

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A BILL TO PROVIDE THAT FEDERAL EMPLOYEES IN AMERICAN SAMOA SHALL BE PAID THE SAME NON-FOREIGN AREA COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCE AS IF STATIONED IN GUAM OR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

HON. ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I am pleased today to introduce legislation to provide that Federal employees stationed in American Samoa be paid the same non-foreign area cost-of-living allowance as stationed in Guam or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

To date, American Samoa is the only non-foreign area in which Federal employees do not receive a cost-of-living allowance. Given that American Samoa faces many of the same issues driving higher prices for goods, services, and travel that face other territories in similar situations, it seems discriminatory that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has chosen not to provide COLA to Federal employees in American Samoa. Further exacerbating this problem is the fact that "post differential" compensation is paid to Federal employees who are working here who have come in from other areas of the country. As a result, the only non-foreign area Federal employees who do not receive any additional compensation are those Federal employees from American Samoa, working in American Samoa.

This legislation would remedy that inequity by providing COLA for our Federal employees at the same rate as has been determined by OPM to apply in Guam and CNMI. I urge my colleagues to join me in resolving this issue by supporting this legislation that would provide fair compensation to American Samoa's Federal employees.

RECOGNIZING THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON ITS 95TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Girl Scouts of the United States of America for helping millions of young women become role models and community leaders for the past 95 years.

It was in 1912 that Juliette Gordon Low founded the Girls Scouts of the USA. Based on her lifelong desire to serve and assist others, she brought girls of all backgrounds together and helped them develop important skills to serve their communities, help the

needy and make the world a better place to live. Going against the traditional norms of the time, she encouraged young women to not only prepare for a role as a homemaker, but also to learn skills to succeed as a professional woman.

Starting 95 years ago with a single troop of 18 girls, Juliette Gordon Low's mission has grown exponentially. More than 50 million girls have since experienced the benefits of Girl Scouting and research shows that Girl Scout alumnae now represent 70 percent of women serving in Congress, 64 percent of women listed in "Who's Who in America," and 53 percent of women business owners.

In my District, the Girl Scouts of Downingtown will celebrate this anniversary with a day of service at Chester County's Springton Manor Farm Park. The girls and their parents will spend the day volunteering their time on everything from planting trees and gardening to cleaning the trails and building a new orienteering course.

So I ask, Madam Speaker, that my colleagues join me today in congratulating the Girl Scouts of the USA as they celebrate this historic milestone and encouraging this exemplary organization to provide another 95 years of service and assistance to the young women of this country in developing important skills to better their communities and succeed in careers of their choosing.

HONORING THE AMERICAN STROKE FOUNDATION AND SHOWING SUPPORT FOR H.R. 477, THE STROKE TREATMENT AND ONGOING PREVENTION ACT

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 477, the Stroke Treatment and Ongoing Prevention Act and to honor the American Stroke Foundation (ASF). Founded in 1997 in the Kansas City Metropolitan Area, the ASF supports stroke survivors, their families, caregivers and friends by providing resources, services, education and information that improves their quality of life.

Every forty-five seconds, someone suffers from a stroke. Blood supply to the brain is interrupted, causing a loss of brain function and possibly brain damage. Every three minutes, someone dies from a stroke.

Stroke is the number one cause of adult disability and the third leading cause of death in the United States. About 700,000 Americans suffer a stroke each year. Four out of five people in the U.S. either have had a stroke or know someone who has. My family, like the vast majority of American families, has been touched by stroke. I am proud to come before you today not only to express my commitment to doing all that is necessary to stop strokes, but to vote for an important step to ending this tragic disease.

House Resolution 477, the Stroke Treatment and Ongoing Prevention Act, establishes a national grant program and public awareness program to help each state ensure that patients have access to quality stroke prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services. I was proud to cosponsor and vote for this legislation in previous Congresses, and I am proud to do so again this week.

I would like America to know about a hometown hero, who has devoted her time, energy and amazing spirit to helping those disabled by stroke. After her husband Stan's stroke, Shirley Rose realized, as I did when stroke struck my family, that resources for recovering stroke survivors and their caregivers were painfully inadequate. Shirley did not dwell on the need and simply retreat in dismay. No, instead, Shirley founded the American Stroke Foundation and from their two locations in Kansas and Missouri, ASF has worked to improve the lives of stroke survivors by providing extended rehabilitation efforts, creating community programs, and educating the public about strokes. Shirley turned her desire for the best care for her husband and her personal need for a support network into an organization that helps thousands of Americans each year cope and recover from this often-debilitating disease.

In 2002, thanks to efforts like those of the ASF, the United States had one of the lowest death rates for stroke. My home state of Missouri is fortunate to have one of the lowest fatality rates in the country. Regardless, I hope to see both of these numbers decrease as these essential programs are supported.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the American Stroke Foundation and vote for this life-saving legislation, and I ask my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to this life-saving and life-improving organization.

AMBASSADOR MANSOUR VISITS SEWANEE FOR LECTURE SERIES

HON. LINCOLN DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, known for its unique and comprehensive educational experience, Sewanee: The University of the South, is holding a two part lecture series focusing on the Middle East. Ambassador Reda Mansour, Consul General of Israel to the Southeastern United States, has been invited and will lead the first lecture.

Ambassador Reda Mansour was appointed to his current post in August 2006. Previously he served as the Ambassador of Israel to Ecuador, Deputy Ambassador in the Israeli Embassy to Portugal, and Deputy Consul General of Israel to the U.S. Pacific Northwest based in San Francisco.

Prior to his diplomatic career, Ambassador Mansour served in the Israeli Defense Forces Corps of Engineers in the Northern Command

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Demolition Unit. Ambassador Mansour holds a masters degree from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and is a Ph.D. candidate in Haifa University's Middle Eastern History department.

In addition to his position as a diplomat, Ambassador Mansour is an accomplished author. He has published three books of poetry, as well as a number of short stories and poems published in literary articles and poetry reviews. Ambassador Mansour has received the Ha'aretz Annual Short Story Award, as well as the Haifa University Miller Award.

I join Sewanee, The University of the South, in thanking Ambassador Mansour for taking part in this important lecture series intended to foster a greater understanding of the Middle East.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DR. RUTH
JOHNSON

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend Dr. Ruth Johnson, president of the Clark County School District Board of School Trustees, and congratulate her on behalf of the Clark County School District for receiving the Distinguished Support of Music Education Award.

The VH1 Save the Music Foundation has selected the Clark County School District Board of School Trustees as this year's recipient of their Third Annual School Board Award for Distinguished Support of Music Education. Clark County is an exemplary school district to which others can look as model for music education. The Board of School Trustees, presided over by Ruth Johnson, is the only school board in the United States to receive this award by VH1 Save the Music Foundation. The Clark County School District Board of Trustees are dedicated to providing a certified, qualified music teacher for each school, as well as funding after school music programs, text books, and music supplies.

For the past 10 years, Ruth has served on the Clark County School District Board of Trustees, where her leadership has greatly contributed to the development of music education in the Clark County School District. Furthermore, Ruth Johnson has committed the efforts of the Board of School Trustees to go above and beyond to achieve excellence in music education.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor my friend Dr. Johnson and the Clark County School District Board of Trustees. Her dedication in enriching the educational experience of the Clark County students is commendable and I congratulate her for being honored by VH1 Save the Music. I wish Dr. Johnson continued success as she serves as president of the Clark County School Board of Trustees.

HONORING THE TUSKEGEE
AIRMEN

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I wish to honor the Tuskegee Airmen, the group of African-American pilots who flew with distinction during World War II as the 332d Fighter Group of the U.S. Army Air Corps. Additionally, I am compelled to honor an excellent servant to our Nation, Mr. Matthew W. Plummer, an original Tuskegee Airman who served as an instructor for U.S. Army cadets training at Tuskegee. His tireless work, like that of so many other Tuskegee Airmen, helped to make our country a more perfect union.

