

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 28, 2003.

Hon. TOMMY G. THOMPSON,
Secretary, Department of Health and Human
Services, Independence Ave. SW., Wash-
ington, DC.

DEAR MR. THOMPSON: The enclosed article describes another tragic account of OxyContin abuse.

How many more stories do we have to read about this problem before you take more action?

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 28, 2003.

Dr. MARK MCCLELLAN,
Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration,
Fishers Ln., Rockville, MD.

DEAR DR. MCCLELLAN: The enclosed article describes another tragic account of OxyContin abuse.

How many more stories do we have to read about this problem before action is taken?

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

HONORING THE CIVIC LEADERSHIP
OF ROBERT SIDNEY AND GAIL
PHELAN

HON. JOHN S. TANNER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 21, 2003

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of Robert Sidney and Gail Phelan, fine public servants who have dedicated themselves throughout their lives as loyal citizens to our community.

The couple married in 1958, months after Gail had been crowned Miss Trenton. They are members of the 1st United Methodist Church of Trenton and the proud parents of Robert Sidney Phelan, Jr., Paul Edmund Phelan, and Mary LeAnn Phelan. Robert and Gail also have three grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

Robert operated the family business, a Ford automobile dealership, for 50 years, before selling it. He has since started a smaller independent dealership. In 1963, Robert became the acting Postmaster while continuing to run his auto dealership. He also served in the Tennessee National Guard, from which he retired as a First Lieutenant. With the help of U.S. Senator Jim Sasser, Robert was instrumental in establishing a new National Guard Armory in 1991.

He has served as Exalted Ruler of the Trenton Elks Lodge and President of the Trenton Chamber of Commerce. Robert also served on the Trenton Rotary Club, the Gibson County Election Commission, the Trenton Housing Authority Board and the Trenton Industrial Board. He served on the board of Citizen State Bank, spending some of that tenure as Chairman. Robert worked diligently to form Citizen City and County Bank, where he now serves as Chairman of the Board.

The Phelans have always been devoted to the Democratic Party on local, state and national levels, including involvement with generations of Tennessee governors, Members of Congress and Vice President Al Gore. Their son Paul served for 10 years as a State Representative.

The family was instrumental in the formation of the Trenton Special School District and years later helped replace the aging school building with a new high school. Believing that Gibson County could support a satellite community college, Robert and Gail also helped raise money to fund Dyersburg State Community College in Trenton.

Gail has dedicated much of her life to the education of her children and others in our community. She has always been very involved in school parent organizations and takes an active role in making our schools better, including beautiful murals in school hallways.

Gail has not limited her helpful involvement to working with children, however. A cancer survivor, she has been an active participant in Relay for Life efforts of the American Cancer Society and has helped counsel others who are also battling cancer, using her own experiences to help comfort those around her.

Mr. Speaker, please join Robert and Gail's friends and family as we recognize their dedication and service to our community.

IN HONOR OF MAYOR DAVID
PENDERGRASS OF SAND CITY,
CALIFORNIA

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 21, 2003

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and pleasure that I am able to rise today to recognize Mayor David Pendergrass, a dedicated public servant of Sand City, California. Mayor Pendergrass has served Sand City for 25 years, where throughout his tenure as a Mayor-Councilmember, Mayor Pendergrass has distinguished himself as a strong leader.

Under Mayor Pendergrass' leadership, the City of Sand City has been enhanced in many different ways. He has overseen the establishment of an active redevelopment program and agency, the organization of a modern city government with a City Administrator-Council administrative structure, and maintained an ongoing forum to receive and respond to citizens' concerns. Furthermore, Mayor Pendergrass has been able to keep Sand City's focus on its primary goals with diplomacy, patience, and consideration.

Mayor Pendergrass' committed public service has improved the quality of life at Sand City, California. He has made great contributions, and his lifelong dedication to public service is commendable. His achievements are truly honorable, and I along with the City of Sand City, honor this great man.

WRITING BY VICKI WILSON

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 21, 2003

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to share with my colleagues this editorial written by my courageous friend Vicki Wilson. In it she describes her very personal story about her pregnancy and a procedure that was re-

quired to save her life. As Vicki rightly points out, the ban on so-called "partial birth abortion" prevents women—along with their families and doctors—from making private decisions about saving their own lives and protecting their right to future pregnancies.

A short while ago, the House debated the so-called "Partial Birth Abortion" ban. Several members who supported the ban tried to deny Vicki's story.

Those Members didn't know what they were talking about. Here is the truth as printed in the San Jose Mercury News.

[From the San Jose Mercury News]

HEARTBREAK AND A CHOICE: I HAD AN
ABORTION AT EIGHT MONTHS

(By Vicki Wilson)

The right to end a pregnancy is frighteningly precarious, something I didn't understand until I had an abortion at eight months. The new abortion ban covers what is not actually a recognized medical procedure; "partial birth" was coined by the anti-choice lobby to rile public sensibilities and distort the truth.

At 36 weeks of pregnancy, an ultra-sound showed what all my previous parental testing failed to detect—an encephalocele. Two-thirds of my daughter's brain had formed outside her skull. What felt to be strong, big, healthy baby movements were in fact seizures.

My doctor sent me to several specialists in a desperate attempt to find a way to save her. Everyone agreed she would not survive outside my body. As the pregnancy progressed before I went into labor, she would probably die from the increased compression of her brain.

Our doctors explained our options. Let "nature take its course." But how could I let my daughter suffer the ongoing seizures? Second: Abortion. My God! I thought. Here I am at the end of a planned and very much wanted pregnancy: Her name is Abigail. How can one even utter the word "abortion" now? Despite being a nurse, I'd never heard of any abortion in the eighth month. I asked about a Caesarean section. Doctors perform C-sections only to save babies lives. Mine couldn't be saved so they didn't want to risk the possibility of hurting my future fertility. It was a risk I wasn't willing to take either.

We agonized over our options, which doesn't convey the heartbreak and rage we felt. It was hard even to think of these "choices." I wanted my daughter to be born with a brain—period. We decided to make our choice based on what was best for Abigail.

As health-care professionals, my husband and I understood the medical risks of each alternative. We understood that it wasn't "is she going to die"—a higher power had decided that—but "how?" To this day, I thank God that this decision, at least, was ours.

I continue to battle the anti-choice hardliner machine from banning the very procedure that saved my health and ended Abigail's suffering. When will politicians understand: The decision about terminating a pregnancy should be between women, their family and their doctors—not politicians. While I was struggling with the most wrenching choice I have ever made, it never occurred to me to confer with a lawyer or a judge or a politician.

Those opposed to abortion for any reason declare that women are selfishly choosing to end their pregnancies late. They deny medical necessity; they'd rather see Abigail suffer and me lose my fertility than allow us to choose the most decent path for our family.