

IN MEMORY OF THOMAS “TOMMY”
THOMPSON

HON. JOE BARTON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 2, 2014

Mr. BARTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise with a heavy heart today to honor an amazing life, and a legendary career. On November 6th, America lost one of the great innovators in medical technology and a dear friend of mine, Thomas “Tommy” Thompson. While Tommy Thompson may not be a household name, there is not one household in America who has not been touched by his life’s work.

Tommy was a dynamic medical device innovator whose passion in life was to improve the human condition. And in this pursuit he was immensely successful. But Tommy wasn’t content with his own successes, he wanted to make sure that the countless doctors, engineers and other innovators in this field also had an environment where they could develop medical breakthroughs. Tommy was the type of leader who didn’t just point out problems, he tirelessly fought to fix them. In 1992, he joined with a group of innovators to establish the Medical Device Manufacturers Association to give the innovative and entrepreneurial sector of the industry a strong and independent voice in the nation’s capital. What started as a handful of medical technology companies has grown to nearly 300 members across the United States. Under Tommy’s leadership, the association helped drive countless policies and regulations that improved patient care and innovation. For the past few years, Tommy discussed the devastating impact the medical device tax was having on innovators trying to develop the cures of tomorrow. Tommy was also a tireless advocate to ensure patients and physicians had access to the technologies they needed, and worked to remove barriers and roadblocks so that they could obtain the best care possible. There is no question that medical technology innovators today are standing on the shoulders of Tommy and all the passion and hard work he dedicated towards improving the innovation ecosystem. To honor Tommy, I will continue to work to repeal this tax.

Tommy’s passion also extended to helping organizations and individuals in his home state of Texas. He devoted countless hours to many of his favorite organizations there including the Fairhill School, the Foundation for Lovejoy Schools, and Phi Kappa Sigma at The University of Texas.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife Betty and all his family and loved ones at this difficult time. We have all lost a great man whose love of improving patient care was second only to that for his family.

At one time or another everyone wonders what kind of legacy our lives might produce, and what it is that future generations may say about our brief time here on Earth. Tommy never said it—he was too humble and too magnanimous—but I will: Tommy Thompson was a legend and a leader in the medical device industry, allowing patients around the world to live longer, healthier lives. He gave so much of his time, treasure and talents, never expecting anything in return. Whether helping a local school or giving time to mentor an engineer just starting in the field, Tommy

cared about people and improving this world. That is his legacy. That is what he will always be known for. That is a legacy anyone would be proud of, and we will be forever grateful for all that Tommy did on behalf of patients and innovators.

Thomas “Tommy” Thompson led a life dedicated to that old-fashioned notion that if you’re focused on helping others, you truly can change the world. Tommy did change the world, and we are all better off thanks to his selfless passion and generosity.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. MIKE
MCCALL ON HIS RETIREMENT AS
PRESIDENT OF THE KENTUCKY
COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL
COLLEGE SYSTEM

HON. BRETT GUTHRIE

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 2, 2014

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dr. Mike McCall. After more than 15 years serving as the President of the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), Dr. McCall will retire in January 2015.

KCTCS, a network of 16 colleges located throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky, currently educates more than 92,000 students. Kentucky’s Second District is fortunate to be the home of three of those campuses—Owensboro Community and Technical College, Southcentral Kentucky Community and Technical College and Elizabethtown Community and Technical College.

During Dr. McCall’s tenure, KCTCS has grown to be the largest provider of post-secondary education in the Commonwealth. Today, KCTCS represents nearly 50 percent of all undergraduate college students, serving more than 5,000 businesses and training more than 52,000 employees on an annual basis.

Dr. McCall has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors, but it is Kentucky that is the real winner. Dr. McCall’s career dedicated to better serving community and technical colleges has been one that will create a lasting impact on the Commonwealth. I wish Dr. McCall well during this new phase of his life and know that KCTCS will continue to grow and prosper.

HONORING MARK E. SALTARELLI
AS THE 2014 CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 2, 2014

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. Mark E. Saltarelli as he is recognized as Citizen of the Year by the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas. Mr. Saltarelli is a practicing attorney and former acting City Court Judge, whose dedication to public service and the law is commendable.

A graduate of the University of Buffalo and Syracuse Law School, Mr. Saltarelli practices at Saltarelli and Associates, P.C., in the city of Tonawanda. He is a trusted attorney whose sound legal advice has helped many in the community for decades.

In addition to his legal work, Mr. Saltarelli has leadership roles in many non-profit organizations, including the Knights of Columbus, the Tonawanda Club, the Kiwanis Club of the Tonawandas, the Riviera Theatre, Gateway Harbor, Inc., and Buffalo’s Franciscan Center. Mr. Saltarelli is involved heavily in the St. Francis of Assisi Parish Council and their school board. While the school is in danger of closing, Mr. Saltarelli has joined with many in the community in an attempt to keep the school open.

