

This is the legacy Mrs. Mabel Yap bequeathed to us. Indeed, I am privileged to have been touched by the magnificent contributions she has made to our community through her family. I now join our community in thanks for her grace and for her noble and giving presence during her time with us.

THE ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY PROTECTION ACT OF 2005

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, the past several months have seen an almost unprecedented focus in this body on the extremely important issue of homeland security. Just a few weeks ago, we passed the National Intelligence Reform Act, a landmark piece of legislation to overhaul our intelligence agencies. But, as I noted at that time, the bill unfortunately did not go far enough in addressing the major security vulnerability presented by the porous nature of our borders.

So as we continue to address the issue of border security, I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of Chairman SENSENBRENNER's legislation to complete the San Diego border fence, and ensure that illegal immigrants are unable to receive drivers' licenses, something, I might add, already prohibited in my home state of California.

But in addition to these important steps that will soon be taken, I rise to ask for the support of my colleagues for an illegal immigration control plan that I am pleased to introduce today. The plan is the brainchild of T.J. Bonner, the President of the National Border Patrol Council, and a 26-year veteran of the Border Patrol who still serves with them today. T.J. believes that our proposal will eliminate up to 98 percent of the illegal border crossings into the United States.

T.J. and I share the belief that for any proposal to stop illegal immigration to be successful, it must get at the root cause of what attracts illegal immigrants to our country—and that is the lure of economic opportunity and the ease with which illegal workers can find jobs. Under the Bonner Plan, we will dramatically increase the enforcement of laws which prohibit American businesses from employing illegal immigrants. Regrettably, too many employers have been unwilling to comply with the law. The growing availability of counterfeit identity documents has also undermined the current system because employers are increasingly unable to establish the authenticity of documents presented by job applicants.

Our legislation adds new features to the Social Security card to deter counterfeiting and make it easier for employers to determine whether a card is genuine by including a digitized photo of the cardholder on the card. The improved Social Security card will also be encoded with a unique electronic encryption code to allow employers to verify each prospective applicant's work eligibility status prior to hiring, through either an electronic card-reader or a toll-free telephone number. Employers will face stiff federal fines of \$50,000 and up to 5 years in prison if they hire an illegal immigrant or choose not to verify a pro-

spective employee's work eligibility. The employer would also be required to reimburse the government for the cost of deporting the illegal immigrant.

With the improved Social Security card and national verification system, employers will have no excuse for hiring illegal immigrants. By eliminating the supply of jobs for illegal workers, we will end the incentive for illegal immigrants to enter the United States because they will know that they will be unable to make a living here.

Legal workers will only need to update their Social Security card once, to have their photo placed on the card and for other long-overdue anti-fraud measures to be applied. A worker would only need the updated Social Security card when applying for a new job. I want to make it very, very clear that this proposal does not represent the creation of a national identification card. This bill strictly prohibits the use of the Social Security card as a national ID card, and stipulates that the card not be required to be routinely carried on one's person. Social Security cards are often already required to be provided to new employers; the changes we are proposing to the Social Security card take us no further down the road of creating a national ID card.

Finally, the Bonner Plan also puts teeth into the new enforcement procedures by calling for the addition of 10,000 new Homeland Security officers whose sole responsibility will be to enforce employer compliance with the law. These new agents will free up the rest of the Border Patrol to exclusively focus on border enforcement and terrorism prevention.

Mr. Speaker, I do not stand here today to tell the rest of the world that we intend to limit opportunities for the American dream to be fulfilled. But if foreign nationals wish to come to the United States, they must, as Governor Schwarzenegger said, "play by the rules," and we must make clear that there will be no economic opportunity for anyone who enters this country illegally. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in this effort, and hope they will consider joining me as we take action on this vital national security priority.

ENSURING COLLEGE ACCESS FOR ALL AMERICANS ACT

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, since 1973, the Pell Grant program has been the backbone of making higher education affordable in the United States, with more than five million students receiving nearly 13 billion dollars in aid this year alone. Unfortunately, President Bush recently made a change to student aid policy that will cut more than \$300 million in federal scholarships to low- and moderate-income college students for the 2005–06 school year. As a result, 1.3 million students will have their Pell Grant scholarships either reduced or eliminated.

