

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RESTORING FIRST AMENDMENT PROTECTIONS OF RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS SPEECH

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce legislation restoring First amendment protections of religion and religious speech. For fifty years, the personal religious freedom of this nation's citizens has been infringed upon by courts that misread and distort the First amendment. The framers of the Constitution never in their worst nightmares imagined that the words, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech. . . ." would be used to ban children from praying in school, prohibit courthouses from displaying the Ten Commandments, or prevent citizens from praying before football games. The original meaning of the First amendment was clear on these two points: The federal government cannot enact laws establishing one religious denomination over another, and the federal government cannot forbid mention of religion, including the Ten Commandments and references to God.

In case after case, the Supreme Court has used the infamous "separation of church and state" metaphor to uphold court decisions that allow the federal government to intrude upon and deprive citizens of their religious liberty. This "separation" doctrine is based upon a phrase taken out of context from a letter written by Thomas Jefferson to the Danbury Baptists on January 1, 1802. In the letter, Jefferson simply reassures the Baptists that the First amendment would preclude an intrusion by the federal government into religious matters between denominations. It is ironic and sad that a letter defending the principle that the federal government must stay out of religious affairs. Should be used two hundred years later to justify the Supreme Court telling a child that he cannot pray in school!

The Court completely disregards the original meaning and intent of the First amendment. It has interpreted the establishment clause to preclude prayer and other religious speech in a public place, thereby violating the free exercise clause of the very same First amendment. Therefore, it is incumbent upon Congress to correct this error, and to perform its duty to support and defend the Constitution. My legislation would restore First amendment protections of religion and speech by removing all religious freedom-related cases from federal district court jurisdiction, as well as from federal claims court jurisdiction. The federal government has no constitutional authority to reach its hands in the religious affairs of its citizens or of the several states.

As James Madison said, "There are more instances of the abridgement of the freedom of the people by the gradual and silent encroachment of those in power, than by violent

and sudden usurpation." I sincerely hope that my colleagues will fight against the "gradual and silent encroachment" of the courts upon our nation's religious liberties by supporting this bill.

HONORING CHARLOTTE EDMUNDSON FOR HER 47 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE CHILLICOTHE STATE BANK IN CHILLICOTHE, MISSOURI

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2003

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Charlotte Edmundson, vice-president and head of customer service for the Chillicothe State Bank in Chillicothe, Missouri. Charlotte has exemplified the finest qualities of leadership and service and is being honored for her 47 year commitment to the bank and the citizens of Chillicothe.

Charlotte is well known among staff and patrons of the bank for going above and beyond customer service standards, when dealing with both banking and non-banking issues. She interacts on many levels with everyone she comes in contact with and maintains the highest degree of professionalism and honesty. She prides herself on getting her job done right and getting it done on time.

During her years with the bank, Charlotte attained knowledge of the customer service department and the bank's operations that made her an exemplary employee heavily relied upon by management and fellow bank staff. Her coworkers have described her as honest, reliable, helpful, trustworthy and professional.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending the career of Charlotte Edmundson, who exemplifies the qualities of dedication and service as both an employee and citizen of Chillicothe, Missouri.

HONORING THE JENKINTOWN LIBRARY ON ITS 200TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOSEPH M. HOFFEL

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2003

Mr. HOFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the Jenkintown Library on its 200th anniversary.

Established in 1803, the Jenkintown Library is now the third oldest library in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. For two centuries it has been a center for community learning and is still satisfying the changing needs of the area. The library's vast collection contains books, periodicals, DVD's, and other forms of multimedia. The library also offers programs that reflect the diverse interests of the community it serves.

It is fitting that the Jenkintown Library is celebrating its bicentennial next week, as it corresponds with National Library week. National Library week is a time to recognize and highlight the contributions of both libraries and librarians for connecting people with the resources that they need to live and to learn. It also recognizes libraries as a place for education, self-help, and opportunity, something that the Jenkintown Library exemplifies.

Two hundred years after its founding, the Jenkintown Library still retains its architectural beauty and has been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1979. Throughout its long history, the library has been able to keep up with the needs of the community, and I am confident that the library will continue to contribute for many years to come. I am grateful for the service that the library has provided to not only the citizens of Jenkintown but to all Montgomery Counties.

HONORING JULIE INMAN OF ORANGE COUNTY FOR RECEIVING THE CLARA BARTON SPECTRUM AWARD

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2003

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Julie Inman of Orange County for receiving the Clara Barton Spectrum Award.

The Clara Barton Spectrum Award, given by the Red Cross, was awarded to eight outstanding women in Orange County.

Julie was honored for founding SupportAbility, a non-profit organization that raised \$11,000 for scholarship that went to 14 students who have overcome great adversity.

Julie herself is not unfamiliar with overcoming adversity. When she was 15 years old, Julie suffered a massive stroke. Doctors told her she would never speak again. Three years later, she graduated from Mater Dei High School.

Julie has dedicated herself to helping others beat the odds. Her courage has served as inspiration for many.

Let this young lady's accomplishments serve as an example of the wonderful things our young people are capable of achieving.

I wish her the best of luck in the future.

TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN STEIN

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 1, 2003

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, last week the United States Air Force lost six servicemen

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