

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HONORABLE JOHN D. DINGELL'S SERVICE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH OF

**HON. DAVID E. PRICE**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 13, 2005*

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join colleagues in recognizing and honoring JOHN DINGELL as he celebrates his fiftieth anniversary as a member of the House of Representatives.

As a young political scientist teaching about the Congress and doing research on the committee system, I knew a good deal about JOHN DINGELL before I joined him in the House in 1987. I studied his role, along with his friend and colleague John Moss, in shaking up the Commerce Committee in the 1970s, decentralizing the then-Chairman's authority and greatly stepping up oversight of the executive. I came to the House hoping that I could someday become a Commerce member myself. By then, JOHN was chairman, and the Committee was the "place to be" for an activist member, known for its broad legislative reach and vigilant oversight.

As it happened, my region had its full quota of Commerce seats, and I successfully pursued Appropriations instead. But I have continued to admire JOHN's work, now as ranking member. He is totally dedicated to this institution as the keystone of American democracy, and he fully understands the importance of active, assertive committees to the institution's capacity for deliberation and sound law-making.

JOHN richly deserves the fulsome tributes we have heard from senior and junior colleagues, of every partisan and political stripe, upon this fiftieth anniversary of his winning the seat vacated by his father's death in 1955. Many have also mentioned Debbie Dingell, JOHN's wife and partner in service. Debbie has been an invaluable resource to the House Democratic Caucus in planning issues conferences and other activities, and I recently was privileged to serve with her on our national party's Commission on Presidential Nomination Timing and Scheduling.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join in tribute to JOHN and Debbie DINGELL—to thank them for their dedication and perseverance, for their effectiveness as advocates and public servants, and for what they have meant to each of us and to our country as champions of this institution.

**BORDER PROTECTION, ANTITERRORISM, AND ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION CONTROL ACT OF 2005**

SPEECH OF

**HON. PAUL RYAN**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 16, 2005*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4437) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to strengthen enforcement of the immigration

laws, to enhance border security, and for other purposes:

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Chairman, after long deliberation and discussion with the bill's author, I decided to vote "aye" on H.R. 4437. This bill is far from complete, and far from being ready to become law. Yet, it has become clear that Congress will deal with immigration reform through several stages in a long process during the next session of the 109th Congress. I supported H.R. 4437 to begin this process, so we can ultimately achieve comprehensive immigration reform.

Among the provisions I believe are instrumental toward achieving such reform are the reforms to secure our borders. Border security is no longer simply an issue of illegal immigration. It is an issue of national security, where we are vulnerable to terrorist infiltration. This proposal offers a comprehensive way to address this threat.

However, I have several concerns with this legislation that must be addressed in order to receive my support for a final, comprehensive solution to fixing our broken immigration system.

First and foremost, the provision in H.R. 4437 that makes undocumented alien status a federal felony is totally unacceptable. Prior to the bill's passing, I received a commitment from the author, Chairman SENSENBRENNER, that this provision will be removed. Second, the employer verification system proposed in this bill is unworkable and must be fixed. Third, a final bill should include the creation of a secure, legal channel by which foreign workers needed to keep the United States' economy growing may enter and leave the country. And, finally, we must bring into the open, in a reasonable and fair manner, the millions of immigrants who are living in our communities without any documentation. Failure to address all of these issues will simply prolong our broken immigration system.

Because Congress is so divided on how to achieve comprehensive reform, it has become clear to me that such reform will occur in stages over the course of the next year. I look forward to working with my colleagues in both political parties to make sure the final version of this legislative effort is one we can all be proud to support.

**BORDER PROTECTION, ANTITERRORISM, AND ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION CONTROL ACT OF 2005**

SPEECH OF

**HON. DAVE WELDON**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 16, 2005*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4437) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to strengthen enforcement of the immigration laws, to enhance border security, and for other purposes:

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4437, The Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005. This is a good bill that takes some important steps to curb illegal immigration, secure our borders and make America safer.

The bill takes a broad range of actions to secure our Nation. These include imposing tougher penalties for those who smuggle illegal immigrants into the U.S. and for those who overstay their visas. Individuals involved in making and using fraudulent documents will face stiffer penalties. We also end the "catch and release" policy that allows apprehended illegal immigrants to slip away unnoticed and live illegally in the U.S. as they will no longer simply be released back into the community.