Current law allows students and their families to deduct state and local taxes when calculating how much income they have available to pay for the cost of higher education. This recent Bush update changes the way families calculate these deductions, and as a result,

1.3 million students will have their Pell scholarships reduced or eliminated. In essence, the change would make it appear that families have more money available to pay for tuition, decreasing the amount of Federal student aid, as well as other need-based aid for which families are eligible.

This is why I am introducing legislation along with Representative TIM BISHOP to reverse the \$300 million Pell scholarship cut. Specifically, our bill would prevent any student from having his or her federal Pell Grant eligibility amount reduced as a result of the recent changes to student aid. This would enable the Department of Education to fine tune the eligibility calculation without hurting students and families who rely on these scholarships to pay for college.

Today, education is more important than ever to solving the most pressing problems of our communities and the country. We must do everything possible to help American students attend college.

RECOGNIZING THE ACTIVITIES OF MRS. RUTH WILLNER

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize an extremely active and dedicated woman, Mrs. Ruth Willner for her contributions to the Monterey Park Democratic Club. In addition to working and raising two children, Mrs. Willner has still found the time to be very involved in her community.

Many groups in the Los Angeles area are fortunate to count Mrs. Willner as one of their members. However, the time that she has contributed to the Monterey Park Democratic Club is especially remarkable. Mrs. Willner has been a Monterey Park Democratic Club member for nearly 40 years.

In addition to being a member she also assumed the role of the club's Newsletter Editor and has held that position for the past 20 years. For the past two decades, she has served as the newsletter's only reporter, writer and editor. Her work played an integral role in keeping members up to date and in touch.

In December, Mrs. Willner produced her last newsletter for the club and retired as the Newsletter Editor. Although she will relinquish her position, her hard work and devotion will not be forgotten. Her commitment and drive is an inspiration to us all.

TRIBUTE TO RAMON BUTLER AND COREY JONES

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a pair of heroes whose courage has served as an inspiration to many in South Florida during this past holiday season.

Shortly after 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 22, 2004, an unattended candle sparked a flame that engulfed a home in the City of Miami Gardens, FL; fourteen-year-old Ramon

Butler who lives next door immediately responded to cries for help. Ramon entered the burning home without regard to his own personal safety, located and rescued a one-year-old child and then reentered the home in an attempt to locate the baby's five-month-old sister. Unfortunately, the roof began to collapse and he could not proceed any further and exited the home.

At this point, City of Miami Gardens Police Officer Corey Jones arrived on the scene. Aware that the baby was still inside and told which room she was in, Officer Jones rushed back to the home, pulled hurricane shutters open, cranked the window open and leaped inside. Though the flames were intense and smoke filled the home, Officer Jones was successful in locating the infant and bringing her out to safety.

The Miami-Dade County Police Department recently presented its highest civilian honor, the Silver Medal of Valor, to Ramon Butler, and both he and Officer Jones have been acknowledged by Miami Gardens Mayor Shirley Gibson for their acts of bravery. It is with great pride that I too pay tribute to the efforts of these two community heroes and extend my congratulations to each of them for a job well done.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND RESULTS ACT

HON. TODD RUSSELL PLATTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce important legislation to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our Federal government—the Program Assessment and Results Act, or PAR Act, which establishes a statutory requirement that the Office of Management and Budget, OMB, working with agencies, review and assess the effectiveness of each federal program at least once every five years. As elected representatives of the people, we have a responsibility to use taxpayer dollars in the most effective way possible. As Congress formulates its budget each year, we must have the best information available to us on which to base our spending decisions.

The Government Performance and Results Act, or GPRA, has laid a solid foundation for agencies working with Congress to set strategic goals and begin to utilize performance based information. Building on GPRA, we must take the next step toward reforming the way the government conducts business.

One of the key aspects of any reform effort is to change the prevailing mindset. If our emphasis is on creating a more results-oriented government, then we must change our mindset from outputs to outcomes. It takes time to achieve this type of cultural shift. The reforms of the early 1990s—the CFO Act, GPRA and others—are just beginning to work as intended.

Prior efforts to make the federal government more effective—the Hoover Commission, Zero-Based Budgeting, the Planning-Programming-Budgeting System, Reinventing Government—have come and gone with little lasting effect. Federal managers have learned that if

they wait, each new administration is likely to attempt yet another broad based reform. From a management standpoint, it is difficult in that type of environment to make long-range plans; and it's next to impossible to achieve the kind of cultural shift needed to reform the management of the federal government.