Prior to the Tuskegee Airmen, not a single U.S. military pilot had been African-American. However, due to the work of the African-American civil rights community, the United States Congress in 1941 forced the Army Air Corps to form an all-black combat unit. In June 1941, the Tuskegee program officially began with formation of the 99th Fighter Squadron at the Tuskegee Institute, a highly regarded university founded by Booker T. Washington in Tuskegee, Alabama. The Airmen were placed under the command of Capt. Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., one of the few African-American West Point graduates.

During World War II the Tuskegee Airmen fought with amazing gallantry and uncompromising determination. They flew escort for heavy bombers, established an impressive combat record, and often entered combat against greater numbers of superior German aircraft, while emerging victorious. These brave fighters fought for their country at a time when their country would not fight for them. They were forced to suffer from the daily disease of racism even while in uniform. However, the Tuskegee Airmen chose to fight for their country as hard as they fought against racism, and they would eventually prove that they were the greatest of the "Greatest Generation".

By the end of the war, the Tuskegee Airmen were credited with shooting down 109 Luftwaffe aircraft and destroying numerous fuel dumps, trucks and trains. The squadrons of the 332nd Fighter Group flew more than 15,000 sorties on 1,500 missions. The unit was awarded a Distinguished Unit Citation for a mission flown on March 24, 1945, escorting B-17s to bomb the Daimler-Benz tank factory at Berlin, Germany, an action in which its pilots destroyed three Me-262 jets in aerial combat.

The Tuskegee Airmen were awarded several Silver Stars, 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 14 Bronze Stars, and 744 Air Medals. In all, 992 pilots were trained in Tuskegee from 1940 to 1946. Of the airmen 445 deployed overseas and 150 Airmen lost their lives in training or combat.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to honor the Tuskegee Airmen for their service to our country, their work to end segregation in the U.S. military, and their courage which has empowered millions of African-Americans and other minorities across our great country.

INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION
CELEBRATING THE 500TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF THE FIRST USE OF
THE NAME "AMERICA"

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues Representatives ALCEE HASTINGS, JOE WILSON, and HOYER, to honor the upcoming 500th anniversary of the coining of the name "America." On April 25, 1507 cartographer Martin Waldseemüller of the research group Gymnasium Vosagense in Saint-Die', France changed the way Europeans perceived the world by first depicting the Western Hemisphere in his 1507 world map. Waldseemüller honored Amerigo Vespucci by labeling this land with the Italian navigator's Christian name. Although explorers like Christopher Columbus already discovered this land, Amerigo Vespucci was the first to realize that it was not India but an entirely new continent. I invite my fellow Americans to join me and the House of Representatives in celebrating the historic 500th anniversary of the coining of this great name. Lastly, I also want to welcome Representative HASTINGS as a new member of the Americans Abroad Caucus, which I along with Representative WILSON have co-founded.

2007 EXCELLENCE AWARDS FOR
EMPLOYEES OF THE CHIEF AD-
MINISTRATIVE OFFICER

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to announce the recipients of the 2007 Achieving Excellence Awards (ACE) for the Office of the Chief Administrative Officer.

This year's award winners are Darrell Norman, Liz McBride-Chambers, Scott Hood, Wanda Jackson, Cari Knowles, Traci Beaubian, Patricia Nuzzo, Jim Caskey, Dave Woodburn and Christine Stewart. Their ACE Awards acknowledge the exceptional efforts made by these employees to provide quality service to the Members, Committees and offices of the House of Representatives.

The recipients of the 2007 CAO ACE Awards represent many areas of the CAO organization, perform a variety of jobs, and provide a wide range of services to the House community. Whether working directly with Members or staff, supporting CAO internal operations, or ensuring the technical infrastructure is operational, each serves as an exemplary role model for the entire CAO community. Collectively and individually they deliver solutions that fulfill our goal of providing a quality customer experience.

Employees nominated for an award must be in a full-time status and have a current excellent performance rating. Nominations for the awards are submitted by managers or supervisors within the organization. The nominations are then reviewed by a committee comprised of the CAO's leadership team with final award recommendations submitted to the Chief Administrative Officer for approval.

Darrell Norman, a CAO employee who died this past January, is being honored posthumously as one of the recipients of the "CAO Excellence" award. As a long-time employee of the CAO Technical Support team, Darrell exemplified the customer service standards of the CAO organization, the consultative approach to working with Members and staff to identify practical solutions, and a great attitude that resonated with all whom he worked with and served.

Starting this year, the CAO Excellence award will be formally re-named the "Darrell Norman Excellence Award" as an ongoing tribute to Darrell's many years of exemplary service to the House, in recognition of the tremendous role model he was for his CAO colleagues, and to acknowledge his "can-do" attitude and his infectious spirit.

Liz McBride-Chambers and Edward (Scott) Hood were selected as additional recipients of the "Darrell Norman Excellence Award." In her role as a member of the Office of Employee Assistance and the Human Capital Solutions team, Liz is a critical member of the CAO team. She embodies the mission, vision and values of the organization and provides her exceptional consultative skills and excellent customer service to the entire House community. She brings passion, integrity and an unwavering commitment to the "people" of the CAO organization and the House in everything that she does, whether providing employee assistance services to an individual House employee, consulting with a Member's Chief of Staff to identify a team development solution, or conducting a training program for a specific work group.

Scott Hood, as a supervisor in the Joint Capitol Service Center, inspires and motivates his staff and others to deliver quality services and solutions to many problems for the offices located in the Capitol. Scott has also been a key contributor to our efforts to enhance customer satisfaction and to work across the organization and with a variety of service partners to deliver solutions that exceed the expectations and needs of their customers. He has been particularly effective in bringing his change management and leadership skills to bear in developing an effective partnership with the Architect of the Capitol to deliver seamless solutions to House Leadership Offices.

Wanda Jackson is the 2007 recipient of the "Simplify the Day" award. As a Telephone Systems Consultant, Wanda is committed to going the extra mile for her customers and her colleagues. This past year, she stepped in to fill the void left by the departure of a senior telecommunications administrator in the midst of the Congressional transition, and she took on the support of sixty Member offices throughout the transition, including the coordination of the installation of voice and data services in the District offices of several freshman Members. Wanda worked tirelessly on behalf of one particular District office to troubleshoot their problem with the local telephone company and to manage the set-up process to the point of resolution and the complete satisfaction of the office.

Cari Knowles is being recognized with the "Personalized Solutions" award. In her role of providing graphics-related support services to Members, Committees, and House support offices, Cari has contributed significantly to raising customer expectations for the Graphics of-

fice through the excellence of her work, her ability to build relationships of trust with her customers, and her commitment to personalize a variety of graphics solutions for each customer. By carefully listening to her customers, she brings them a particular value through her ability to take ownership for their project by helping them define their requirements and identify the most appropriate solution to their unique graphics production needs.

Traci Beaubian and Patricia Nuzzo have been selected to share the 2007 "Dedicated" award. Traci Beaubian's persistence in getting the new payroll system stabilized after a challenging conversion process is reflective of her dedication to the House, to her colleagues, and to the House workforce. She looks beyond the surface to identify existing and potential challenges, works with her team to develop practical and innovative solutions, and accepts responsibility for the work of her team in carrying the solution forward. This past year she developed a successful audit technique to identify unusual variances in salary amounts which produced measurable results that were recorded on the CAO's financial statements. Patricia (Trish) Nuzzo, as a senior member of the CAO Advanced Business Solutions team, has responsibility for support of the payroll system covering day-to-day operations, audit management and long-term project support. Her ability to balance short-term and long-term objectives, her positive attitude, and her collaborative approach to resolving problems helps diffuse difficult situations. Trish has been particularly effective as a facilitator in bringing diverse teams together to develop and arrive at workable solutions by matching the right people to the situation, issue or challenge. Her dedication to her work and her ability to recognize and harness the talents of multiple team members has earned her the respect of her colleagues and her customers.

