

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 178, passage of H.R. 740—Preventing Harassment through Outbound Number Enforcement (PHONE) Act of 2007, I was unavoidably detained and unable to vote.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I was not able to attend a number of votes that took place March 21, 2007 on the House floor. I take my responsibility to vote very seriously and had I been present I would have voted: "Yea" on rollcall 167, Motion to Permit to Proceed in Order on This Day; "Nay" on rollcall 168, Neugebauer of Texas Amendment; "Nay" on rollcall 169, Price of Georgia Amendment; "Yea" on rollcall 170, Al Green of Texas Amendment, as Modified; "No" on rollcall 171, On Motion to Re-commit with Instructions; "Aye" on rollcall 172, On Passage, Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act of 2007; "Yea" on rollcall 173, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act; "Yea" on rollcall 174, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, Joshua Omvig Veterans Suicide Prevention Act; "Yea" on rollcall 175, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended, Dr. James Allen Veteran Vision Equity Act; "Yea" on rollcall 176, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2007; "Yea" on rollcall 177, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, Judicial Disclosure Responsibility Act; and "Yea" on rollcall 178, On Passage, Preventing Harassment through Outbound Number Enforcement (PHONE) Act of 2007.

IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP
FUELS AMERICAN ECONOMIC
GROWTH**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, the Center for an Urban Future recently released a report titled, "A World of Opportunity." The "report reiterates the fact that immigrant entrepreneurs are key engines of growth for many cities in the United States. Every census taken from 1880 to 1990 has revealed that immigrants were self-employed significantly more than American-born natives. The number of immigrant entrepreneurs in 2005 was 350 out of 100,000, compared to 280 of 100,000 for those born in the United States. Research maintains that immigrant entrepreneurs have

made positive contributions to the U.S. economy for more than a century.

Nowhere are the contributions of self-employed immigrants, to urban economies, more visible than in New York City, where people migrate from almost every part of the world. Despite ethnic differences, New York City immigrants often arrive with an entrepreneurial determination. Over the past 10 to 15 years, immigrant entrepreneurs have fueled much of the overall growth in new businesses across the City and have triggered dramatic turn-arounds in neighborhoods. Communities such as Sunset Park, Flushing, Richmond Hill and Washington Heights have all reaped from the seeds of growth powered by immigrant owned businesses. There is no doubt that Immigrants will continue to make significant contributions to the City's economic growth in the future.

There are several reasons why immigrants start their own businesses and in such record numbers. The risk of a business venture appears comparatively minimal to the surmountable risk immigrants have already taken when packing up their homes and moving to a country where the majority of the people do not speak their native language. Another motivation for immigrants to open up their own businesses is the recognition that they can offer a variety of products and services that many other entrepreneurs cannot. Similarly, many immigrants prefer the solace that comes with owning a business instead of having to deal with the numerous struggles and frustrations of participating in the large business work force where immigrants are often discriminated against, paid unfairly and required to work uncommon hours.

The stereotype that immigrant businesses represent small "mom-and-pop shops" such as restaurants and local grocery stores no longer holds true. Immigrant entrepreneurs have a growing presence in several vital sectors of the New York City's economy such as: biotechnology, construction, food manufacturing, mass transportation, telecommunications and restaurant equipment sales. Every year, Inc. Magazine publishes what they call the "Inc. 500," a list of America's fastest growing privately owned businesses. In 2005, 55 of Inc. Magazine's 500 business owners were immigrants. Collectively their companies employed more than 14,000 individuals and contributed almost \$1.4 billion to the U.S. economy.

At a time in which outsourcing and corporate mergers are on the rise, it is likely that small, home-grown businesses will only become more integral to New York City's future economic success. However, while celebrating these successes and contributions it is important to remember that many immigrants face considerable challenges when deciding to open a business. New York's regulatory environment can be daunting to any entrepreneur. The addition of language and cultural barriers, in many cases, exacerbate this process. Nonetheless, there are numerous organizations dedicated to educating entrepreneurs about how to start a business and overcome obstacles to growth, such as Seedco and the Economic Development Corporation, which offer classes on how to start a business, in Spanish and Chinese.

I commend all of those who have migrated to the United States in search of the American dream, pursuing happiness by establishing their own businesses and contributing positively to the fabric of our country's economy.

