

Introduction of Congressman Curt Weldon
Speech delivered by Weldon in the TEC Center of Allentown, Pennsylvania
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by

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Honored guests and folks in Eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey:

Just 10 days ago, on the evening of September 3rd, I was given the great honor to introduce my good friend Congressman Curt Weldon as the keynote speaker in a very different setting: it was at the opening ceremony of the “International Symposium on 21st Century China and Sustainable Development.” Due to its timeliness and enormous global implications, that conference attracted over 400 political and economic leaders from the United States and China, and was carried by C-Span (which broadcasted it three times a couple days later), China Central TV (which carried it nationwide on the evening news the next day, watched probably by over half a billion of Chinese), and a multitude of ethnic and Pacific Rim media.

From his speech, entitled “U.S. – China in the New Millennium,” Curt outlined his profound and palpable understanding of this complicated, dangerous but utterly important foreign relations for the United States. Therefore, it is not at all a surprise that of all the leaders in the United States, from the legislature and the administrative branches, the organizers zeroed in on Curt as their keynote speaker!

Today, I am again given another great honor by the organizers. I am here to introduce Curt in this profoundly important event for our region: Eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey. I understand that this speech of his may reach as many as a quarter of a million households in this region.

As we all know, with ubiquitous presence in millions of households, the rapid growth of the infrastructure and importance of the Internet, this and the next generation, and with its interactive ability, one simply cannot underscores enough the importance of cable television as a communication tool in the 21st century. I think that this is true not just in the United States, but globally. In fact, the importance of global cable TV hit me in the face when as a member of Curt’s Congressional Delegation to Hong Kong a couple of years ago, I was bombarded in the hotel room by 50 cable TV channels! I am sure that number has grown even more now! This importance makes the event of today, which is partially sponsored by the Service Electric Cable Television, a company which has the distinct honor of “inventing” cable television 52 years ago by its founder, the father of the previous speaker, the current CEO of Service Electric, Mr. John Walsom, just that much

more historical. The title of Curt's today's talk: "Technology and Economic Development in the New Millennium" marks another area of great expertise he possesses. With this speech, in a sense, he, as one of the most eloquent and powerful legislators on technology, economic and intellectual development will deliver his "vision statement" in this area to the people in Eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

The fact that Curt is invited to talk about such different subjects in such a short span clearly delineates his depth as well as breath in these disparate subjects. It also shows his ability to interconnect disparate subjects to render them as win-win situations!

To introduce Curt, two quotations came to mind. The first is the one he delivered in a technology conference on December 19, 1995, the first time I met him. At that keynote, he said that

".....It is now taken to be self-evident that a world class society of the new millennium must have as its underpinning a world-class computing and network infrastructure"

and the second was his concluding remarks of his Szechenyi Lecture delivered last December in the Technical University of Budapest when he was inducted by the faculty of that university to be an honored faculty council member:

"...I know that Grof (Count) Istvan Szechenyi, for which this lecture is named after, had been a profound influence to Hungary. His father, Grof Ferencz Szechenyi, was also a very enlightened nobleman. He was the founder of numerous Hungarian Institutions, notably the National Library. He sent his son to England to get a modern education. There the young Szechenyi saw the advance of the industrial revolution, international trade and commerce, the value of good education and the importance of science and the arts. On his return to Hungary, often using his own money, young Szechenyi started to build a modern infrastructure for the country, including roads, waterways and dams. He started the first Hungarian Steamboat Company to provide for transportation on Europe's greatest river, the Danube.

On one occasion, Istvan Szechenyi received a message at his home in Pest that his father, Ferencz Szechenyi, was gravely ill in Vienna. Since the winter was particularly harsh and the Danube was frozen, he could not cross the river for several days. By the time he got to Vienna his father passed away. With great sorrow and determination, he went to London, hired the best engineer (Adam Clark) and the first permanent bridge connecting Buda and Pest was built. The Szechenyi bridge, or chain bridge as Hungarians like to call it, is still the most beautiful bridge in Budapest.

I like to urge the 21st century Istvan Szechenyi's, many of whom I am sure are sitting in the audience, to build the electronic "chain bridge" in the new millennium, so that people in the world, through this new communication bridge, can live in peace and prosperity."