James (Jim) Caskey and Charles (Dave) Woodburn are each being recognized with the "Knowledge" award. In his role as a Senior Procurement Specialist, Jim Caskey's knowledge and skills in negotiation have saved the House tens of thousands of dollars annually through the effective procurement of professional services and software licenses and maintenance agreements. Jim consistently provides the House community, his procurement colleagues, and the program offices he supports with his expert advice, his extensive experience and his service-minded attitude. His knowledge is particularly evident in the mentoring relationships he has with other procurement personnel and in his creativity in finding innovative and effective solutions to procurement and purchasing issues.

Dave Woodburn's knowledge and contribution to the CAO organization and the House far exceeds his immediate responsibilities in the Central Receiving and Warehousing Department, and makes him a "go-to" resource for his co-workers, vendors and contractors alike. In addition to having a firm understanding of the needs of the Members, Committees and staffs that he serves, Dave has brought added value to the organization by applying his knowledge of services and processes to meet challenges enthusiastically, while using his excellent people skills to build solid relationships with House offices and vendors and to resolve issues with staff and internal customers in an amenable fashion.

Christine Stewart is the 2007 recipient of the "One Team" award. Her dedication, profes-

sionalism, outstanding customer service skills, and knowledge of procurement management and the House environment have made Christine a valuable team member to the CAO Procurement team and the offices she supports throughout the procurement and purchasing processes. There is never a task that she is not willing to take on, regardless of the level of effort required or the urgency of the procurement need. This was particularly evident this past year during the Congressional transition when, in response to an urgent procurement requirement, she secured inventory services within 6 days while saving the House over \$70,000.

On behalf of the entire House community, I extend congratulations to the family and colleagues of Darrell Norman, and to Liz McBride-Chambers, Scott Hood, Wanda Jackson, Cari Knowles, Traci Beaubian, Trish Nuzzo, Jim Caskey, Dave Woodburn, and Christine Stewart for their tireless efforts and outstanding contributions to the U.S. House of Representatives. I extend my condolences to Darrell's family, and I wish his CAO colleagues and this year's CAO ACE Award recipients continued success in their endeavors and contributions to the House community.

INTRODUCING THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY CENTERS ESTABLISHMENT ACT

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce the National Emergency Centers Establishment Act, a bill I first introduced in the 109th Congress.

Many of us share the belief that the Federal Government's response to Hurricane Katrina was disorganized and inadequate; the Federal Emergency Management Agency—FEMA—was far too slow to arrive and evacuees were left stranded in massive shelters with egregious standard of living violations.

Sixteen months following the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Katrina, more than 13,000 residents who were displaced by the storm were still living in trailers provided by FEMA. Eighteen months after Katrina, half the homes in New Orleans still did not have electricity. FEMA had informed Congress that 60,000 families in Louisiana still live in 240-square-foot trailers—usually at least 3 to a trailer.

Even President Bush realizes the shortcomings of our Federal Government to respond to the immediate and long-term needs of these disaster victims.

As recently as March 1, 2007, President Bush acknowledged that many gulf coast residents remained frustrated with the slowness of rebuilding after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and pledged to continue to help hurricane victims and their communities rebuild.

The sluggish and derisory reaction of our Federal Government to disaster victims affects me personally. In 2004, four hurricanes ravaged my home State of Florida, all of which literally destroyed parts of the counties in my district. In the immediate and long-term aftermath, our communities saw FEMA's shortcomings. Eighteen months after Hurricane

Wilma struck in 2005, citizens are still residing in trailers labeled on the outside "FEMA."

The lack of natural disaster preparedness efforts and temporary housing options for disaster stricken citizens has only exacerbated an unbearable situation. Deficient recovery responses have led to elongated recovery rates in my district and across this Nation.

Two main problems—increasing the availability of temporary housing in times of national emergencies and improving training and preparedness for national emergencies—must be resolved to ensure that the humanitarian catastrophe that occurred in the gulf coast and continues to happen today will never occur again.

We have an obligation to better prepare and more adequately respond to the needs of communities hit by natural disasters. We have a responsibility to ensure that the most basic needs of disaster victims are met immediately following the devastation.

It is for this reason that I come to the floor today to introduce the National Emergency Centers Establishment Act. My bill establishes no fewer than six National Emergency Centers spread throughout the United States. The centers would be used, first and foremost, to provide temporary housing, medical and humanitarian assistance, including education, for individuals and families displaced due to an emergency. The centers would also serve as a centralized location for the training and coordination of first responders in the instance of an emergency. In addition, the centers will improve the coordination of preparedness, response and recovery efforts between governments, private, not-for-profit entities and faith-based organizations.

The National Emergency Centers would be located on military bases, with a preference wherever possible for those installations closed during the most recent Base Realignment and Closures—BRAC—round. I am proposing these sites because the necessary infrastructure to house, feed, educate and care for evacuees over an extended period of time is already in place, thus limiting the cost and time needed to construct these facilities.

Madam Speaker, our Nation was not prepared for the disastrous hurricanes that struck Florida and the gulf coast in 2004 or in 2005. The establishment of National Emergency Centers will go a long way to ensuring that our response to national emergencies are not as disastrous as the disasters that created the emergencies in the first place.

I ask for my colleagues' support and urge the House leadership to bring this legislation to the floor for its swift consideration.

IN MEMORY OF GENE MCKAY

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, South Carolina early today lost a giant in broadcasting with the death of Eugene Klemick, who we all knew as the legendary Gene McKay.

Gene began his service in Columbia at WIS Radio. He and fellow radio pioneers, Dave

Wright, Bill Benton and Dennis Waldrop, purchased WSCQ-FM in 1976, where Gene, along with co-hosts Dave Wright and Bill Benton, began to cheerfully wake up the Midlands with "Good Morning Columbia." Following the sale of WSCQ-FM in 1997, Gene continued his early morning "Good Morning Columbia" radio show at WISW-AM with co-hosts Bill Benton and Doug Enlow.

Gene had a keen insight which produced an instant humorous wit with profound political beliefs and a great love of America. He was a devoted family man and patriot who helped Midlands residents begin each day with cheer. He was a proud Polish-American from Chicago who became beloved in South Carolina.

As an admirer and friend, our family extends our sympathy to Roni, Katherine, his extraordinary co-workers, and countless friends.

CONGRATULATING FLORIDA GULF
COAST UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S
BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. CONNIE MACK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. MACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to Florida Gulf Coast University Women's Basketball team on their remarkable season. As the national runner-up in Division II women's basketball, the team has become an inspiration to Southwest Florida, and everyone in our community is incredibly proud of their accomplishments.

The Eagles success is made even more amazing because Florida Gulf Coast University is Florida's newest University, having opened its doors just 10 short years ago.

This year, the Eagles set a remarkable school record with 34 wins and only one loss, making them an elite group of NCAA student athletes. Head Coach Karl Smesko and his team deserve our congratulations. They not only won on the court, but with their passion and dedication they have also won Southwest Florida's admiration and respect.

Florida Gulf Coast University is an integral part of our community, and their success in academics and athletics is second to none.

Congratulations to all the coaches and players that worked so hard and achieved so much: Karl Smesko, head coach; LeAnn Freeland, assistant coach; Ebonie Halliburton, assistant coach; Bryan Crislip, assistant coach; Kim Balduzzi, Candace Carreras, Jen Conely, Delia De LaTorre, Chelsea Dermyer, Ashley Haegle, Adrienne McNally, Alex Nelson, Amanda Pierce, Kate Schrader, Steffi Sorensen, Princess Stewart and Angel Woods.

INTRODUCTON OF LEGISLATION
TO MAKE PERMANENT THE DE-
DUCTION FOR MORTGAGE INSUR-
ANCE PREMIUMS

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce legislation to make per-

manent the deduction for mortgage insurance premiums. I want to thank my colleague Mr. RYAN, who sponsored this bill in the last Congress, for working with me in this matter. I would also like to thank Representatives JOHN LEWIS, WALLY HERGER, JOHN TANNER, DAVE CAMP, RAHM EMANUEL, PHIL ENGLISH, SHELLEY BERKLEY, JERRY WELLER, JOE CROWLEY, RON LEWIS, ALLYSON SCHWARTZ and ERIC CANTOR who are joining Mr. RYAN and myself in introducing this legislation.

