

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PAIN-CAPABLE UNBORN CHILD PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2012

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, as a society we must work to ensure that lives of those who are unable to protect themselves are safeguarded; however elected leaders also have an obligation to ensure that laws which are passed, especially at the national level, allow for public input by the people they affect.

I strongly agree with the underlying intent of H.R. 3803, the District of Columbia Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, to prevent the termination of lives of the most vulnerable in our society—that of unborn children. H.R. 3803 would prohibit abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy, except when an acute physical condition endangers the life of the mother. The bill further requires that any termination of pregnancy be done in a manner that provides the best conditions for the unborn child to survive.

I am, however, concerned with the process used to develop and publicly debate the bill. Further, I am concerned about the impact it has on home rule for the District of Columbia. Congress has delegated much authority to the D.C. government to establish policies that reflect the needs of those who live here. But H.R. 3803, which only affects Washington, D.C., would implement this abortion ban without the input of D.C. residents and Congresswoman ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON who represents the people of the District of Columbia in the United States Congress.

I believe that the United States should enact strong policies that recognize and protect the sanctity of human life. However if Congress wants to make meaningful progress to achieve this, legislation should consider the views of those impacted by the legislation and not ignore their points of view or concerns.

IRAN THREAT REDUCTION AND SYRIA HUMAN RIGHTS ACT OF 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2012

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, Today, a time of heightened tensions in U.S.-Iran relations, I voted for the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012, H.R. 1905, a balanced and serious approach towards ensuring Iran will never have nuclear weapons.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have firmly opposed the use of indiscriminate sanctions as a blunt tool of foreign policy, one often more successful as political fodder than as leverage to effect positive change.

The timing of previous Iran sanctions legislation was damaging, undermining the administration in the midst of complex, delicate discussions with Iran. Today, the circumstances have changed. Negotiations are stalled, and this legislation has been focused and toned-down, making it an asset, not a liability, for the administration as it works to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran.

A coherent and unified U.S. policy towards Iran is the best way to strengthen diplomacy, which remains the best, some say the only, way to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. This revised legislation—based on input from a broad coalition, including the White House—brings coherence and focused pressure to the negotiating table.

I commend Chairwoman ROS LEHTINEN and Ranking Member BERMAN of the House Foreign Affairs Committee for producing a bill that is based on policy, not politics. There were extreme voices pushing to include some very harsh language that, for example, would have made the few currently permitted humanitarian transactions with Iranian financial institutions illegal. To the benefit of the U.S. and innocent Iranian civilians, these provisions were left out.

Another critical change to this legislation is language that clarifies in the Act is not an authorization of the use of force against Iran or Syria.

The resolution would provide the administration with additional leverage for their broader diplomatic effort. Sanctions are effective when it is clear that if concessions are made, the other side has the ability to reciprocate by easing elements of the sanctions regime. This bill provides the administration with such flexibility.

In the midst of negotiations yet to yield progress, focused sanctions that unite both Congress and the executive provides leverage that increases the likelihood of success, and an alternative to military action, which our nation can ill-afford and which I oppose.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAN BENISHEK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2012

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker on rollcall No. 539, on Tuesday, July 31, 2012, my plane was delayed in Detroit due to bad weather. As a result, I missed votes that evening, including a measure of personal importance, H.R. 3803, the District of Columbia Pain Capable Unborn Child Act.

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

IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL GUARD UNIT IN AMERICAN SAMOA

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2012

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will authorize the Secretary of the Department of Defense to establish a National Guard unit in American Samoa.

Mr. Speaker, the National Guard has a long, proud history in the United States. As part of their federal duties, National Guard units have been mobilized to supplement regular armed forces during times of war or national emergencies. As State entities, National Guard units have been utilized in their respective States upon declaration of a State of Emergency.

National Guard troops have been activated in response to emergencies as a

result of snowstorms, droughts, flooding, earthquakes, and other natural hazards that require providing basic necessities to people across the country. Indeed, one is reminded that National Guard units played a major role in providing security and assisting recovery efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, in September 2005.

Mr. Speaker, today, there are 54 separate National Guard units—one for each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia, plus Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. There is no National Guard unit in American Samoa.

Mr. Speaker, on September 29, 2009, American Samoa was hit by a powerful earthquake which struck below the ocean about 140 miles southwest of Pago Pago, American Samoa, and 125 miles south of Samoa. The earthquake, which registered 8.3 on the Richter scale, set off a massive tsunami that crashed into American Samoa. Entire villages were devastated creating a disaster of epic proportion in the Territory.

Mr. Speaker, one of the lessons of the 2009 Tsunami is the fact that American Samoa is prone to disasters and we must be prepared. Especially, with American Samoa being out there on its own in the midst of the vast South Pacific Ocean, it is very difficult to coordinate and organize first responders from the mainland. Having a National Guard unit is extremely helpful when there is a State emergency.

In addition, American Samoa has a per capita enlistment rate in the U.S. military which is higher than any State or U.S. Territory. Our sons and daughters have served in record numbers in every U.S. military engagement from WWII to present operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. We have stood by the United States in good times and bad, and I believe this relationship would only be strengthened by establishing a National Guard unit in American Samoa.

For these reasons, I am pleased to introduce legislation today to establish a National Guard unit in American Samoa. I understand that there are several other issues to consider in order to fulfill the objectives of this legislation. My hope is to work together with my colleagues to make improvements and adjustments as needed.

I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

CONGRATULATING JOHN ANNALORO ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2012

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor John Annaloro, the CEO of the Northwest Credit Union Association, on his retirement after nearly 30 years of working in the credit union industry.

John's passion for people and economics first brought him to the credit union industry in