

HONORING VENTURA COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION 60TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the 60th anniversary of the Ventura County Economic Development Association, VCEDA.

In the past two decades, VCEDA has been actively involved in a myriad of projects aimed at maintaining the economic vitality of the county, including BRAC '95 and '05 to protect our military bases; mediating air quality issues to resolve differences and prevent costly court battles; working with schools, businesses and corporate executives to determine needs for a skilled trained workforce; and working with local governments to remove unwarranted obstacles to the growth of business and industry.

VCEDA has played an important role in bringing and continuing to support Channel Islands State University in Ventura County. And it has set a goal of working with all educators at all levels to ensure that the upcoming workforce is ready to meet the needs of business in the 21st century.

Most recently, VCEDA has been recognized as "The Champion of Job Growth" by the Workforce Investment Board of Ventura County, "The Small Business Advocate" by the Pacific Coast Business Times and received "The Distinguished Business Leader Award" by the Ventura County Leadership Academy.

I commend VCEDA for its outstanding leadership and commitment in serving the needs of its members and the surrounding community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF T.D.
STEINKE

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

Mr. EDWARDS of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of T.D. Steinke.

I will deeply miss our friend, T.D. Steinke. It has been a blessing in my life to have had T.D. as a friend for 26 years.

T.D. always stood up for the dignity of average working families. In doing so, he inspired me and so many others to remember the people who are the heart and soul of our Nation's economy and our values.

I guess it's a surprise to no one that T.D. was a Democrat's Democrat.

That is why my prayer today is that St. Peter is not a Republican. However, if I am wrong, I have no doubt that T.D. is working to convert him.

As I listened to President Obama's inaugural address yesterday, I couldn't help but think about T.D. and how much he would have savored a Democrat being sworn in as our new president.

Then, as I looked out at the crowds of over 2 million people, I realized that T.D. had just decided he would rather watch the inauguration from a better place.

Ruth, I want to thank you and your family for sharing T.D. with all of us, who will always be part of our family.

I thank God for giving us the blessing of T.D. and pray that He will give you strength and comfort in the years and days ahead.

TARP REFORM AND
ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 384, the Troubled Assets Relief Program (TARP) Reform and Accountability Act of 2009. This bill will amend the TARP provisions of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008, EESA, to strengthen accountability, close loopholes, increase transparency, and most importantly, require the Treasury Department to take significant steps on foreclosure mitigation.

Madam Speaker, I was particularly pleased to work with Chairman FRANK and his staff on significant portions of the Manager's amendment to this legislation which ensures that small and minority businesses along with local, community, and private banks gain fair and equitable access to the TARP funds.

It's been 3 months since the Treasury started disbursing TARP funds. Just in time perhaps for a lot of big banks, however smaller banks have been locked out so far. A lot of small banks certainly are in need of relief as the real estate crisis continues to unfold and hundreds have already applied.

According to recent reports, the Treasury Department has yet to issue "the necessary guidelines for about 3,000 additional private banks. Most of them are set up as partnerships, with no more than 100 shareholders. They are not able to issue preferred shares to the government in exchange for capital injections, as other banks can." While Treasury officials state they are "working on a solution," for these private banks time is of the essence.

The Treasury Department has handed out more than \$155 billion to 77 banks. Of that sum, \$115 billion has gone to the eight largest banks. Community banks hold 11 percent of the industry's total assets and play a vital role in small business and agriculture lending. Community banks provide 29 percent of small commercial and industrial loans, 40 percent of small commercial real estate loans and 77 percent of small agricultural production loans.

This Manager's amendment requires that the Treasury Department act promptly to permit smaller community financial institutions and specifically private banks that have been shut out so far in participating on the same terms as the large financial institutions that have already received funds.

This is a major change for millions of Americans who bank in private banks and who deserve the same access to needed capital. Small businesses are the backbone of our Nation, and unfortunately, they have not been afforded the opportunity that large financial institutions have received to TARP funds and loans. Small businesses represent more than the American dream—they represent the

American economy. Small businesses account for 95 percent of all employers, create half of our gross domestic product, and provide three out of four new jobs in this country. Small business growth means economic growth for the Nation. We cannot stabilize and revitalize our economy without ensuring the inclusion and participation of the small business segment of our economy. With the ever worsening economic crisis, we must ensure in this legislation that small and minority businesses and community banks are afforded an opportunity to benefit from this important legislation. I am very pleased that the Manager's amendment will affect this change.

In Section 107, the Manager's amendment creates an Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, which will be responsible for developing and implementing standards and procedures to ensure the inclusion and utilization of minority and women-owned businesses. These businesses will include financial institutions, investment banking firms, mortgage banking firms, broker-dealers, accountants, and consultants.

Furthermore, the inclusion of these businesses should be at all levels, including procurement, insurance, and all types of contracts such as the issuance or guarantee of debt, equity, or mortgage-related securities. This office will also be responsible for diversity in the management, employment, and business activities of the TARP, including the management of mortgage and securities portfolios, making of equity investments, the sale and servicing of mortgage loans, and the implementation its affordable housing programs and initiatives.

Section 107 also calls for the Secretary of the Treasury to report to Congress in 180 days detailed information describing the actions taken by the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion, which will include a statement of the total amounts provided under TARP to small, minority, and women-owned businesses. The Manager's amendment in Section 404 also has clarifying language ensuring that the Secretary has authority to support the availability of small business loans and loans to minority and disadvantaged businesses.

This will be critical to ensuring that small and minority businesses have access to loans, financing, and purchase of asset-backed securities directly through the Treasury Department or the Federal Reserve.

H.R. 384 reforms TARP by increasing oversight, reporting, monitoring and accountability. It requires any existing or future institution that receives funding under TARP to provide no less than quarterly public reporting on its use of TARP funding. Any insured depository institution that receives funding under TARP is required to report quarterly on the amount of any increased lending (or reduction in decrease of lending) and related activity attributable to such financial assistance.

In connection with any new receipt of TARP funds, Treasury is also required to reach an agreement with the institution, and its primary Federal regulator on how the funds are to be used and benchmarks the institution is required to meet so as to advance the purposes of the Act to strengthen the soundness of the financial system and the availability of credit to the economy. In addition, a recipient institution's primary Federal regulator must specifically examine use of funds and compliance