

TRIBUTE TO MARE ISLAND
ORIGINAL 21ERS

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to invite my colleagues to join me in honoring the Mare Island Original 21ers for their efforts to end racial discrimination at Mare Island Naval Shipyard.

On Nov. 17, 1962, twenty-one African American workers at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo, CA, took a historic step by filing a racial discrimination complaint with President Kennedy's newly created Committee on Equal Job Opportunities. The complaint quickly helped lead to sweeping changes locally at the shipyard and nationally at military installations, including early Affirmative Action-type programs. All the men wanted was a wage comparable to their white co-workers and to be treated equally. What they started was a chain reaction that reverberated around the country. The group would become known as the Mare Island Original 21ers, and would forever change the base's social landscape.

Despite these pioneering steps, their early civil rights efforts remain in obscurity. The group's surviving members still talk about the movement, but the full story was buried in the 1960s and only recently came to light as a result of a series of newspaper articles by Vallejo Times Herald reporter Matthias Gafni.

Their story is typical of the time. Vallejo was a Navy town, and a separated one. With its naval shipyard, Vallejo has always had a population reflecting a wide range of ethnic backgrounds; but it was not always harmonious. In the late 1950s minorities were mostly working in unskilled positions at Mare Island as sandblasters, laborers and cleaners, with efforts to keep them out of certain positions. The discrimination was not restricted to withholding promotions and unfair hiring practices, according to one of the workers. At every phase of each work day they faced discrimination.

By 1960 the Civil Rights Movement was in its infancy and the African American workers were losing patience. In March 1961, President Kennedy issued an executive order establishing a sweeping, government-wide Equal Employment Opportunity Policy. Twenty-one workers began organizing under the leadership of Willie Long, meeting in complete secrecy to protect their safety and their jobs. A complaint was drafted and twenty-five workers ultimately signed it. The complaint covered deplorable conditions for black workers, involving promotions, the apprenticeship program, and general unfair treatment. The shipyard commander found no pattern of discrimination, but President Kennedy's committee was inundated with similar complaints from around the country and changes were finally made after several years. Almost everyone who signed the original complaint was promoted to supervisor and fortunately escaped any of the serious reprisals they feared.

Their quiet but risky fight for equal treatment helped change our Nation. These heroic men included Willie Long, Boston Banks, Jr., Matthew Barnes, Louis Greer, Jake Sloan, Charles Fluker, Clarence Williams, James Davis, Thomas King, Robert E. Borden, James O. Hall, Matthew Luke, Herman Moore,

Jimmie James, John L. McGhee, James J. Colbert, Virgil N. Herndon, Eddie Brady, Brodie Taylor, W.J. Price, Levi Jones, Herbert H. Lane, Kermit Day, and Charles Scales.

Madam Speaker, in tribute to these men and their fight for equal rights, it is proper for us, and it is indeed my honor, to formally recognize the Mare Island Original 21ers, and thank them for their heroic actions.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE
UDALL-EISENHOWER ARCTIC
WILDERNESS ACT

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. MARKEY. Madam Speaker, the Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act honors two great American visionaries by designating the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness in their names and giving permanent protection to this great unspoiled wild place. Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower began the bipartisan legacy of fighting to protect this majestic area for future generations of Americans when he set aside the core of the Refuge in 1960. Twenty years later, in 1980, Democratic Representative Morris Udall succeeded in doubling the size of the Refuge, protecting even more of this untrammelled wilderness from oil drilling.

President Eisenhower and Morris Udall had the vision to protect a remote but very special piece of pristine wilderness. I am proud to introduce legislation today along with Representative JIM RAMSTAD of Minnesota that would complete the job they began by giving permanent protection to the coastal plain of the Refuge.

I am also proud to introduce this legislation under the bill number H.R. 39, a bill number with important historical significance in the effort to preserve the land within the Arctic Refuge. H.R. 39 was the bill number given to Mo Udall's Alaska Natural Interest Lands Conservation Act that became law in 1980, expanding the area President Eisenhower had set aside and renaming it as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Representative Udall later began introducing his legislation to designate the coastal plain of the Refuge as wilderness under that same bill number. This bill number offers an important reminder of the history of this special place.

The coastal plain is the biological heart of the Refuge and is central to the survival of many unique species of animals including caribou, polar bears, musk oxen, wolves, and over 160 species of birds. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service calls the coastal plain the "center for wildlife activity" in the Refuge. If we were to allow drilling in the Refuge it would irreparably disrupt this important ecosystem and one of our last great wild places will be forever scared and destroyed.

