedicatedly volunteers her time to mentoring high school students.

As the Community Service Chair and Hostess Chair for the Suburban Republican Women's Club, she dedicates her time to organizing activities which allow the members to creatively engage with the community. Under her direction, the Suburban Republican Women have been participating in a program to collect coupons to assist the military families of the United States. Diane also worked with a local senior citizen center on a project to have the club serve food at a dinner for the seniors.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending sincere congratulations to this year's Tribute to Women Award honoree, Diane Policelli, for her devoted service to her community and country.

28TH ANNUAL NATIONAL PEACE OFFICERS' MEMORIAL SERVICE

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 14, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, today we stand on the West Lawn commemorating and celebrating the Nation's law enforcement officers from across the Nation. As Members of Congress, we welcome you to this Congress every year, and we do so humbly and with great appreciation.

Let me acknowledge the work that many of us have done with our local law enforcement in the State of Texas. We have a multitude of law disciplines and law enforcement persons to whom we in Texas owe a debt of gratitude. From the constables office to other peace officers throughout the City of Houston, we owe these peace officers a debt of gratitude.

As a Member of the Eighteenth Congressional District, I have the privilege of representing the first African American constable, Mae Walker, and representing Constable Victor Trevino, a Hispanic constable. We have deputy sheriffs. We have the sheriff's department. We have the Houston Police Department, the Department of Public Safety. In many instances we find great leaders who believe not only in crime fighting, but crime prevention.

Today I would like to focus upon the importance of law enforcement and their need to work in the community. I salute the former mayor of the City of Houston, Lee Brown, former chief of police of the cities of Houston, New York, and Atlanta. I consider him the father of community-oriented policing that really speaks to the hearts and minds of the people.

It lets the police officers and law enforcement officers become knowledgeable about the community. The COPS program helps police officers know the "good guys" and the "bad guys." Neighbors become comfortable with law enforcement officers when they are engaged as people who are concerned about the neighborhood and the community.

At the same time as we raise up and respect our law enforcement officers, let me applaud those who I speak to all the time as I travel to Washington. We have a very effective aviation police force. I get an opportunity as I go through the airport to listen to them and to thank them.

Let us be concerned about the benefits for law enforcement officers. In particular, I know that my city, a very large city, has seen the decline of senior officers. For some reason or another, because our belts are being tightened, we don't have enough resources to provide them with the upward mobility, the professional development and the protection of their pensions and to recognize the sacrifice that they and their families are making. We as communities across the Nation should be concerned about making sure they have the right kind of benefits.

On the Federal level, I am very glad that the House Judiciary Committee has just passed out a COPS bill reauthorization. I think that is a very, very important aspect of the work of this Congress. The COPS program worked. It provided police officers for rural communities and urban communities. I spoke to my police personnel there and they said, yes, it would help us greatly if the COPS program were reauthorized. So as we salute our peace officers across America, let us make sure that we are actually doing as we are saying, and that is providing them with the resources that they need.

At the same time, let me also add the importance of training. There is the sensitivity that our police officers are able to get through experience, but training also helps them detect those with mental illness and have the best resources to address those suffering from mental illness so that those persons can be taken away from society before they do harm to themselves or someone else.

We thank those who are serving today. We offer our deepest sympathy to the families of those who have lost their lives on the front lines of law enforcement in America over the last year, and we certainly acknowledge the continued sacrifice that law enforcement officers will make.

We should promote and congratulate good law enforcement officers. We should not allow

the bad incidents that occur, the mishaps that occur, and many of them have occurred, and I have stood up vigorously against them and I will stand up yesterday, today and tomorrow, when there is abuse.

But we should not allow those kinds of situations to take away from the grandeur, the respect, the honesty, the integrity and the down-right commitment that the law enforcement agencies of America, particularly those in our local communities, show every single day with the idea that as they leave in the morning and kiss their families good-bye, that they might sacrifice their lives so that we might be safe.

We owe them a great debt of gratitude, and it is my pleasure to thank our peace officers. Peace officers, the sworn, public-sector officers entrusted with law enforcement authority and the power of arrest, risk their lives daily to protect our Nation. These individuals, who are responsible for safeguarding the rights and freedoms we enjoy as Americans, are true heroes.

Peace Officers Memorial Day honors those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the safety and security of their communities and our Nation. Created by Public Law 87-726, signed by President Kennedy in 1962, this day gives us the opportunity to acknowledge and pay our respect to those who, through their courageous deeds, have fallen in the line of duty.

In the Houston Police Department's 168-year history, 109 officers have been killed while on duty. Nationally, the number of police officers that have fallen in the line of duty has decreased. Although the number of officers killed in the line of duty has declined in recent years, the fact that one officer is killed every 2½ days in our country is a sober reminder that protecting our communities and safeguarding our democracy come at a heavy price. There are 17,917 names engraved on the Memorial, representing officers from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, and Federal law enforcement and military police agencies.

21ST CENTURY GREEN HIGH-PERFORMING PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 2187) to direct the Secretary of Education to make grants to State educational agencies for the modernization, renovation, or repair of public school facilities, and for other purposes:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise today as a member of the Green Schools Caucus to strongly support the 21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act.

Many of our nation's schools are in disrepair. The average American school is 50 years old and almost two-thirds need extensive modernization. According to the GAO, 14 million students attend schools considered below standard or dangerous. In my own district, thousands of students go to class in portable classrooms—trailers located outside the school buildings—because the schools can no longer accommodate the growing student population. But in a time of state budget deficits, fewer dollars are going to school construction projects.

Today's bill will assist local school districts with the initial costs of construction and modernization and, by investing in energy efficient technology, will result in significant long term savings. Building green costs about 2 percent more than conventional construction, but can save 20 times that amount over the life of the school.

Moreover, green school construction yields substantial environmental benefits. Green schools use on average 33 percent less energy and produce less carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide, and coarse particulate matter emissions.

With its investment in infrastructure, this bill provides an important economic stimulus. School districts have many projects ready to go. When this bill is passed, we will see additional jobs in the construction industry, including suppliers, architects, contractors, and engineers.

Mr. Chair, this legislation is a good, long-term investment. I urge my colleagues to pass this bill today and work to ensure that it is fully funded to improve education, reduce our energy consumption, and create jobs in local communities.