

It is time that Congress updates the VPPA to keep up with today's technology and the consumer marketplace. This bill does just that.

I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this important piece of legislation.

REAFFIRMING COMMITMENT TO
NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT OF
ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 6, 2011

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise to reluctantly support H. Res. 268. I support the resolution because I strongly agree in principle that the Israelis and Palestinians must negotiate a two-state solution.

H. Res. 268 contains much with which I disagree. We have seen such resolutions in the past. Unfortunately, their intent is to advance a specific narrative that I believe is at odds with the urgency of a negotiated peace. The resolutions are brought to the floor without the ability for Members of Congress to provide input at either the committee level or during consideration on the House floor. As a strong supporter of Israel and her right to self-defense, I take issue with this approach.

My biggest concern with H. Res. 268 is its call to cut aid to the Palestinians. Such a move would be at best premature and at worst detrimental to the prospects of resuming negotiations. The unity agreement between Hamas and Fatah is tenuous and the path forward for a potential unity government is unknown. Let me be clear: I would never advocate United States aid for Hamas or any government that contains Hamas. Hamas' charter calls for the destruction of Israel; it has never supported the peace process and it sympathizes with America's enemies like al Qaeda and Iran. But at a time when much of the Middle East is shifting toward democracy, it is irresponsible and against our own interests to withhold dollars that we know are being used by the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank to promote greater economic stability and physical security—for both the Israelis and Palestinians. Cutting off aid would be a setback for those working toward peace. Indeed, as the New York Times argues in its editorial on May 8, 2011, such a move may “shift the political balance dangerously toward Hamas.”

In addition, H. Res. 268 is as egregious for what it includes as what it leaves out. The resolution does not suggest that the United States should play a strong role in bringing both sides back to the negotiating table. It does not say that both sides must continue negotiating without preconditions. Nor does it say both the Israelis and Palestinians must cease unilateral actions. The omissions raise serious questions. How can we as leaders of our nation reaffirm our commitment to a lasting two-state solution without acknowledging that U.S. leadership is critical to bringing about that solution? How can we ask one side and not the other to make difficult concessions?

The stakes in reaching a negotiated peace agreement are as high as ever as the window for a two-state solution narrows. The United States must help both sides rejoin negotiations, not pass resolutions laden with threats,

grandstanding, and obfuscation. As the President stated in his speech at the U.S. State Department in May, “At a time when the people of the Middle East and North Africa are casting off the burdens of the past, the drive for a lasting peace that ends the conflict and resolves all claims is more urgent than ever. That's certainly true for the two parties involved.”

My stance on this conflict is well known. I support a two-state solution that results in a Jewish and democratic state of Israel living side-by-side in peace and security with a Palestinian state. H. Res. 268 does nothing to achieve this outcome.

CONGRATULATING DR. STEWART
B. SIMMS

HON. PAUL C. BROUN

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 8, 2011

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to congratulate Dr. Stewart B. Simms, Jr. for 30 years of excellent service at Beech Haven Baptist Church.

I am confident that Athens is a better place in which to live, work, and study because of the presence of his fine church. Beech Haven's building stands as a stunning landmark and the reputation of its members as a powerful testimony to the beauty of our God. Beech Haven's success and strength is due, in large part, to Dr. Simms' faithfulness and care.

Many blessings as Dr. Simms continues on his journey of devoted service to the Lord. I not only value his friendship, but I hold him in the highest regard because of his work (1 Thessalonians 5:13).

HONORING MAJORS MANUEL AND
JOANN MADRID OF THE ST.
CLOUD SALVATION ARMY ON
THEIR RETIREMENT AFTER 4
YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE
IN OUR COMMUNITY AND 40
YEARS OF SERVICE WITH THE
SALVATION ARMY

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 8, 2011

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Majors Manuel and JoAnn Madrid of the St. Cloud Salvation Army on their retirement after 4 years of dedicated service in our community and 40 years of service with the Salvation Army.

Since their arrival in St. Cloud 4 years ago, the St. Cloud Salvation Army has grown from 28 to 64 beds for the homeless, opened a transitional apartment housing program and broken ground for a new chapel last May. In the last two years alone, 47,000 people have entered the St. Cloud Salvation Army's doors for a meal, but they were blessed with so much more. From simple prayers for provision to places to rest their head at night, the Madrids have guided countless numbers of people from despair to hope with inspirational sermons, warm meals, and open arms.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that this body join with me in recognizing 40 years of service from

Majors Manuel and JoAnn Madrid. Manuel and Joann live every day reflecting the mission of the Salvation Army: “motivated by the love of God . . . to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination”. We are grateful for their service and wish them many years of happiness in their retirement beginning this fall.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE
INDEPENDENCE OF SOUTH SUDAN

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 8, 2011

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, it is with an immense sense of hope that I rise today to congratulate the people of South Sudan on the eve of their independence.

South Sudan has overcome incredible devastation brought on by decades of violence and famine that killed and displaced millions. After years of brutal fighting, the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement signed a peace agreement in January 2005 that finally ended the civil war. And in January of this year the people of the south, by an overwhelming margin of 98.8 per cent to 1.17 per cent, peacefully voted for independence. The joy on the voters' faces as they cast their ballots, their hopes for the future, and their unshakeable resolve to determine their own fate was nothing short of inspirational.

South Sudan will face many challenges. There are still major issues to be addressed such as its frayed relations with Khartoum, the dispute over Abyei and the lack of agreement on borders, citizenship rights and other matters. In addition, there is the extremely worrisome violence that has grown in recent weeks in the northern border state of Southern Kordofan which has forced tens of thousands to flee. These tests will be difficult but I have no doubt that the people of South Sudan will continue to demonstrate the courage and strength of spirit that has brought them this far to take on these challenges. As they do so, the people of the United States will continue to support and stand by them as they build their new country.

However, tomorrow will be a day for celebrating a new nation that was able to overcome adversity and rise out of the ashes of genocide and civil war. On behalf of the people of the Ninth District of Massachusetts, I wish to extend my deepest congratulations to the people of South Sudan.

IN HONOR OF BETTY ROBERTS

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 8, 2011

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, Oregonians are mourning the passing of a pioneering female leader of truly historic dimension. Betty Roberts was a pioneer in every sense of the word.

There have been women in our community who as the first Oregon female Member of