Last year, a version of Mr. RYAN's legislation, H.R. 3098, was incorporated into the Tax Relief and Health Care Act. As a result, homeowners who purchase mortgage insurance will be able to deduct the premiums they pay beginning January 1st of this year. Unfortunately, the provision is temporary and expires December 31, 2007. The legislation we are introducing today will make this deduction permanent.

Government and private mortgage insurance programs help first-time, low- and middle-income, minority and veteran borrowers afford to purchase a home. The Federal Housing Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, Rural Housing Service and private mortgage insurance programs allow these homebuyers to obtain a mortgage with a significantly reduced down payment of 3 percent or less of the appraised value, addressing one of the key barriers to homeownership.

As a result of our legislation, mortgage insurance will be a more affordable option for families that want to purchase a home. Particularly given the ongoing problems associated with subprime lending, it is important that we continue to make premiums on new mortgage insurance contracts deductible beyond the end of this year.

According to the most recent data, more than 388,000 families in my home state of Michigan held mortgages with either FHA or private mortgage insurance, and insured mortgages comprised 36 percent of home purchase loans originated in Michigan from 2000–2005. Mortgage insurance covered 40 percent of the mortgage loans made to African American or Hispanic borrowers. Borrowers earning less than 120 percent of area median income comprised 80 percent of the insured home purchase loans originated in the state.

Nationwide, 11.5 million families presently use mortgage insurance. The people who use mortgage insurance are our neighbors. They are policemen, firemen, teachers, and veterans who live in every community in every one of our districts. This House has a long-standing commitment to expanding homeownership and to achieve that goal, we must expand the circle of people that are able to participate in the housing market.

Making the tax deduction for mortgage insurance premium payments permanent will help make the American dream of owning a home come true for many more of our citizens. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation and join us in working towards its enactment at the earliest opportunity this year.

NORTHEAST TARRANT CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE ON ITS 50TH AN-
NIVERSARY

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Northeast Tarrant Chamber of Commerce.

The Northeast Tarrant Chamber of Commerce was chartered on December 23, 1957 as "The Greater Richland Area Chamber of Commerce." The initial meeting to establish the chamber was the dream of Gertrude Tarpley and Jack Bean. Tarpley was Northeast Tarrant County's unofficial matriarch and Bean was its first president. At the time, the Richland Industrial Park was in the planning stages and many people were concerned about how it would affect their homes. Seventy-five local civic leaders signed up to participate in the new chamber, coming from as far away as Grapevine and paying an annual fee of \$25.

The organization quickly gained momentum. In the 1960's, the chamber worked to balance commercial, industrial and residential zoning. It also helped expedite the Airport Freeway construction and helped form the Tarrant County Junior College District. The organization's membership also increased, with the group's regular dinners averaging 500 to 600 attendees.

In the late 80's and early 90's, the chamber hit a rough patch as questions arose about the organization's effectiveness.

In 1992, Doug Terry, president of Frost National Bank in Hurst, took over as president and the organization agreed to make changes to promote economic development, retain its membership and offer programs to help member businesses. As a result, the chamber became more visible to city councils and became more effective overall.

In 2001, Robert Hamilton was named president and CEO and was responsible for implementing innovative ideas and new programs to enhance the chamber's position in the North Texas region. A new economic development foundation called Quad Cities DFW was founded in early 2003 with marketing of the four cities and chamber membership as the main priority. Throughout the next few years, the chamber, its programs and materials earned top honors from chamber peers throughout the state.

Today, the chamber has 925 members. As a current member of the Board of Directors, I can attest to the hard work and commitment the Northeast Tarrant Chamber has to its members and community. The chamber has been a key player in helping bring economic development and leadership to local businesses and the Tarrant County community.

I commend the Northeast Tarrant Chamber for its hard work and dedication. Your involvement in the economic development of our region is very crucial and greatly appreciated.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGETOWN HIGH
SCHOOL MEN'S BASKETBALL
TEAM

HON. JEAN SCHMIDT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer congratulations to Georgetown High School in Brown County on winning the Division IV Ohio High School Athletic Association's Men's Basketball Title.

The city of Georgetown has always been attached to the catchphrase "the home of our 18th President, Ulysses S. Grant". Now President Grant will need to share that catchphrase with the 2007 Men's Basketball Champions.

Georgetown, Ohio, home of Ulysses S. Grant and the 2007 State Champion G-Men.

With the win the Georgetown G-Men became the only basketball team in Ohio this year to complete an undefeated season. Though unranked the G-Men never gave up their dream of a perfect season and a state championship.

As Georgetown High School marched their way through the state tournament all of Brown County caught G-Men fever. It seemed when Georgetown took to the basketball court in Columbus Brown County's population crashed to near zero.

Madam Speaker, I salute the school, Coach Underwood and the entire community on their perfect season. Brown County is very proud tonight. Go G-men!

SMALL BUSINESS PROTECTION ACT

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I introduced the bipartisan Small Business Securities Protection Act with my colleague, Representative Steve Israel. This bill follows the recommendations of the SEC's own advisory committee to help small businesses with the costs of implementing just one section of Sarbanes-Oxley—Section 404.

Section 404 requires publicly traded companies to document all of their internal controls. While this is helpful with 90 percent of the companies offering stock in America, it has cost the average small company half of its profit margin. America has lost 90 percent of its foreign securities business as markets in Hong Kong and London advertise themselves as "Sarbanes-Oxley-free." SEC Chairman Cox warned that Section 404's implementation on small businesses has led to an instinct to "go for the capillary," focusing millions of dollars on micro-accounting issues rather than expanding employment. The Chief Finance Officer of Whole Foods recently said "... we spent even more time drilling into insignificant details ... spending millions on accounting research—not on new stores, new products, and new jobs."

Our bill follows the recommendations of the SEC's Advisory Committee to clearly define key accounting terms like "material," "reasonable," "significant," and "sufficient"—terms

that if left undefined lead to millions spent in pointless litigation. The bill would allow consultants advising on Sarbanes-Oxley compliance to actually talk to accountants so differences could be resolved. Finally, the bill provides relief to small enterprises and companies less than one year old to revive the business sector hit hardest by Section 404.

Much of the new foreign securities work has already left our country. Many publicly-traded companies are going private to eliminate millions in Sarbanes-Oxley costs. Our reforms would keep 95 percent of companies under full Section 404 rules. It would relieve the burden on only the newest and smallest companies—who are the most dynamic and innovative parts of our economy.

While other bills offer more far reaching proposals, this one is soundly grounded in the work of the SEC's own Advisory Committee.

SMALL BUSINESS EXPENSING EX- PANSION AND PERMANENCY ACT OF 2007

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, in 2003 Congress and the President enacted the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003. This bill strengthened and expanded the existing ability of small businesses to immediately expense new investment under Section 179 of the tax code. The objective of this law was to further encourage small businesses to make new capital investments, helping to spur economic growth and create jobs in our economy. Like many, I believe we should permanently extend and expand this provision, which is why I am introducing the Small Business Expensing Expansion and Permanency Act of 2007.

The Jobs and Growth Act increased from \$25,000 to \$100,000 the amount of new investment a business can expense—or deduct from income—in a given year. The law also increased—from \$200,000 to \$400,000—the amount of total investment a business can make in a year and still qualify for expensing under Section 179. The original sunset date for expensing was slated for 2007, however we successfully extended the current law expensing limits under the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act in 2006. They will now expire in 2009.

If the higher expensing limits are good for our nation's small businesses over the next two years, they should be good for small businesses indefinitely. This legislation will repeal the 2009 sunset and expand the current expensing limits to \$200,000, indexed for inflation. The current phase out level would also increase, and would begin at \$800,000 of annual investment. Further, the legislation would allow more small businesses to use this powerful expensing ability by reducing the phase out to only 50 cents on every next dollar of investment. Effectively, firms investing up to \$1.2 million per year would be able to use some level of expensing.

