

Since the poverty threshold for a family of four is about \$20,000, and the income of the Jones family is above that level, the Jones family is officially "not poor."

Now let's say their neighbors the Smith family also is a family of four. The Smith family also has a total of \$30,000 in annual income. But the Smith's income comes from multiple sources—\$18,000 from wages, plus a total of \$12,000 in housing, health care, food stamp, and earned income tax credit benefits provided by taxpayers. Under current rules, none of the \$12,000 in taxpayer benefits provided the Smith family is counted as income. So since their \$18,000 in wages falls short of the \$20,000 poverty threshold for a family of four, the Smith family is "officially" poor.

This makes little sense.

The "Poverty Measurement Improvement Act" would direct the Census Bureau to report on poverty as measured three ways. First, Census would retitle the current official poverty rate as the "partial benefits poverty rate," which is what it is. The second measure, called the "full benefits poverty rate" would include means-tested food, housing and health care benefits as income. The final measure, called the "full benefits and taxes poverty rate," would also add in the value tax credits like the EITC, and subtract taxes paid.

This legislation would help us better understand both who is poor and the effectiveness of current antipoverty benefits. And it would put income from earnings and income from government benefits on the same level, so that the Jones and Smith families would be recognized as having the same disposable incomes, regardless of its source.

More needs to be done to help families lift themselves out of poverty. That means pressing on with more of what works to reduce poverty. As we saw in the progress against poverty following the 1996 welfare reform law, that starts with promoting more full-time work instead of welfare dependence. And it includes promoting more healthy marriage, which also reduces poverty and welfare dependence for the long run.

But we also should do a better job understanding how current antipoverty efforts are working, and the effect of means-tested benefits in improving the incomes and wellbeing of families. The "Poverty Measurement Improvement Act" I am introducing today does just that, and I urge all Members to support it.

#### IRAN SANCTIONS ACT OF 1996 AMENDMENTS

SPEECH OF

### HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 30, 2007*

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I opposed this bill, much as I opposed the "Iran Freedom Support Act" last year, because it threatens the united international diplomatic front that's needed to block Iran's nuclear weapons program. Instead of sanctioning Iran, this bill will sanction allies in Europe and Asia.

I do not object to efforts to punish "sham" subsidiaries that are set up specifically to evade U.S. sanctions on Iran. However, the U.S. government already has this authority under the International Emergency Economic

Powers Act and the language in H.R. 957 is clearly meant to extend sanctions to overseas subsidiaries that are legally and legitimately incorporated outside of the United States. Passage of this bill will set back our diplomatic efforts with regards to Iran and only serve to diminish our global influence on this very important issue.

#### RECOGNIZING THE STONE GARDENS HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

### HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 31, 2007*

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise today to applaud the efforts of Mr. Albert Blitstein and the Mitzvah Corps of Stone Gardens in Menorah Park who decided to commemorate the Holocaust with a living memorial. With donations from Mr. Blitstein's children and the residents of Stone Gardens, a memorial consisting of six weeping cherry trees representing the six million men, women, and children of the Jewish faith who perished during the Holocaust, was planted in a peaceful and reflecting setting.

A published author, Mr. Blitstein provided the quote that was placed on the commemorative plaque:

This living memorial is dedicated to the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust. It is to verify that we will never forget them. The six living trees planted in their memory are called weeping cherry trees. Although six decades have passed since the Holocaust, we still weep for them.

I join with the residents of the Stone Gardens, family, friends and the Stone Garden Mitzvah Corps in dedicating the Stone Gardens Holocaust Memorial. As a world community may we never forget the lives of those who died and may their memories never stray far from our minds as we affirm that we will never forget.

On behalf of the United States Congress and the residents of the Eleventh Congressional District, Ohio, I salute the Stone Gardens Mitzvah Corps for their dedication and generosity in the construction of this great memorial. May the Stone Gardens Holocaust Memorial be a lasting reminder and a living tribute to those who perished in one of the world's greatest tragedies.

#### 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF SCLC

### HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 31, 2007*

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, we are here tonight to pay tribute to an historic American institution. This August the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the SCLC, will celebrate its 50th anniversary.

The SCLC is one of the oldest and most influential civil rights organizations in American history. From its storied beginning, under the leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the SCLC has practiced the cornerstone of its founding principles: nonviolence in the fight for civil and human rights.

Originating from the Montgomery Bus Boycott that began after Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat, the SCLC has been a stalwart in the struggle for equal rights and human dignity for all.

The bus boycott organized under the leadership of Dr. King and Ralph David Abernathy signaled to Black America the beginning of a new phase in the long struggle in what has come to be known as the modern civil rights movement.

Bombings, threats, and arrests could not dissuade church leaders from all over the Deep South from coming together and organizing under a simple mission and platform.

At its first convention in Montgomery, Alabama in August 1957, the Southern Leadership Conference adopted the current name, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and the newly-formed group issued a document declaring that civil rights were essential to democracy, that segregation must end, and that all Black people should reject segregation absolutely and nonviolently.

Founders at these early meetings adopted nonviolent mass action as the centerpiece of their strategy against segregation and inequality. Additionally, the organization made the determination to open up the SCLC movement to people of all races, religions, and backgrounds.

At that time in American history there were many of us who questioned solely using nonviolent protest as a tactic in the fight for civil rights. However, today there can be no question that the strategy was effective.

One of the most dramatic moments in America history occurred during a SCLC campaign in Birmingham, Alabama. On May 2, 1957 more than 1,000 Black school children joined in the peaceful demonstrations where hundreds were arrested. The following day, 2,500 more students showed up, and Public Safety Commissioner Bull Connor met them with police dogs and high-pressure fire hoses.

That evening, television news programs showed the nation, and the world, scenes of fire hoses knocking down school children and dogs attacking individual demonstrators, who had no means of protecting themselves.

Public outrage led the Kennedy administration to intervene more forcefully. A settlement was announced on May 10, under which the downtown Birmingham businesses would desegregate and eliminate discriminatory hiring practices, and the city would release the jailed protesters.

During this turbulent episode, the brutal response of local police and "Bull" Connor stood in stark contrast to the nonviolent civil disobedience of the activists, and public sentiment came down on the side of justice.

Madam Speaker, I take pride in doing my part to continue the work of Dr. King and other prominent SCLC members and moving the civil rights agenda forward.

Tonight my colleagues and I would like to salute the efforts and hard work of the SCLC. The world is a better place today because of their actions throughout these past fifty years. I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations and gratitude for the legacy the SCLC has established, here in America and around the globe.