

crisp air of life, being born in the land of the free.

Payton Poe Alexander showed up tipping the scales at 9 pounds-1 ounce and a height of 22 inches. Not bad for his first day on earth. His mother, Kara, my daughter, and his father Shane, are right-thinking, God-fearing people. Payton's little 2-year-old sister Elizabeth, shall we say, is inquisitive.

Mr. Speaker, we all get excited when kids are born, because we see in those innocent eyes the hope of the world, the chance that this new child might make a difference for the rest of us.

My hope for my new grandson is that he grows up embodying the spirit of truth, justice and the American way, and that he plays football for the University of Texas and not Texas A&M.

And that's just the way it is.

OPPOSE THE BUSH COLOMBIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

(Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the Bush Colombia Free Trade Agreement. Like many here, I would like to see our relationship with Colombia strengthened, but the NAFTA-style Colombia FTA would actually do more harm than good.

The Bush administration refuses to change its stubborn ways. By deciding to force the trade agreement through Congress without seeking support or input from the House leadership, the administration continues to demonstrate its lack of judgment and sensibility.

Despite many serious concerns about the Colombia Free Trade Agreement, this administration continues to believe that it can unilaterally demand and approve legislation as it pleases, when it pleases. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way.

Until the Bush administration understands that it must make fundamental changes in its approach to trade, this House will oppose its one-sided trade deals. We need trade deals that work for American working families. The Bush Colombia FTA is not it.

MR. CARTER—DON'T MEET WITH HAMAS

(Mr. KIRK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, The Washington Post reports that President Carter will visit Syria next week to meet with a Hamas assassin, Khaled Meshal. The State Department lists Hamas as a foreign terrorist organization, and it is responsible for the murder of at least 26 American citizens: David and Nava Applebaum of Ohio, killed just before Nava's wedding; Alan Beer of Ohio; Marla Bennet of Cali-

fornia; Benjamin Blustein of Pennsylvania; David Boim of New York; Yael Botwin of California; Dina Carter of North Carolina; Janis Ruth Coulter of Massachusetts; Sara Duker of New Jersey; Matthew Eisenfeld of Connecticut; Tzvi Goldstein of New York; Judith Greenbaum of New Jersey; David Gritz of Massachusetts; Dina Horowitz of Florida; Rabbi Eli Horowitz of Illinois; Tehilla Nathanson of New York, age 3; Malka Roth of New York; Mordechai Reinitz of New York; Yitzhak Reinitz of New York; Leah Stern of New Jersey; Goldie Taubenfeld of New York; Shmuel Taubenfeld, 3 months old, of New York; Nachshon Wachsmann of New York; Ira Weinstein of New York; and Yitzhak Weinstock of California.

President Carter, the voices from the grave beseech you, do not meet with the man that ordered the murder of these American citizens.

I urge Members to sign our letter asking former President Carter not to meet with the killer of American citizens.

SUPPORT THE STOP OUTSOURCING SECURITY ACT

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, the State Department decided to renew Blackwater's \$1.2 billion contract for another year. It has been over 6 months since Blackwater contractors killed 17 innocent Iraqi civilians, 16 months since the Christmas Eve murder in the Green Zone, and 35 months since a Blackwater helicopter dropped CS gas on a traffic jam in Baghdad. Yet there have been no arrests, no charges, no trials, no convictions, Nothing.

The Department of Justice, the FBI and State Department have remained completely silent about these investigations. Meanwhile, those contractors are still working side-by-side with our troops in Iraq.

But what is even more appalling is that our government has ignored those abuses and renewed Blackwater's contract. If you owned a company, would you rehire someone who has killed dozens of innocent people? The State Department's decision not only puts the lives of innocent Iraqi civilians at risk, but it threatens the safety of our troops and jeopardizes our mission in Iraq.

I urge my colleagues to sign on to my bill, H.R. 4102, the SOS, or Stop Outsourcing Security Act, and phase out the use of military security contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan.

WINNING IN IRAQ

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker up-

dated members of the House Armed Services Committee and Foreign Affairs Committee regarding the conditions on the ground in Iraq. Noting successes on the military and political fronts, both indicated reasons to be optimistic about the progress being made.

Having recently visited Iraq, I am not surprised to hear about these successes. Violence is down and reconciliation is happening. But the progress is fragile, a sentiment echoed by both Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus.

During the hearing, many of my Democrat colleagues asked about the cost of the war. Is it expensive? Yes, the cost is expensive. My question to them is, what will be the cost of defeat, and are you willing to pay for it?

HONORING ABBY LEVINE ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

(Mr. KLEIN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable and outstanding member of our community, Mr. Abby Levine. Abby and his wife Mildred have devoted their lives to addressing critical social, political and humanitarian issues.

Abby is celebrating an important milestone this week, the occasion of his 90th birthday. At nine decades young, Abby, in addition to his other commitments, is working to build a vibrant Jewish community among young people in South Florida.

Abby and Mildred helped establish the Levine-Weinberger Jewish Life Center at Florida Atlantic University, which has become the nerve center of Jewish life on campus. Abby and Mildred are also generous supporters of a number of other causes, including the Boca Raton Community Hospital, and their dedication to improving our community is deeply valued.

Madam Speaker, I join countless friends, family members and loved ones in South Florida in wishing Abby a wonderful birthday, and many more years of good health and happiness.

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NEW EMPLOYEE VERIFICATION SYSTEM

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on November 1, the Nation's employment verification system, E-Verify, is going to expire.

E-Verify is a broken employment verification system that has helped grow the number of illegal immigrants in America to over 12 million. We have got to find new solutions.

Our bill, H.R. 5515, the New Employment Verification Act or NEVA, would