Small businesses truly are the backbone of our economy, representing more than half of all jobs and economic output. We should not take small business vitality for granted, however. Rather, our tax laws should support

small businesses in their role as the engines of innovation, growth, and job creation.

Madam Speaker, in difficult economic times, we must do all we can to encourage new investment and job creation by creating certainty and predictability for America's small business owners. The Small Business Expensing Expansion and Permanency Act of 2007 will help accomplish this worthy goal. I applaud the Administration for its consistent leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working with others in Congress to enact this much-needed legislation.

CÉSAR CHÁVEZ'S BIRTHDAY

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, this Saturday, millions of Americans will honor a great American hero—César Chávez—on what would have been his 80th birthday.

César Chávez was a civil rights and human rights leader who learned about the importance of justice early in his life. He would often say: "The love for justice that is in us is not only the best part of our being but it is also the most true to our nature."

After graduating from the eighth grade, a young César Chávez went to work in the fields as a migrant farm worker to support his family. In 1962, Chávez and Dolores Huerta founded the National Farm Workers Association, later to become the United Farm Workers. Chávez had the foresight to train his union workers and then to send many of them into the cities where they were to use the boycott and picket as their weapon.

Chávez was able to successfully organize farm workers because of his tireless leadership and nonviolent tactics that helped pass laws which would permit farm workers to organize into unions and allow collective bargaining agreements. He also helped make people aware of the struggles of farm workers for fair wages and safer working conditions. His movement was the beginning of La Causa ("The Cause"), a cause that was supported by organized labor, religious groups, minorities, and students.

César Chávez, the founder and president of the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO, died peacefully in his sleep on April 23, 1993. On August 8, 1994, César Chávez was posthumously awarded the Medal of Freedom, our country's highest civilian honor, by President Clinton. In the words of President Clinton: "He was for his own people a Moses figure . . . who, with faith and discipline, soft spoken humility and amazing inner strength, led a very courageous life."

César Chávez left our world better than he found it, and his legacy inspires not just the 43 million Latinos in this country, but every person on this earth who believes in non-violence as a means to achieve social change. He truly was, in the words of Senator Robert Kennedy, "one of the heroic figures of our time."

IN REMEMBRANCE OF CORNEL
"CONNIE" TERECK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of Cornel "Connie" Tereck, whose fierce dedication to family, friends and country serves as a model for all who have been blessed by his presence.

As a member of the Greatest Generation, Connie served in the United States Navy during World War II, where he protected our country with great pride and courage. After retiring from the service, Connie carried this commitment to the security of our country into his professional life, as he went to work for the Department of Defense. He proudly worked at the Defense Contract Administration Service Region until his retirement in 1987.

Connie was known as a man of honesty, intelligence and wit, not only to friends and family but to the whole community. He took interest in and care of the people surrounding him, and his deep devotion to, and commitment for his family and friends stands as a shining example to us all. He was a beloved husband of 57 years to his wife, Laura, and his legacy will continue through three children and five grandchildren.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring Cornel "Connie" Tereck as a true example of the spirit upon which this great Nation is built. We have lost a loving father, a faithful husband, a courageous serviceman and a wonderful neighbor, but his caring personality and loving devotion continue to inspire everyone that has crossed paths with him.

THE 2006 COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES AND THE PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, this morning the Committee on Foreign Affairs held a hearing on the recently-released 2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices prepared by the Department of State. Over the past three decades, we have seen a steady increase in the quality, candor, and scope of the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. In fighting the plague of human rights abuse, sunlight is often the best disinfectant. On the whole, the Country Reports shine brightly into some very dark corners. We owe a debt of gratitude to the men and women of the Department of State who work so hard to compile them.

Although we do not claim to be perfect and are ourselves subject to the universal ideals we espouse, the United States continues to be the world's most prominent champion of fundamental human rights.

This Congress, I have re-introduced the Global Online Freedom Act of 2007 which seeks to promote and defend human rights re-

lated to this increasingly influential communication medium. I am pleased to note that the State Department has already implemented one of the action items of this proposed legislation by including important additional information in the Country Reports, such as the domestic legal authority for internet restrictions and penalties imposed for the exercise of free speech via the Internet. This information is critical to efforts to address Internet repression in countries like Vietnam, China, Tunisia, and Belarus, and to convince governments that free speech restrictions are contrary to their national interests.

It is worth noting that most of the major human rights efforts undertaken by the United States Government in recent decades—including the Country Reports themselves—have been the result of Congressional mandates: The Jackson-Vanik Amendment; The International Religious Freedom Act; the Torture Victims Relief Act; the Lautenberg Amendment; the Trafficking Victims Protection Act; the North Korean Human Rights Act. These were Congressional initiatives undertaken in the face of skepticism—and sometimes outright opposition—by the Executive branch.

For example, I recall when then-Assistant Secretary Shattuck appeared before my subcommittee 10 years ago to oppose the International Religious Freedom Act. He argued that he was "particularly concerned" that the bill would "harm the very people it seeks to help" because it would "legislate a hierarchy of human rights into our laws" that could "severely damage our efforts to ensure that all aspects of basic civil and political rights . . . are protected." Not surprisingly, this doomsday prophecy did not come to pass.

To the contrary, once such issues have been forced by legislation, the Executive branch eventually internalizes, and sometimes embraces, those human rights priorities. For example, religious freedom and trafficking are now mainstream policy priorities that receive far more international attention and action than they did before the laws were on the books. Other mandates are embraced more slowly, such as the refugee title of the North Korean Human Rights Act, which has not yet been adequately implemented.

There are many countries where the seriousness of human rights violations deserves condemnation, including Zimbabwe with its recent horrific crackdown on the political opposition, North Korea, Eritrea, Belarus, Burma, Saudi Arabia, Cuba, Ethiopia and Iran. The Report provides disturbing details about how these countries in particular—though not exclusively—continue to thwart universal principles of respect for fundamental human rights. However, I will limit myself to focusing the spotlight on three human rights violators in particular—China, Sudan, and Vietnam.

This year's report repeats the assessment of prior years that the Chinese Government's human rights record "remained poor," but even when many of us thought the situation could not get much worse, it adds that the Chinese record "in certain areas deteriorated." One of those areas often ignored or downplayed by the international community is the appalling lengths to which the government will go to enforce its one-child per couple limit.

The Chinese government has a long record of oppressing its people, especially women, through its population control program. Beijing does not deny levying huge fines against people who have children the State deems illegal.

In fact, at a hearing that I chaired several years ago, Secretary Dewey testified that "couples who give birth to an unapproved child are likely to be assessed a social compensation fee, which can range from one-half the local average annual household income to as much as ten times that level." Indeed this is a horrific government that decides which children are legal and which are illegal—that is, which children will be allowed to live and which will not.

These acts are truly a crime against humanity executed in conjunction with the UNFPA. The UNFPA has funded, provided crucial technical support and, most importantly, provided cover for massive crimes against humanity of forced abortion and involuntary sterilization. Tens of millions of children have been slaughtered—their mothers robbed of their children by the State. This barbaric policy makes brothers and sisters illegal, and makes women the pawns of the population control cadres.

This barbaric policy has now given rise to a new problem for China. An article published in the *Guardian* several years ago, stated that China could find itself dealing with as many as 40 million single men by the year 2020 because of the one child policy. According to the article Li Weixiong, a population advisor to the Chinese government, said a cultural preference for boys was creating an artificial disparity between the number of boys and girls representing "a serious threat to building a well-off society." He also said that the lack of women in China will lead to a dramatic rise in prostitution and the trafficking of women. "This is by no means a sensational prediction," he stated.