With regard to granting immigration benefits, i.e., citizenship, green cards, permanent residency, the bill ends the practice of granting such benefits to those for whom a background check has not been completed. Immigration benefits should not be handed out simply because a certain number of days have passed since the investigation was commenced. Perhaps the background check approval is being delayed because of the need to fully investigate a possible criminal or terrorism risks.

Current law denies immigration benefits to those who are classified as habitual drunkards, but not those affiliated with terrorist organizations. This bill fixes that problem by making sure that illegal immigrants who are deportable on terrorist grounds are deported without delay.

H.R. 4437 requires employers to verify that prospective employees are legally employable. The bill ensures that a system is in place for employers to verify the legal status of such job applicants and it provides penalties for employers who violate these laws. The bill also prohibits federal funds provided under the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program to any state or local government that maintains a "sanctuary policy" for illegal immigrants.

In order to ensure that we have a better understanding of just who is crossing illegally into the U.S. the bill requires the Department of Homeland Security, DHS, to report to Congress on the number of illegal aliens apprehended who are from non-contiguous countries, with a particular emphasis on ascertaining the number of individuals from countries known to harbor terrorists. DHS is also to provide the Congress with a timeline for fully equipping all land borders with the US-VISIT entry/exit system.

On a 260-159 vote, the House mandated the construction of security fencing, including lights and cameras, along the Southwest border in sectors with the highest number of illegal border crossings, drug smuggling, and immigrant deaths. Additionally, DHS will be required to conduct a study and report back to Congress on the use of physical barriers along the Northern border.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 4437 moves us in the right direction of addressing the serious problem of illegal immigration making the United States more secure.

**BORDER PROTECTION, ANTITERRORISM, AND ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION CONTROL ACT OF 2005**

SPEECH OF

**HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 16, 2005*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 4437) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to strengthen enforcement of the immigration laws, to enhance border security, and for other purposes:

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, our Nation has long been a beacon for the dispossessed and downtrodden around the world who come to our shores for a shot at achieving financial security, personal security, and to fulfill their human potential, the very essence of the American dream. Our Nation was built on the sweat and ingenuity of immigrants. My father's side emigrated from Italy, and my mother's side came from Ireland. We should be proud of this heritage.

However, a nation that does not have control over its own borders is a nation that cannot claim to be sovereign. We need to know who is coming into our country, and we need to be able to keep out those who are not authorized to enter. The status quo, with 500,000 or more individuals entering the U.S. illegally every year, including untold numbers from countries of concern, meaning countries in which radical Islamic terrorists are prevalent, is not acceptable.

Prior efforts by Congress to control and rationalize immigration, including the reforms enacted in 1986 and 1996, have failed. One of the primary reasons these reforms have failed to stop the flow of undocumented workers and the exploitation of immigrant labor is the lack of meaningful employer sanctions. I believe the crux of the legislation under consideration today, in addition to enhanced border security provisions, such as more agents, improved technology, and cracking down on document fraud, is that for the first time Congress is imposing tough employer sanctions, which will decrease the incentive to exploit immigrant labor. H.R. 4437 would double the fines for employers who hire undocumented workers to a minimum of \$5,000 for a first offense and up to \$40,000 for subsequent offenses. H.R. 4437 would also require employers to verify an applicant's eligibility for lawful employment with immigration and Social Security officials.

These enhanced employer verification provisions are one of the reasons why the powerful business lobbies like the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, some of whose members regularly hire low-wage exploitable immigrant labor, are opposing the bill, but also one of the reasons why I support it.

Many business and immigrant rights organizations, along with some in organized labor, have raised the concern that H.R. 4437 does not include guest worker provisions.

I have serious reservations about the guest worker proposals that have been proposed by the President and in various bills in Congress. Very little has changed with respect to guest worker programs since I came to Congress. They continue to be a source of worker exploitation. When I was first elected, I fought a small group of government contractors in the forestry and reforestation industries who were abusing their workers. A recent series in the Sacramento Bee newspaper documented that abuse of immigrant labor continues to be widespread in guest worker forestry programs.

The new guest worker proposals are unlikely to improve that situation.