A family man, Mr. Saltarelli enjoys spending time with his wife Marcia and their two children, Rachel and Mark Thomas.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me a few moments to recognize the accomplishments of Mark Saltarelli, the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas Citizen of the Year. I congratulate Mr. Saltarelli on this honor and wish him continued success in all his future endeavors.

CELEBRATING STEP AFRIKA! ON
ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 2, 2014

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating Step Afrika! on its 20th anniversary, which will be celebrated on December 4, 2014.

Founded two decades ago, Step Afrika! was originally created as a cultural exchange program with the Soweto Dance Theatre of Johannesburg, South Africa, and has grown to become an internationally recognized dance company.

Stepping is a uniquely American art form that originated on the campuses of Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Step Afrika! is the first professional company dedicated to the art of stepping. Step Afrika! promotes an appreciation for stepping through performances and arts education programs in the District of Columbia, across the rest of the United States and around the world.

Step Afrika! specializes in the use of stepping as an educational tool for young students. Step Afrika! brings stepping and its associated values of teamwork, commitment and discipline to students in classrooms, non-traditional dance venues and performing arts venues. Step Afrika! introduced stepping to the Kennedy Center’s Teaching Artist program in 1998, and served as the first step group for the Washington Performing Arts’ Concerts in Schools program. In 2005, Step Afrika! earned its first DC Mayor’s Arts Award for Outstanding Contribution to Education, in acknowledgement for its expanding role in arts education. Step Afrika! brings stepping to more than 20,000 students each year.

Step Afrika! is also globally renowned. The organization serves as an official Cultural Ambassador for the U.S. State Department. It has represented the United States and countries around the world including South Sudan. Step Afrika! has also provided moral, welfare, and recreation programs for service members overseas in Bahrain and Djibouti.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Step Afrika!

its Founder and Executive Director, C. Brian Williams, and the Chair of Step Afrika!s Board of Directors, Jacqueline N. Francis, M.D. on 20 years of service to the District of Columbia and the rest of the United States.

HISTORICAL RECORD OF OPINION
EDITORIAL ON CANNED TUNA
MADE BY CHILD LABOR

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 2, 2014

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to include, for historical purposes, the following opinion editorial on canned tuna made by child labor.

[From The Hill, Jan. 8, 2014]

TUNA FIRMS SPAR OVER SCHOOL LUNCH
ACCESS

(By Kevin Bogardus)

The world's largest tuna companies are making a splash in Washington with a fight over rules that keep some catches out of school lunches.

StarKist and Tri Marine are clashing with Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea over the Agriculture Department's strict Buy American standards for where tuna is cleaned, canned and shipped.

Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea lose under the rules. Both companies have facilities that process tuna in the United States, but their product is also cleaned overseas. Under the USDA standards, their tuna cannot be served in schools, denying them access to a lucrative market.

StarKist, on the other hand, has a major operation in the U.S. territory of American Samoa. Tri Marine is building up a new facility in the territory as well.

The two factions are sparring over language in the House agricultural appropriations bill that would require the USDA to issue a report on how the department could revise its Buy American standards, including "the option for less than 100 percent of the value of the tuna product be United States produced."

The language could be slipped into the omnibus spending bill that lawmakers aim to release sometimes this week. If it becomes law, that report could clear the way for Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea to begin selling to schools.

Millions of dollars in government sales are at stake, including for American Samoa, where tuna is a linchpin of the island economy.

The fight over the provision has become bitter, with both sides hurling charges of child labor and inhumane working conditions at the other.

"I suspect most members don't have the facts yet on where Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea source their tuna. And if they would be informed, they would not be supportive of this language," said Jim Bonham, chairman of the government affairs practice at Manatt, Phelps & Phillips.

Bonham lobbies for Tri Marine, founded in Singapore, and StarKist, which is headquartered in Pittsburgh but owned by Korea's Dongwon Industries. StarKist's tuna qualifies for the USDA's school nutrition program because it's processed in American Samoa, and Tri-Marine's catch should as well once its plant is up and running.

But their competitors want in on the action.

"For years, we have been trying to revise these standards. So instead of 100 percent

U.S. content, we would revise it down to 80 percent," said Jeff Pike, CEO of Pike Associates, which lobbies for Bumble Bee. "We are buying fish from U.S. boats. We are working with U.S. fishermen. We have a U.S. factory and we are the only U.S.-owned major brand."

Tuna purchases by the U.S. government represent a significant chunk of change. The USDA's purchases of canned and pouched tuna have equaled around \$20 million per year over the past decade.

The provision under scrutiny could upend that market, critics argue.

"The parameters of the study are so narrow, we know what the outcome will be. It asks them [the USDA] to come up with multiple options to erode the Buy American standards," Bonham said.