On that point Mr. Li is right. In fact, the combined effect of the birth limitation policies and the traditional preference for male children resulted in the disproportionate abortion of female unborn children at a rate of 116.9 to 100 overall, and a shocking 151.9 to 100 for second pregnancies. As a direct result of these ongoing crimes against humanity, China today is missing millions of girls—girls who were murdered in the womb simply because they are girls. A couple of years ago, the State Department suggested that as many as 100 million girls of all ages are missing—that is to say, they should be alive and well and are not, a direct consequence of the government's one-child policy. This genocide constitutes one of humanity's worst blights, and a far greater peril to peace and security than is being credited at this time.

The world is all too aware of the continuing genocide in Sudan, appropriately identified as such in the Country Reports. Current reports estimate that the conflicts in Darfur and in Southern Sudan have resulted in the deaths of close to 2.4 million people and left over 4 million others either internally displaced or as refugees. When confronted with such numbers, one must also take into account the attending human rights violations, including the abuse of children, extensive trafficking in persons, and the acts of torture and violence against women.

Just two weeks ago, on March 14th, I introduced a House resolution calling on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to immediately and unconditionally release several political prisoners and prisoners of conscience who have been arrested in a recent wave of government oppression. One of those individuals specifically mentioned in the

resolution is Father Nguyen Van Ly, who has already spent over 13 years in prison since 1983 for his advocacy of religious freedom and democracy in Vietnam. Tomorrow, Fr. Ly will be given a kangaroo trial for exercising his fundamental human rights, and he faces 20 years in prison in the likely event that he is convicted.

This is a case worthy of our particular attention as the Vietnamese Government audaciously resumed its past oppression of human rights after Congress agreed to Vietnam becoming an official member of the World Trade Organization in December 2006. A focus of today's hearing was the promotion of human rights in U.S. foreign policy, and it is important to keep in mind that those of us in Congress play an important role in our country's foreign policy. While substantial criticism was leveled during the hearing at the Administration for its shortcomings in promoting and defending human rights, those of us in Congress should also look in the mirror and ask what priority we give to human rights, both individually and as an institution.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DELORES TERRANO

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Delores "Dee Dee" Terrano and congratulate her for her well-deserved recognition of her work with the United States Postal Service.

Dee Dee began her career with the United States Postal Service in 1984 as a distribution clerk. After showing extraordinary capability and exemplary leadership skills, she was promoted to Manager of Consumer Affairs/Claims for the Nevada-Sierra District. Under Dee Dee's leadership the Nevada-Sierra district was the top-ranked office in the country for processing customer claims. Dee Dee worked tirelessly with the Nevada Congressional Delegation for the Nevada-Sierra District as a representative of postal issues. In this post, she was knowledgeable and very capable at her job. However, what distinguishes Dee Dee is the care and sensitivity she showed towards the needs of my constituent and my staff. Moreover, Dee Dee was also selected to work on the inaugural team that developed the first national call center for the Postal Service.

Dee Dee currently serves as Emergency Preparedness Manager, the job which Dee Dee sees as extremely important to Nevada and she is excited to have the opportunity to gain knowledge. In this role she has distinguished herself by developing and executing evacuation drills in Las Vegas and Reno.

Over the course of her long and distinguished career, Dee Dee has received numerous accolades; including, a Postmaster General Award for Automation Readability Leadership, two national communication awards, a national best practice award, and an outstanding merit award for media and communication.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Dee Dee Terrano. Her dedication to the USPS is commendable and I wish her continued success with her future endeavors.

RETIREMENT COMMENDATION FOR MRS. M. JEAN BUTLER

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to extend my most sincere "Congratulations" to Mrs. M. Jean Butler on her retirement from JCB Construction, Incorporated. I wish to join with her many friends, family members and admirers in recognizing Mrs. Butler on this special occasion.

The years of dedicated and productive service she has demonstrated have set a standard in the construction industry that will not soon be surpassed. In an industry dominated by men, Mrs. Butler established ICB Construction, Inc. to be the largest African American female owned firm in Central Florida. Expanding on a family legacy of entrepreneurship in the construction industry, Mrs. Butler has developed a reputation as a savvy businesswoman who's professional and quality work within the last 20 years have been modeled by other organizations. I commend her for her setting an example and remaining true to her vision.

Mrs. Butler is the recipient of many honors and awards of which she is most deserving. She is a leader in this community who takes pride in giving back. Her wisdom and words of encouragement to everyone she encounters has endeared her to us all. It has been said, "To whom much is given, much is required." I extend my best wishes for continued happiness and abundant blessings during her retirement. It is my tremendous honor to recognize Mrs. Butler for her years of service and for being a productive citizen in this community. Her valuable time, efforts and accomplishments are greatly appreciated and will never go unnoticed.

HONORING THE NORTHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL RED REGIMENT

HON. MARK E. SOUDER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. SOUDER. Madam Speaker, today I am delighted to honor the NorthWood High School Red Regiment for being the only Indiana high school invited to march in the Washington, D.C., Memorial Day parade on Monday, May 28, 2007.

The NorthWood High School Bands, under the expert direction of Mr. Barry Houser, have enjoyed unparalleled success over the last six years. Their accomplishments have gained regional and national prominence, and include the following: Chosen to represent the State of Indiana in the National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, D.C., May '07; Chosen as one of Indiana's bands to partner with the great Purdue University Bands in 2007; 74th Annual Hollywood Christmas Parade, Hollywood, CA, 2006; Disneyland Main Street Parade, CA, November 2006; Hollywood Bands at the Bowl, Hollywood, CA, November 2006; Indiana Music Educator's Association State Convention Wind Ensemble Performance, January 2004; Outback Bowl Halftime Show, 2500 students nationwide, Tampa, Florida '04; Outback

Bowl Parade, 2nd Place, Tampa, Florida '03; Walt Disney World's Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Parade '03; Indianapolis 500 Opening Ceremonies Spectacle of Bands '03; Chicago's Target Thanksgiving Day Parade '02; Indianapolis 500 Opening Ceremonies Spectacle of Bands '02; Indianapolis 500 Festival Parade '02.

The Red Regiment continues to achieve the very highest awards everywhere they perform and have been an ISSMA State Finalist in 1991, 1998, 1999, and 2003. In addition, the bands have earned consistent gold ratings in all marching, concert, and jazz ISSMA contests.

The NorthWood Bands have had the opportunity to perform with the internationally famous Dallas Brass, open for Maynard Ferguson and His Big Bop Nouveau Band, and also appear on the front cover of the JW Pepper's Sheet Music Magazine, which was distributed nationwide.

I congratulate the following staff and members of the NorthWood High School Red Regiment on all of their achievements and am proud to have them representing Indiana in the Washington, D.C. Memorial Day parade:

Barry L. Houser, Director of Bands; Jeanne Focht, Performing Arts Secretary; Tom Schiefer, Staff; Cristal Osbourn, Guard Director.

Abel, Stephen; Ammerman, Carter; Beachy, Stasia; Bechtold, Amanda; Brovont, Natasha; Campbell, Tyler; Capre, Laure; Carney, Samantha; Christianson, Taylor; Clark, Felisha; Clark, Rebecca; Dougherty, Sarah; Douwsma, Seth; Eagan, Harlan; Figueroa, Lisette.

Ford, Alicia; Ghigliotto, Bianca; Ghigliotto, Brenna; Grabill, Jacob; Hall, Samantha; Hapner, Edith; Henke, Corrie; Hochstetter, Chandra; Huber, Danielle; Hurst, Colton; Hurst, Trenna; Johnson, Brett; Johnson, Taryn; Kaufman, Michael; Koch, Stacie.

Korsmo, Amanda; Korsmo, Ashley; Kronk, Shawn; Kurtz, Hannah; Leavitt, Benjamin; Lengacher, Katelyn; Lentz, Kendra; Loutzenhiser, Samantha; Lucas, Ann; Maltos, Marisella; Marsh, Andrew; Martin, Andrea; McDonald, Jennifer; McFerren, Amanda; McFerren, Molly.

