

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. SCHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 600 I was not present for the vote due to a family emergency.

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 588 and 589, I was unable to be present. My wife had surgery that day, November 18, 2013, and I needed to be by her side.

Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on all said votes.

RECOGNIZING DAVID LAVERY AND THE MARS SCIENCE LABORATORY TEAM FOR RECEIPT OF THE SAMUEL J. HEYMAN SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL MEDAL

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize and congratulate my constituent David Lavery, as well as his colleagues on the Mars Science Laboratory Team for being awarded the Samuel J. Heyman Science and Environment Medal. The Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals (referred to as the Sammys) pay tribute to America's dedicated federal workforce, highlighting those who have made significant contributions to our country. Honorees are chosen based on their commitment and innovation, as well as the impact of their work on addressing the needs of the nation.

As Program Executive for Solar System Exploration, Mr. Lavery leads the Curiosity rover mission to Mars that is exploring the Red Planet's geology and climate and assessing whether conditions are favorable for microbial life and future human exploration. This historic mission is the culmination of more than a decade of perseverance, engineering breakthroughs, and scientific innovations. The mission's findings will rewrite the textbooks on the geology of Mars and shed light on the possibility of life-supporting environments there.

Working on the cutting edge of space exploration at NASA was Mr. Lavery's childhood dream. Although unable to become an astronaut, he has twice helped place American technology on the surface of another planet. His first flight project was Sojourner—a rover sent to Mars in 1997. For the Curiosity mission, Lavery carefully supervised every step of the process leading to the launch. According to Jonathan Rall, assistant director of NASA's Planetary Science Division, "Without Dave's

constant oversight for this mission, it would not have been successful."

This award is just the latest achievement in an amazing public service career that extends beyond NASA to include his years mentoring the robotics team at Herndon High School, guiding them in national competitions and inspiring generations of young Americans to pursue careers in science and technology.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our highest praise and congratulations to the Dave Lavery and the eight other public servants from around the country who have been honored with Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals this year. Their achievements range from working to eradicate polio in India to landing an exploratory vehicle on Mars to saving the Air Force more than \$1 billion in 2012 by reducing energy consumption. It has been my great privilege and honor to represent tens of thousands of exceptional Federal workers who hail from Virginia's 11th Congressional District. They all deserve our thanks and respect.

SHARING STORIES IN SUPPORT OF COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

HON. JOE GARCIA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 21, 2013

Mr. GARCIA. Mr. Speaker, the following are stories of individuals affected by our nation's broken immigration system:

Story 1: Legalization is necessary. There are many things that people don't know that the authorities do. In my case, I've lived through three or four accidents that I saw, and I am the only one who saw and I didn't testify because I'm scared. I think that because of that they closed a lot of cases. I'd like something to be done. Also, at work, there are three or four companies that haven't paid me and discriminate in a lot of things that happen. We, who work with meat, know a lot of things that aren't easy to say to anyone for fear of what that information would do and because of that, reform is necessary.

I'm Mexican and I've been here for 21 years. Ultimately, the truth that I've seen a lot of things that shouldn't exist for human beings to practice these types of things. Because realistically, all of us deserve to live as best as possible and I think that there is a way that we can live and do whatever type of work, without being treated the way they treat us. We want to be welcome wherever we want to go.

Story 2: I arrived in the United States approximately 25 years ago. Thank God I am now an American citizen, but I have many friends who suffer because they do not have their documents. One of the hardships is that they are not allowed to work or go to many places. For example, there are jobs that they are able to do, but they're not allowed into those places. So they can make \$20 or \$25 per hour, but they're making \$15 or less because they can't go to the place, even though they can do the job. So I say yes to immigration reform because it helps the government as well. The government makes money for giving out papers. People are going to buy cars, they're going to buy houses, they're going to travel within the United States. So, the money that they're going to pay to get their papers is more than they contribute to the United States now. They will travel to their

home countries to visit their parents, their siblings—I think that will be something very good for the country as well.

Story 3: I arrived 22 years ago from San Marcos, Guatemala. Thank God we had the opportunity to have papers, but we are here to support our people. We want everyone to be equal and to have the opportunity that we had. So it is great that there is a possibility at reform for all. The only thing we can do is support in any way we can—by meeting and being with them. I think that people can work legally and do many things.

Story 4: I'm from Guatemala. I've been here with my wife for nine years and we are nothing in this country. We came here for the purpose of allowing our family to succeed. In Guatemala, the circumstances over there don't allow for success. For that reason, we came here to have a life a little better than what we had there. All we are asking is for the Senators and the people listening to this recording to support us because the majority of Hispanics that are in the United States are here to work and support this country. For that, we want to be heard and we want to say yes. We want to arrive to citizenship because we need it. You see on TV and in the news that many families are suffering and many families are crying. There have been many deportations, and we don't want that that continue. We want all families to feel happy and live happily here, but they're scared. We don't want people to continue living in fear. For that we make the invitation to collaborate, because everything we can do, we will do. We don't want racism, for example. Here there are various nationalities from various countries, and we are unified for this cause. We will continue uniting, for whatever work there is. I work in landscaping, cutting branches on trees, on palms, cleaning gardens. Right now, we don't have kids and my wife and I have been married for seven years.

Story 5: I am originally from Guatemala. I immigrated to the United States in 1987 at age 18. I turned 18 while crossing the desert. There I celebrated my birthday. From there I went to work on a farm for three or four years. In that time, the situation was much more difficult, but I had the opportunity to work in different jobs. Around that time I was a beneficiary of the NACARA law, which allowed me to apply. I saw that the NACARA law benefitted me a lot because I was able to have some economic stability for my family. I have been married for 22 years, and I have a 19-year-old son. The NACARA law has always helped me, so of course I feel like there is a need for immigration reform because it would benefit my community so much. The people who are here can grow economically and help their families. They can create businesses and jobs in our country. That is why people emigrate here, because there are no jobs in their home countries. I don't know, governments don't invest in creating jobs and so people in immigration limbo don't want to invest because they don't know what will happen. I feel that it's a necessity, and I think we deserve it. We are working people. The majority that come here come for work. We don't come for public benefits. In my community, very few are the type to try to get social assistance. The majority, like my case, came and paid taxes, and they have been paying taxes since coming to the United States.

They deported me in 1987 after I was detained in Krome. I was held in Krome for a month or a half before they sent me to my land. It's very frustrating, because I'm from a town very far from the capital. At that time, it was about eight hours