The first quote demonstrates how far sighted he is. I remembered in 1995, Drexel University, which is a technological university, did not have a LAN, and the entire feed into the Internet cloud was a 56 kbps line! Yet, Curt was already concerned about networks and region's robustness. The second clearly shows his interest to dig into other cultures seriously, and learn from it, and see how it could become a win-win situation for all!

As the Chairman of the powerful Congressional Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Military Research and Development and a senior member on the Committee on Science, Curt is one of the most pro-education, technically astute and globally minded political leaders in the United States.

As a teacher, his interest in education is palpable. He is personally responsible for providing the vision of establishing a "sister relationship" between a high school in his district, Conestoga High School of Tredyffrin/Easttown School District, with one of the top high schools in China, Fudan University attached high school in Shanghai. With this as backdrop, Conestoga now has an extremely robust full Chinese program, with exchanged teachers and students from China on a regular basis!

As a Russian major in college, Congressman Weldon nurtured his global outlook even as a young student. As a representative from one of the most high-tech districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the 7th district, which includes the 202 Corridor, Congressman Weldon's passion to utilize technology to upgrade the economic and intellectual landscape of our region is relentless. By creating the HUBS project, now managed by the Nation's largest system integration company, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), his yeoman effort in rendering the four states region: Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania the information center of the world is a testimony of this fact.

It is worth emphasizing that Congressman Weldon's HUBS vision can be characterized as non-provincial and non-exclusive. For example, his interest in promoting the HUBS effort in the Lehigh Valley is just as strong as his promotion in his own district. He encourages wide range of partnerships and collaborations!

As a young county commissioner in Delaware County in the early eighties, Curt Weldon, who is fluent in Russian, was already making contacts with many of the "young pioneers" in the Soviet Union. This was his attempt to understand the true nature of this adversary of the United States. Many of these "young pioneers" are now senior officials in the Russian Duma, which was the reason why Weldon was the only Congressional representative invited to observe one of the elections of the Prime Minister in the Duma.

Before I end my introduction, with my background as a theoretical physicist, I like to use this opportunity to make a mathematical analogy of how Congressman Weldon operates. In mathematics, there is a field called "complex functions," which in essence allows one to move around seemingly non-connected mathematical objects called "Riemann Sheets." In fact, the way to learn that subject is to learn the subtle connections! Curt's thinking, I

must say, is at many “Riemann Sheets”, and unless you learn its subtleties, you may not see its global implications.

Let me give you an example. In the past six months, Congressman Weldon has been encouraging HUBS to establish a collaboration with Malaysia’s Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC), a robust and advanced thinking technology project of the government to transform the country into a “digital economy” for the 21st century. While this connection is obvious, it was not obvious, until now, to see that what Curt sees is well beyond just the technology, but the global importance of Malaysia in the Pacific Rim. As a Muslim country with a multi-racial population (the country has 40% Malays, 35% Chinese, 14% Indians, and a sizable percentage of Europeans), with the country rebounding rapidly from its economic woes, and playing an increasingly important role in Pac-Rim, especially among APEC (or Asian Pacific Economic Council) nations, the US should and must have strong ties to that region. HUBS and MSC, both non-political in nature, and both aim at developing economic and intellectual landscape for the region, can in Curt’s eyes forge a natural, strong working and sustainable relations. I am therefore extremely excited that in two weeks, through the work of Curt, the hard work of many people in SAIC and our friends in Oracle, on September 27th, the Senior Minister of Malaysia’s Ministry of Communication and Multimedia, will be coming to HUBS to sign an MOU with HUBS for this collaboration. At the center stage is Curt again!

Let me just give you a short account of how we plan to start this collaboration. In the HUBS project, in collaboration with University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Johns Hopkins University, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, together with Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center and Telcordia (what used to be called BellCore, before SAIC purchased it in its entirety), we will be working on the development of a VPN system for tele-pathology. Pathologists from these four major health systems, led by a collection of world renowned physicians, will be zipping massive amount of data through the next generation Internet to do real time pathological studies. The health implications of this project for our region are obvious. We are, even as we speak, working closely with our Malaysian colleagues, identifying some pathologists, to come to work with us so that when they return to Malaysia, they can immediately utilize the very broadband CISCO OC48 network system, which links northern Malaysia in Penang, to the southern tip in Johore (just across the Straits from Singapore) for their country.

So, as you can see, Curt has once again a subtle connection in the political Riemann Sheets, and only through working diligently with him will we be able to make the connection!

So, let me invite Curt to address you.