McWilliams, Hannah; Messick, Patrick; Metzler, Alisha; Miller, Drew; Minnich, Kimberly; Minnich, Kristen; Moorhead, Ian; Nelson, Stephanie; Nisley, Garret; Nissley, Bradlynn; Palmer, Tiffany; Peterson, Ben; Phillips, Tyler; Reed, Adam.

Reid, Tabitha; Reid, Thomas; Rensberger, Heather; Reynolds, Britney; Riege, Kyle; Riege, Matthew; Schaffer, Lucas; Schieber, Brett; Schloke, Kirsten; Schmitt, Ashley; Schmitt, Christina; Schmitt, Katelyn; Schmitt, Michael; Schmitt, Rochelle; Smith, Kayla.

Smith, Kyle; Smith, Lindsay; Sonner, Jaclyn; Stahl, Amanda; Stahl, Jeremy; Stephens, Stewart; Stevens, Derrick; Stutzman, Shelby; Stutzman, Trenton; Taylor, Qwatecia; Teske, Bradley.

Truex, Corey; Wakefield, Karen; Wegmiller, Jillian; Weldy, Kory; Wenger, Rachel; Wilson, Breanna; Yoder, Andrew; Yoder, Emily; Yoder, Sarah; Zimmerman, Krystal.

RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ACT OF 2007

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1401) to improve the security of railroads, public transportation, and over-the-road buses in the United States, and for other purposes:

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to express my strong opposition to section three of amendment No. 18 offered to H.R. 1401, the Rail and Public Transportation Security Act of 2007, which would undermine a long standing principle of Federal uniformity in the area of railroad safety law. The railroads have long had Federal preemption from a variety of State-level laws because railroads, as a national system, could not function effectively under a patchwork of laws from 50 different States.

Regulation of rail safety must be uniform nationwide. The Federal Rail Safety Act was not intended to create minimum standards for rail safety; it was intended to create uniform standards governing railroad safety because Congress recognized that given the interstate and interdependent nature of the industry, uniformity was essential to effective safety regulation.

It would be counterproductive for States and localities to impose widely disparate safety requirements that could hinder a railroad's ability to operate efficiently across State and local boundaries. In 1970, Congress found that the railroad industry: "... has a truly interstate character calling for a uniform body of regulation and enforcement. . . . The integral operating parts of these companies cross many State lines. In addition to the obvious areas of rolling stock and employees, such elements as operating rules, signal systems, power supply systems, and communication systems of a single company normally cross numerous State lines. To subject a carrier to enforcement before a number of different State administrative and judicial systems in several areas of operation could well result in an undue burden on interstate commerce." (H.R. Report No. 91-1194 (1970))

Congress' reasoning was sound then, and that reasoning remains sound today.

In conclusion, I am concerned by the fact that this sweeping provision was labeled "technical" in nature. In addition, there have been no hearings on this topic and no analysis of its effects on the railroad industry and interstate commerce. Federal preemption is vital to fluid daily operations of the railroads which we all rely on to move goods efficiently across the country. In fact, we should not forget that, this is precisely why the founding fathers included important interstate commerce protections in the Constitution.

TRIBUTE TO WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Women's History Month. Though we have designated March as the particular month for this celebration, we must pause everyday to salute the spirit, courage, and contributions of women in our own country and around the world.

With the election of the new Speaker of the House, our own Baltimore native Nancy Pelosi, we brought down another barrier and took another step towards equal and enfranchised participation of women in government. On her swearing-in day, Speaker Pelosi said "It says to women everywhere that not only a glass ceiling but a marble ceiling can be broken and that anything is possible." Out of the 180 countries that directly elect representatives to national legislatures, the United States ranks 60th in terms of female representation. Of the nearly 600 persons who have served in a President's Cabinet since George Washington's presidency, only 29 have been women. We have come a long way in giving a voice to the many disenfranchised and under-represented communities in our nation but the fight for social advancement is not over.

Maryland has been called home by many of America's trailblazing women. This month, Rachel Carson, who spent many years in Maryland and later died in Silver Spring, would have celebrated her 100th birthday. Ms. Carson received her masters degree in Zoology from John's Hopkins University and penned many feature articles on Natural History for the Baltimore Sun. But she was best known as the author of Silent Spring—the book that pulled back the curtain on the human and environmental impacts of chemical pesticides such as DDT. Facing a rash of criticism and in some cases harassment, Ms. Carson persevered and became known as the mother of the environmental movement. In 1964, her life was cut short by a disease that today has a grip on far too many lives, breast cancer.

Madam Speaker, the first female President of Ireland and former United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights, Mary Robinson, once said, "In a society where the rights and potential of women are constrained, no man can be truly free. He may have power, but he will not have freedom." Celebrating women's history gives girls and women the courage to dream bigger and gives us all the opportunity to redouble our efforts in helping them realize these dreams. I salute the great women of our nation and encourage the next generation to further the cause of equality and freedom.

5-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF RADIO FREE AFGHANISTAN

HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, January 30, 2007, marked the 5-year anniversary of Radio

Free Afghanistan's first broadcast. Five years ago, this service of Radio Free Europe began broadcasting 12 hours a day in Dari and Pashto, to millions of Afghans who had been thirsting for legitimate news and information.

Radio Free Afghanistan had operated during the Soviet invasion, but was then unwisely stopped. The Taliban's Radio Shariat filled the vacuum—broadcasting a steady stream of hate. After the Taliban's fall, Radio Free Afghanistan was restarted and has established itself as the leading broadcaster, with nearly 60 percent of Afghan adults listening.

Madam Speaker, it was Congress who took the lead in creating this essential service. A bipartisan group of Members passed my Radio Free Afghanistan Act of 2001 quickly after September 11th.

As Afghans have confronted many challenges over the past 5 years, Radio Free Afghanistan has been there—and will continue to be in the years to come, offering a voice of freedom and moderation.

TRIBUTE TO BOB BECKWITH

HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Bob Beckwith on the upcoming celebration of his 75th Birthday on April 16th. Bob personifies the very best of the FDNY and has been a source of strength for so many grieving Americans, whether he was standing with President Bush at Ground Zero just days after September 11th or traveling across the country to raise funds for the New York Firefighters Burn Center Foundation. I wish him all the best and I am proud to call him my friend!

CONGRATULATING BENJAMIN CLINE FOR EARNING HIS EAGLE SCOUT AWARD

HON. STEVAN PEARCE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. PEARCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Benjamin Cline for recently earning his Eagle Scout Award, the highest award in Scouting. His keen interest, work ethic and drive in the pursuit of excellence have led Ben to complete all the ranks along the trail to Eagle, including 29 merit badges. Benjamin's Eagle Scout Service Project was completed by installing two flag poles at Belen's Alexander Airport. He has enjoyed Boy Scouts through many camping trips, building his own raft and river rafting, canoeing 50 miles down the Rio Grande and bicycling over 100 miles.

Ben is the son of Doug and Ann Marie Cline of Los Lunas and a junior at Belen High School. At BHS he holds the rank of Lt. JG in Naval ROTC and is the Color Guard commander. He is involved in the new Sea Scouts Ship recently formed at Belen High School as well as with MESA. He is a member of the First United Methodist Church Handbell Choir. Ben also holds a second degree Black Belt at

Belen Goju Ryu Karate School. He attended Dennis Chavez Elementary then was home-schooled for several years before entering Belen High School. He has two sisters who are currently attending UNM in Albuquerque. After graduation in 2008, Ben plans to attend San Juan Community College and earn two associate degrees—Aviation and Law Enforcement. He then plans to attend the University of Minnesota to complete a BS degree in Aviation Law Enforcement and begin a related career.

Ben encourages all young men to explore the Scouting experience—"It has helped me grow in outdoor and leadership skills and helped to mold my character and make me a better person. The Scouting program teaches valuable life skills."

I am proud to recognize Benjamin Cline for his accomplishments. It is my honor as a Member of Congress to have the chance to congratulate this outstanding young man on an achievement he will celebrate the rest of his life. Congratulations Ben Cline, your family, your congressman, and your country are all proud of your achievement.