In this last year, we have seen so-called "environmentally-gentle" oil drilling exposed once and for all as the myth that it is. On March 2, 2006, BP workers discovered a quarter-inch hole in a pipeline on Alaska's North Slope that had leaked 267,000 gallons of oil onto the arctic tundra. That recent spill was the largest in the history of the North Slope.

Subsequent spills led to the discovery that BP had grossly mismanaged and severely neglected its pipelines and North Slope oil drilling operations, which had previously been touted by drilling proponents as the best and most technologically advanced in the world. The reality is that drilling for oil is a dirty business and opening the Arctic Refuge to drilling would forever ruin this untouched special place.

Moreover, if we were to allow drilling in the Arctic Refuge, the crown jewel of the Wildlife Refuge System, it would represent a colossal shift in the policy and precedent governing our wildlife refuges. Prying open the Arctic Refuge for drilling would set a dangerous precedent that would allow the oil companies to select any of the other 544 as the next target for oil drilling.

The Bush administration has argued that we have no choice—that we are so dependent on oil that we must start defiling our wildlife refuge system to keep feeding our oil addiction. That is wrong. We have a choice, a better choice, and it is about time that we enact real changes in our energy policy by focusing on conservation rather than seeking to drill for a few short months worth of oil in this pristine refuge.

The United States consumes 25 percent of the world's oil but controls only 3 percent of the world's oil reserves. We cannot drill our way out of our dependence on foreign oil but we can choose to harness our technologic genius to do something real about our dependence on oil.

Two-thirds of the oil we consume everyday in the U.S. goes into the gas tanks of our cars, trucks and SUVs. From an energy standpoint, drilling in the Refuge is completely unnecessary. If our cars, trucks and SUVs traveled just 3 miles more per gallon today, we would save more oil than drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would produce at its peak levels of production. But more than that, if we increased fuel economy standards to 40 miles per gallon over 10 years, we would save more oil within 15 years than we would be able to get out of the Arctic Refuge over its entire 40–50 year production life.

The oil fields on the North Slope already annually produce more air pollution and greenhouse gases than the municipality of Washington, D.C. and the Arctic is showing the strains of global warming.

Just this last month, the Bush Interior Department proposed listing the Polar Bear as an "endangered species" because global warming appears to be so drastically affecting its habitat—particularly the summer ice floes needed to hunt—that the bears are drowning far from shore when the floating ice melts. Last week scientists confirmed that a giant ice shelf—the Ayles Ice Shelf—snapped off of its land anchor just 500 miles south of the North Pole in the Canadian Arctic. This is a feature of the Arctic landscape that is thousands of years old. The remaining ice shelves are 90 percent smaller than when they were first discovered in 1906.

Our addiction to oil is real and enduring and still largely untreated. Drilling in the refuge would amount to a declaration that we remain in denial about this addiction, its impact on our planet and our obligation to future generations.

If Congress were to ever turn the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge into an industrial footprint by allowing oil drilling, the impact on

the land and the wildlife would be permanent but the hoped-for energy benefits only temporary. There are some places in our world that are so rare and so special, that we have a responsibility to protect them. The Arctic Refuge is one of those places. As Mo Udall said, "In our lifetime, we have few opportunities to shape the very Earth on which our descendants will live their lives. In each generation, we have carved up more and more of our once-great natural heritage. There ought to be a few places left in the world the way the Almighty made them." The Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act would ensure that the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is never carved up by the big oil companies but is instead forever protected for future Americans.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CALLING
FOR 2-1-1 ACT OF 2007

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. TERRY. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Calling for 2-1-1 Act of 2007. I am proud to lend my support as an original cosponsor of this bill, which was introduced today by my colleague, Ms. ESHOO of California. I would also like to note a concern I have with the bill as introduced, which I hope will be resolved prior to a vote in the full House of Representatives.

2-1-1 is the number designated by the Federal Communications Commission to provide citizens with information and referral about important community services and volunteer opportunities. United Way and its affiliates operate more than 200 call centers in 41 states nationwide, including my home state of Nebraska. About two-thirds of American citizens currently have access to 2-1-1 referrals. The Calling for 2-1-1 Act will help achieve nationwide coverage for all citizens.