Bumble Bee's advocate contends that changing the standards would simply bring competition to American Samoa's tuna industry.

"There is a lot of sympathy for American Samoa. I'm convinced, even with the change, the government will still buy tuna from American Samoa," Pike said. "Tuna is high in protein. Tuna is low in fat. What is your objection to putting competition into the school lunch program so kids can eat more tuna fish?"

American Samoa has consolidated lobbying forces to protect its golden industry. Last summer, StarKist, Tri Marine, the Chamber of Commerce of American Samoa and others formed the Stronger Economy for American Samoa Coalition.

The group has worked to promote American Samoa, including highlighting a Pittsburgh Post-Gazette op-ed by Pittsburgh Steeler Troy Polamalu that discussed the "economic distress" in the territory.

Mark McCullough, a coalition spokesman, said loosening the Buy American standards would hurt American Samoa.

"Congress needs to be partnering with the islands' public and private industry leaders on a new economic development plan, not costing more Americans their jobs by weakening what it means to buy America," McCullough said.

Del. Eni Faleomavaega (D), American Samoa's delegate on Capitol Hill, has sought to substitute the report language with his own measures that would target Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea. One proposal would have USDA study whether child labor was used to process tuna bought by the government.

Faleomavaega's aides have given a PowerPoint presentation, obtained by The Hill, that cites human rights reports that blast Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea for using Thai facilities, where workers allegedly suffer terrible conditions while cleaning tuna.

"It is disgraceful to suggest that poor kids in Asia should be forced to provide tuna sandwiches for America's school lunch program. Bumble Beeware! It is time for America to know the truth about Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea," Faleomavaega said in a statement to The Hill.

In opposition to the language, Faleomavaega has sent letters to select members of the House and Senate Agriculture panels, Appropriations agriculture subcommittees and to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.). The delegate has also asked for help from House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), according to his office.

"I suspect most consumers don't want to buy child labor tuna. . . . Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea are kicking a hornet's nest here," Bonham said.

StarKist's critics said the company has used the Thai plants as well, but its supporters say the company has made sure not

to sell any foreign-processed tuna to the U.S. government.

StarKist has had to contend with a Food and Drug Administration "warning letter" for poor workplace conditions in 2011. That halted its tuna sales to the USDA, but backers of the company say the issue has since been resolved.

Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea also have their supporters in Congress. Rep. Linda Sánchez (D-Calif.) introduced legislation last year that would loosen the Buy American standards for tuna.

"It simply provides more flexibility to the Department of Agriculture's canned tuna purchasing program. The Tuna Competition Act is designed to bolster domestic industry," said Mattie Muñoz, a Sánchez spokeswoman.

Bumble Bee has a tuna canning plant in Santa Fe Springs, Calif.—based in Sanchez's district—that employs more than 300 workers.

"Congresswoman Sanchez is always happy to fight for job creators in the 38th District. However, it is important to note that this bill will help US tuna producers nationally," Munoz said.

[From The Hill, Jan. 14, 2014]

BOYCOTT CANNED TUNA MADE BY CHILD LABOR
(By Rep. Eni Faleomavaega (D—American Samoa))

As an Asia-Pacific American and former chairman and current ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, I hope that Congress and consumers will boycott efforts by Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea to introduce canned tuna made by child labor into America's school lunch program.

Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea are disqualified from providing canned tuna to the Department of Agriculture's school lunch program because both companies clean their tuna in factories in Thailand, which use child, trafficked, and other forced and exploited labor. The Environmental Justice Foundation says "the processing industry in Thailand does not just have a problem with human rights abuses, but is built on it." This brutal business practice is a gross violation of the Department of Agriculture's Buy America program and is simply un-American.

USDA provisions exist to ensure that federal dollars are spent on products that are available and produced 100 percent in the United States. Buy America provisions also exist to ensure the highest quality goods are being purchased by the U.S. government, and they are being manufactured in a manner consistent with American policies as related to child labor, working conditions and wages.

StarKist, which operates in the U.S. Territory of American Samoa, complies with Buy America provisions. At StarKist Samoa, our workers fully manufacture canned tuna from the whole fish through to the final, labeled product. On occasion, if enough whole fish is not available, StarKist has in the past used frozen loins to supplement the whole fish. However, in compliance with USDA regulations, StarKist uses segregated lines to make sure only whole fish processed 100 percent in the U.S. is used for the school lunch program.

Despite misinformation put forward by Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea, American Samoa's workers are local citizens and legal residents from the neighboring country of Samoa. StarKist abides by U.S. labor and environmental laws, and pays workers in accordance with federal minimum wage standards as determined by the U.S. Congress, unlike tuna factories in Thailand where Bumble Bee and Chicken of the Sea clean their fish.