TRIBUTE TO PAMELA BATES

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of my constituents, Pam Bates, of Bronx, NY. Ms. Bates is being honored for her leadership and service to the community by the Committee for Effective Leadership and the New York State Democratic Committee. Ms. Bates is the mother of one daughter and two sons and the grandmother of nine wonderful additions to her family. She is a Graduate Student at Queens College pursuing a Master's Degree in Political Science and belongs to the CUNY Coalition for Disabled Students and the Queens College Committee for Disabled Students.

Ms. Bates is president of 504 North Star Democratic Club and sits on the executive board of the 504 Democratic Club which focuses on disability issues and rights. She is also on the Board of Directors of Center for Independence of the Disabled in New York and is a member of the executive board of Disabled in Action.

Ms. Bates serves on the Paratransit Advisory Committee and the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Commission, two positions which are appointed by the New York City Council. She is a member of the Manhattan Borough President's Disability Task Force and the Disability Network of New York City where she devotes much of her time conducting press conferences and attending hearings concerning disability rights and issues. She has testified at all levels of government on issues impacting the rights of the disabled. Additionally, Ms. Bates lobbies in Albany on behalf of the rights of disabled students.

Ms. Bates is a devout activist and advocate for the rights of people with mobility, sight, hearing, and mental impairments. As a result of her personal experiences as an African American, a woman, and a wheelchair user, she has given public lectures and written papers on the topics of disability and activism and our legislative process.

Madam Speaker, I join to wish Ms. Bates best wishes and good fortune in her future projects.

INTRODUCTION OF FEDERAL
HOMELAND SECURITY PROCURE-
MENT LEGISLATION**HON. CHRISTOPHER P. CARNEY**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. CARNEY. Madam Speaker, as chairman of the Homeland Security Committee's Subcommittee on Management, Investigations and Oversight, I am very concerned with the potential for waste, fraud and abuse at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

As we have heard all too often in recent months, the Department is spending increasing amounts of its resources on outside contractors to help fulfill its job of preparing, preventing and mitigating any future large-scale catastrophic events on our soil.

Unfortunately, the contracts are numerous, as are the dollars being doled out. Congress

has discovered that, government-wide, Federal agencies have had help developing requests for proposals (RFPs) for any number of goods and services from industry insiders, all in the interest of expediency.

While it is certainly reasonable for the government to consult with industry insiders during RFP development, it is deplorable for these industry insiders to make recommendations to the government that would result in only one selectable proposal: that from the company of the insider who assisted with the initial RFP.

Such action is wrong, yet it has happened on numerous occasions.

For example, starting in late 2003, DHS issued an RFP for "eMerge2," an effort to finish the consolidation of all of the financial systems of the DHS components into one new system. The eMerge2 RFP was drafted in large part by a single contractor. When the contract was awarded, it was split between two contractors, one of them being the company that helped write the RFP. Long story short: eMerge2 was a failure.

The questions raised by eMerge2 run deeper than "just" the federal dollars that were doled out without seeing any return. Indeed, the eMerge2 fiasco raised serious questions about whether more needs to be done, both by DHS and by contractors, to ensure that the "firewalls" contractors are using are actually working. This legislation answers some of those questions.

Similarly, when the Coast Guard (USCG) realized that the majority of its marine and aviation fleet was in desperate need of upgrade, it relied upon only two contractors to design the entire Deepwater project, without nearly enough consultation from USCG personnel. Now the Coast Guard has had to pull ships from service and is borrowing boats from the Navy. Our waters are less secure now than before 9/11 because of the fiasco that is Deepwater.

Surely, there have been examples of unnecessary government largesse resulting in waste. That said, while private industry as a contracting partner can save taxpayer dollars, I am skeptical that a business that helped to write an RFP and was the only business qualified to receive it really has the taxpayers' best interests in mind. In fact, this type of malfeasance is criminal, in my opinion.

This legislation seeks to eliminate the potential for future abuses of Federal homeland security procurement dollars. It would require that any contract entered into after May 1, 2007 is not awarded to companies who played a role in constructing the RFP for said contract. If the company is awarded the contract, the Secretary of Homeland Security must certify to Congress that the contract was issued through a competitive process and that DHS took all appropriate measures to ensure that during the RFP design stage, any potential contractor could not influence the RFP to favor itself. Additionally, it would allow for contractors who had input in the process to be hired as subcontractors if they had input designing the RFP but were not ultimately selected as the lead contractor.