More than 50 percent of the calls made to 2-1-1 call centers are placed to meet basic needs such as food, heat, clothing and shelter for citizens facing difficulty. 2-1-1 helps to keep citizens off long-term government financial aid such as welfare and food stamps by meeting immediate needs before they become crises. 2-1-1 also enhances homeland security by serving as an emergency backup to 9-1-1 during natural disasters and other crises.

In my Congressional District alone, almost 40,000 Nebraskans sought information through 2-1-1 between November 2005 and October 2006. The top needs were for assistance with utilities, rent, food, housing, health and dental care, furniture and tax preparation. Thousands of Nebraskans were able to obtain assistance from federal and non-profit community service agencies because of the existence of 2-1-1.

2-1-1 was crucial during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. When 9-1-1 emergency lines were inoperational, 2-1-1 stepped up to link citizens in dire need with critical services, including emergency medical care, food and housing, and crisis recovery and relocation services nationwide. Volunteer organizations such as the Red Cross also benefit from people who call 2-1-1 seeking opportunities to give back to their communities. 2-1-1 meets critical needs and merits federal aid, provided

that additional protections are put in place before this legislation is brought to a vote.

It was my privilege to work last year with Ms. ESHOO and Mrs. CLINTON in the Senate, as well as Mr. PICKERING and Mr. BILIRAKIS in the House of Representatives, to address important concerns for "socially sensitive" referrals before bringing the Calling for 2-1-1 Act to a vote. As Members of Congress with deep convictions for the protection of human life, we drafted language to refer callers seeking pregnancy-related services to public health departments.

This reasonable compromise was designed to ensure the 2-1-1 legislation does not become a vehicle for taxpayer funding of controversial referrals such as abortion. Unfortunately, this important language, which had been agreed upon by all parties, was not included in the legislation introduced today. I look forward to working with my Ms. ESHOO and my other colleagues to correct this situation.

If my concerns are not addressed, I would be forced to vote against and actively fight against the legislation I have cosponsored and worked to enact into law, despite my strong support for increasing access to 2-1-1 for more American citizens. The fact that I have again cosponsored this legislation despite my concern is testament to the good working relationship I have enjoyed with Ms. ESHOO and Ms. CLINTON, and which I trust will continue during this new Congress.

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to help this legislation become law while ensuring it protects and upholds the sanctity of human life.

IN HONOR OF UNIVERSITY PARK
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate University Park Elementary School upon its receipt of the Department of Education's prestigious Blue Ribbon School Award.

University Park Elementary School is among the first selected in the 2006 No Child Left Behind—Blue Ribbon Schools Program. It is among only 250 schools nationwide honored for either superior academic achievement or dramatic gains in student achievement.

The Blue Ribbon Award is a testament to the hard work and dedication demonstrated by the students, parents, teachers, and administrators of University Park Elementary. This Award also recognizes the values that make the Highland Park Independent School District a beacon of academic excellence.

It is my honor and privilege to recognize University Park Elementary School for its outstanding achievement in preparing our children for the challenges of tomorrow. May University Park Elementary School continue to be a shining example of superior leadership and commitment to excellence in education.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION FOR
SWEARING IN CEREMONY

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Madam Speaker, please excuse my absence from the formal House of Representatives swearing in ceremony today as I was unavoidably detained while paying my respects to a fallen soldier from my district at his funeral in Arlington National Cemetery. I appreciate the opportunity to take my oath of office on my return to the U.S. Capitol.

RECOGNIZING MATTHEW A. PILCH
FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF
EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Matthew A. Pilch, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 374, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Matthew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Matthew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Matthew A. Pilch for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent Matthew in the United States House of Representatives.

TRIBUTE TO THE PEOPLES BANK

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I stand before you today to recognize the many accomplishments of Peoples Bank and offer my congratulations on their 97th Anniversary in the Northwest Indiana community. To commemorate this special occasion, Peoples Bank will hold an anniversary celebration on Saturday, January 6, 2007, at the Center for Visual and Performing Arts in Munster, Indiana.

Peoples Bank was established in 1910 and was organized with a focus to meet the many needs of its consumers. Peoples Bank was originally known as the First Polish National Building and Loan Association. During that time, it was the main hub for church and social activities in East Chicago, Indiana. Over several decades, the association's name changed numerous times, and in 1989, it was renamed Peoples Bank.

Peoples Bank was the first savings and loan association to receive a federal charter in East