Guest-worker programs have also historically been used to break unions. The meatpacking industry is a prime example. The meatpacking industry broke the unions by bringing in low-wage immigrant labor. Once the union was broken, the industry cut wages and benefits for the immigrant workers, sped up conveyor belts, and just generally made working conditions miserable. The rate of worker injuries and workplace accidents are extraordinarily high. It's taken the industry back to the days described in Upton Sinclair's book *The Jungle*.

I am wary of the impact on low-income Americans and low-wage legal immigrants from guest-worker proposals. Such proposals threaten to increase the low-wage labor pool in the U.S. by millions of workers, further eroding the pay rates and working conditions of tens of millions of Americans and legal immigrants. The nearly 20 percent of Americans without a high-school degree will be particularly hard hit. Under the leading guest-worker program in Congress, the number of unskilled workers authorized to enter every year would be 400,000. In addition, 290,000 higher skilled workers would be allowed in every year, nearly double the number in current law.

The Commission on Immigration Reform, created in 1995 by President Bill Clinton and headed by former Democratic Member of Congress Barbara Jordan, reported, "Guest-worker programs have depressed wages" and reduced employment opportunities for "unskilled American workers, including recent immigrants," who can be easily "displaced by newly entering guest workers."

A study by Harvard University professor George Borjas shows wages for Americans dropped 9 percent for high school graduates and 5 percent for college graduates in the wake of the unprecedented migration of undocumented immigrants in the 1980s and 1990s. Other studies, including research by the National Research Council and the Economic Policy Institute, show immigrants under "guest" worker programs are paid 15–33 percent less than American citizens, driving down wages for all workers.

I am also concerned that the administrative burden created by guest-worker programs will disadvantage immigrants from around the world who are now waiting in line for their paperwork to be processed so they can enter the U.S. legally. Though they have complied with the law, filed all the required applications, provided all the needed documentation, and paid all the fees, it will be years before they have legal status. My staff and I devote countless hours every week to the plight of frustrated legal immigrant husbands, wives, mothers and fathers, and children trying to navigate the immigration maze. Families are separated for years and years going the legal route, and immigrants from the Philippines and Mexico often have to wait at least a decade to be approved with no chance to jump to the head of the line.

H.R. 4437 is not a perfect bill. Far from it. Immigrant rights organizations, labor unions

and others have rightfully pointed out that the bill does not in any way address the 10–12 million undocumented workers already in the U.S., no matter how long they've been here or how much they've contributed to their local community or the economy. I am concerned that the alien smuggling provisions are written in an overly broad way that could penalize the everyday actions of social service organizations, churches, and others who may provide humanitarian aid and counsel to immigrants. Further, a dubious amendment was adopted during consideration on the floor that requires the construction of \$2.2 billion worth of fences along a part of the southern border, which, as evidenced by the failure of similar fences in Spain and along the Hong Kong-China border, will do little or nothing to combat illegal immigration, but will certainly divert money from programs that could. Instead, this money could be spent to hire and equip 2,000 additional agents for 10 years and to improve technologies used to protect the border.

We need to move this complex and emotional debate on border security and immigration reform forward. Although H.R. 4437 is flawed, I am voting in favor of the bill because it contains a number of provisions that I support related to border security; because this is the only immigration legislation the Republican leadership will bring to the floor, meaning it is the only opportunity I will have to go on record in favor of enhancing border security; and because I expect that the Senate will address the major deficiencies in the bill. Immigration will be debated again in the House next year after the Senate has worked through its own version of immigration reform and border security legislation and a conference committee has met and resolved the differences between the two chambers bills. I will reserve judgment on whether to support the final bill until I see the details.

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## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Saturday, December 17, 2005*

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, last evening the House voted on H. Res. 598, Condemning actions by the Government of Syria that have hindered the investigation of the assassination of former Prime Minister of Lebanon Rafik Hariri conducted by the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIC), expressing support for extending the UNIIC's investigative mandate, and stating concern about similar assassination attempts apparently aimed at destabilizing Lebanon's security and undermining Lebanon's sovereignty.

Through an error, I was recorded as voting "nay" on the adoption of that resolution. I should have been recorded as voting "yea." I cosponsored this resolution when it was introduced and during the debate on H. Res. 598 I spoke strongly in favor of its adoption.