I would encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting this necessary legislation, which has the potential to save the Federal Government hundreds of millions of dollars, if not more annually. The financial resources of the Federal Government are limited. It should not

be as easy as it currently is to game the system and bilk tens of millions of dollars at a time out the Department of Homeland Security's budget.

A TRIBUTE TO MR. JOHN S.
NIGRELLI, SR.

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of Mr. John S. Nigrelli, Sr., Chairman of the United Savings Bank. Mr. Nigrelli has been chosen as the recipient of the 2007 Achievement Award sponsored by the Association Regionale Calabrese of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Nigrelli's lifetime of excellence and achievement began at the Lawrence Savings and Loan Association. During his time there, he began night school to further his education and completed an Associate degree in business administration from the Wharton School of The University of Pennsylvania.

While attending night school, Mr. Nigrelli dedicated himself to Albert Lawrence Savings and Loan in an effort to continue his advancement through the bank. These tremendous efforts, both educational and professional, were recognized. In 1963, Mr. Nigrelli was elected as an officer of the bank. Throughout his career, he continued to conquer his professional goals and continued his quest for education and knowledge. In 1970, he was elected Executive Vice President and in 1977, he was named President and C.E.O. He continued to hold that position until 2006 when he was named Chairman and C.E.O. As Albert Lawrence Savings and Loan transformed into United Savings Bank throughout the years, Mr. Nigrelli's experience has always guided the bank to unparalleled success.

The bank flourished under Mr. Nigrelli's leadership, knowledge, and experience. His efforts were recognized not only by the community of Philadelphia but by several publications, as one of the most established and stable banks in the city.

Even today, Mr. Nigrelli's kindness is felt through the organizations and charities in which he is a part. Throughout his professional success, this great man was supported by his wife, Marie Pedano. Although she passed away in August 10, 2002, her inspiration continues to contribute to Mr. Nigrelli's continued success. John's endeavors have also been supported by his four beloved children and seven grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating Mr. John Nigrelli, Sr. on his 2007 Achievement Award sponsored by the Association Regionale Calabrese. This great honor could not go to a better man.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, March 20, 2007, I was traveling with the

President of the United States to attend a meeting back in the district and thus missed rollcall votes #160 through 163. Had I been present, I would have voted "Yea" on rollcall votes 161 and 162 and "Nay" on rollcall votes 160 and 163.

RECOGNIZING THE 42ND ANNIVERSARY OF MAUI ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, INC.

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 42nd Anniversary of Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc. (MEO), which was chartered as a community action agency on March 22, 1965, by Federal mandate under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

The motto of MEO is "Helping People. Changing Lives." And for these past 42 years, MEO has maintained a successful record of service by providing basic tools for living, for earning, for self-reliance, and for community involvement.

MEO has initiated many important programs on the Valley Isle, which include specialized bus transportation for seniors, persons with disabilities, and youth; Head Start; Enlace Hispano; community reintegration of prison former inmates; micro-enterprise loans; business education for low income entrepreneurs; employment training and placement programs; Low Income Home Energy Assistance; and energy conservation and home energy assistance for low-income persons. Most impressively, MEO is able to serve all three islands that comprise the County of Maui: Maui, Lanai, and Molokai.

MEO is one of only a handful of agencies—out of over 1,000 community action agencies nationwide—selected by the National Community Action Partnership to receive an Agency of Excellence Award, highlighting superior administrative operations and program excellence. This translates into advocacy and outstanding services tailored to the needs of the Maui community.

I would like to extend a sincere mahalo nui loa (thank you very much) to the staff of MEO for their hard work and dedication. May the next four decades prove to be as successful.

HONORING THE LIFE OF CHRISTOPHER JAMES CEPEDA FERNANDEZ

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise with heavy heart to mourn with my constituency the loss of Guam, Army National Guardsman Specialist Christopher James Cepeda Fernandez.

On March 5, 2007, Specialist Fernandez, a 28-year-old father of one, was killed while serving on deployment in support of the Combined Joint Task Force in the Horn of Africa. Due to Christopher's patriotism and sacrifice to our country, he was posthumously promoted to Sergeant.