By enacting GPRA, Congress put government reform in statute. Because of this statutory framework, federal managers now look at the requirements for performance plans and strategic plans required by GPRA and know they are here to stay regardless of changes in Congress and the Executive Branch. When the first agency strategic plans fell short of expectations, the reform effort was not scrapped—it was improved. Now, ten years after GPRA was enacted, we have strategic plans that are more in line with what was envisioned. We have seen slow, sustainable improvement.

GPRA requires that agencies focus attention on program evaluation as one of six aspects of their strategic plans. Unfortunately, according to a 2004 report from the Government Accountability Office, program evaluation is the one area where departments consistently come up short. Not only have agencies failed to comply with this requirement, the valuable information that stands to be gained from these evaluations is not culled, coordinated, or presented in a useful way.

We have seen great progress in meeting other objectives set out in GPRA. In 1997, only 76 percent of federal managers had developed performance measures. By 2003, that number had risen to 89 percent. It is now time to strengthen GPRA to address the shortfall we see in program evaluation.

By creating and using the Program Assessment Rating Tool, or PART, this Administration has gone a step beyond the strategic plans required by GPRA and implemented a system for evaluating the performance and results of federal programs. The next logical step is to codify the requirement for a coordinated evidence-based review of programs.

The PAR Act does not seek to codify the use of the PART specifically. Rather, this bill amends GPRA by establishing a requirement for program reviews. Specifically, the Office of Management and Budget, working with agency heads, would be required under the Act to review each program activity at least once every five years. By requiring OMB to coordinate this effort with the agencies we will take a great step forward in making the federal government more efficient and results oriented.

Information gleaned from these program reviews needs to be useful across the board to all stakeholders. Members of Congress, taxpayers, federal managers and the Executive Branch need to know if programs are being managed effectively and if they are achieving the desired result. Further, this legislation, once enacted, will allow us to compare data among different agencies, to see how different programs with similar goals are achieving results. Members of Congress can use the information to make informed budget decisions and conduct more effective oversight. It will help the taxpayers see what they are getting for their money. Most important, federal managers will use the information to improve the way they manage programs. The results will be a more effective and efficient government for the good of all Americans.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL TO DETER ADDITIONAL ABUSES OF PRISONERS AND DETAINEES IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, it has been my privilege since the terrorist attacks of September 11th to visit our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. Just a few days ago, I also traveled to Guantanamo Bay with my colleagues, U.S. Senator JON CORZINE and U.S. Representative ROBERT MENENDEZ, to investigate conditions at this key installation and visit with our soldiers on duty there, many of whom are members of the National Guard from our home state of New Jersey. Every visit I've made with our troops has added to the profound admiration and deep respect I have for the brave men and women who serve in our nation's armed forces and who are prosecuting this very difficult global war on terrorism.

At the same time, we do not honor the soldiers when we fail to investigate and call to account all of those up and down the chain of U.S. military command who are directly or indirectly responsible for abusing detainees under U.S. control. This grim reality is made all the clearer in an open letter delivered today to members of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee from a dozen top-ranking retired military officers in the U.S. armed services. They underscore that current U.S. detention and interrogation operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Guantanamo Bay, and elsewhere have undermined our intelligence gathering efforts, and added to the risks facing our troops serving around the world.

Last year, three reports that were compiled by U.S. Army officers and the bipartisan investigative commission appointed by U.S. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld documented in horrifying detail the egregious human rights abuses that occurred at Abu Ghraib Prison and other detention facilities under U.S. military control. Yet, the Congress failed to do our job, doggedly investigate how and why these abuses occurred, and put in place new safeguards for interrogations in U.S. military detention facilities and unfettered, independent investigations of prisoner treatment. As a result, more abuses have occurred.

In recent weeks, more credible disclosures of prisoner abuses at Guantanamo and other sites where detainees are being held have come to light because of reports from the International Committee of the Red Cross, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the NYU Center for Human Rights and Global Justice and the Association of the American Bar of the City of New York. It is increasingly difficult for anybody to argue that the abusive behavior came from a few aberrant soldiers. Broader systemic problems need to be probed by this new Congress. Certainly, we all must concede that the on-going stream of new disclosures continues to hurt American standing in the global community of nations and the costs of these recurring, self-inflicted wounds and related risks to the safety of our soldiers continue to mount.

That is why I am today re-introducing legislation I first sponsored last July H.R. 4951 in the 108th Congress. It is designed to help prevent the kinds of abuses that occurred at Abu