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF GEORGE DAVID

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mr. George David, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of United Technologies Corporation, who received the Leadership in Human Capital Practices award at the Third Annual CNBC Executive Leadership Award ceremony on January 31, 2007. While this prestigious award seeks to honor executives "who best exemplify leadership in human capital practices within their organization by cultivating highly productive and satisfied workforces," no award can fully appreciate the impact that his leadership has had on the lives of thousands of American citizens across the country.

The Employee Scholar Program he created has allowed UTC employees to obtain more than 20,000 academic degrees free of charge. Since 1996, Mr. David's advocacy of the \$600,000,000 investment by United Technologies Corporation in this program has not only enriched the lives of his fellow employees, but has benefited every corner of our great country. The United States of America is more vibrant, dynamic, and competitive because of the Employee Scholar Program he created more than 10 years ago. Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in congratulating George David for receiving this prestigious award.

RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 27, 2007

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the

state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1401) to improve the security of railroads, public transportation, and over-the-road buses in the United States, and for other purposes:

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1401, the "Rail and Public Transportation Security Act."

Since the attacks on 9/11, we have seen the tragic consequences when the vulnerabilities of rail and public transportation systems are exploited, including in London and Madrid. We cannot afford to wait for an attack here in America before we make rail and transit security the priority it needs to be.

Tens of billions of dollars have been spent on aviation security since 9/11, yet only \$660 million has been devoted to mass transit security. While we all agree that air travel needs to be as safe as possible, we cannot forget about the security of the millions of people who are riding subways, trains, and busses everyday.

This bipartisan legislation will help to make our Nation's railways and public transportation systems safer by requiring the Departments of Homeland Security and Transportation to develop a national strategy for the security of these systems after assessing the significant risks associated with them. The bill would authorize \$6 billion over the next four years for grant programs and it would require training for rail, transit, and bus employees about prevention, preparation, and response to a terrorist attack. H.R. 1401 increases the number of full-time surface transportation inspectors and it requires the development of regulations for the transportation of sensitive materials including the possibilities of alternative routes.

I am especially pleased to note that this bill provides critical whistleblower protections for DHS, DoT, and rail and public transportation employees who report security risks or violations. Just this month the House passed legislation that, among other provisions, extended important whistleblower protections to employees of intelligence agencies and to federal contractors. It is important that we protect those who by blowing the whistle on misconduct or wrongdoing help keep this country safe.

Our constituents should feel as safe as possible whether they commute daily on a train or bus or whether they are occasional travelers on public transportation systems. Passage of the bill before us today is an important step in enhancing the security of the Nation's mass transit systems.

I urge my colleagues to vote aye.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF DAVID MABIE

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. David Mabie on the occasion of his retirement after 40 years of dedicated public service to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Mr. Mabie began his career at the Waynesboro Police Department, as one of the original officers of the newly formed Prince William

County division. He served there as a detective until moving to the Commonwealth Attorney's Office in 1980. Throughout his time there, Mr. Mabie investigated major cases involving capital charges, and was successful in bringing convictions in all but one case.

In 1991, Mr. Mabie was elected as Clerk of the Circuit Court in Prince William County, where he has tirelessly worked for the citizens of Northern Virginia. As Circuit Court Clerk, Mr. Mabie has been responsible for organizing regular staff meetings, assisting in the automation of land records, and instituting a dispute resolution program which strives to resolve family conflicts outside the courtroom.

Mr. Mabie has been involved with numerous civic organizations such as the United Way, Regional Jail Board, and the Chamber of Commerce. He will retire on April 1, 2007, and join his wife, Copper, managing the Red Door Art Center in Louisa, Virginia. He also plans to work part-time with the Prince William County Sheriff's Office two days a week.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Dave Mabie for his years of service and dedication to the Northern Virginia community. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Mabie on his retirement and wishing him the best of luck in all future endeavors.

THE "SAFE AMERICAN ROADS ACT OF 2007"

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of the "Safe American Roads Act of 2007," introduced today by the gentlewoman from Kansas (Mrs. BOYDA). This legislation ensures the safety of the traveling public on America's roads as our Nation seeks to honor its commitments under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Since 1995, the opening of the border between the United States and Mexico to cross-border motor vehicle traffic has been delayed due to concerns over whether opening the border would adversely impact safety on U.S. roads. While the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has made considerable progress over the last decade, several unanswered questions remain about whether the necessary systems are in place today to hold Mexico-domiciled motor carriers to the same strict Federal standards that govern U.S. commercial truck operations.

It is because of these unanswered questions that we must introduce this bill. In 2001, Congress passed the FY 2002 Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (Public Law 107-87), which prohibited DOT from using funds to grant long-haul operating authority to Mexico-domiciled motor carriers until 22 safety requirements had been met. Section 350 of this Act set forth a comprehensive list of vehicle, driver, and safety management requirements, including drug and alcohol testing, hours of service, driver qualifications, vehicle specifications and maintenance, and safety management practices.

The DOT Inspector General (IG) was required to review whether the Department was

prepared to comply with several of these provisions. This audit was completed, as well as several follow-up audits. However, independent certification of actual compliance with all of the conditions set forth in Section 350 was not required, and has not occurred.

It is well established that Mexican law does not require many fundamental elements of highway safety that are required for U.S. drivers. Mexican drivers are not subject to hours-of-service restrictions comparable to those governing U.S. drivers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that working hours for truck drivers in Mexico go far beyond anyone's estimate of a safe, reasonable limit. Drug and alcohol testing is also an area of concern, because Mexico does not have certified drug testing labs. To comply with U.S. regulations, drug test collection facilities in Mexico send specimens to labs in the United States for processing. Chain-of-custody issues make compliance with U.S. drug and alcohol requirements very difficult to gauge. Further, many challenges remain in implementing the requirement established in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) (Public Law 109-59), that all Mexican drivers be subjected to the same rigorous criminal and security background checks that U.S. drivers undergo in order to be permitted to transport hazardous materials.

Despite these concerns, DOT has announced plans for a pilot program to grant 100 Mexico-domiciled trucking companies the authority to conduct long-haul operations in the United States. If foreign carriers do not comply fully with all U.S. motor carrier safety laws, the safety of the American traveling public is placed in jeopardy. This pilot program is the first test of whether the provisions of Section 350, as well as other safety measures, exist in the real world, and are not just satisfied on paper.

H.R. _____, the Safe American Roads Act of 2007, will restore accountability and fairness to the process of opening the border, and ensure that the U.S. proceeds with caution while outstanding safety issues are verified. The Act prohibits DOT from granting authority to Mexico-domiciled motor carriers to operate beyond the commercial zones on the U.S.-Mexico border, except under a pilot program that meets the requirements set out in the bill. The bill also requires the following: The pilot program must meet all 22 requirements of Section 350 (Public Law 107-87) and all requirements set forth under Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21) (Public Law 105-85) relating to pilot programs; DOT must provide, prior to initiation of the pilot program, an opportunity for public comment on the details of a pilot program, including the measures in place to protect the health and safety of the public, enforcement measures, penalties for non-compliance, and safety metrics to evaluate the pilot; a pilot program to grant long-haul operating authority to Mexico-domiciled motor carriers must be terminated after one year of enactment of this Act; the IG must review the pilot program to determine whether Mexico-domiciled motor carriers participating in the pilot program are in full compliance with U.S. motor carrier safety laws, including the provisions detailed in Section 350, and report his findings to Congress within 90 days of completion of the pilot program; and DOT must report to Congress on the results of the pilot program within 60 days of completion of the pilot program.

This bill also prohibits the Secretary from initiating a pilot program until U.S. motor carriers are allowed to begin comparable operations in Mexico. DOT has received nearly 900 applications from Mexican carriers seeking operating authority in the U.S. Under the pilot program, 100 U.S. companies are to receive reciprocal authority to operate in Mexico, yet to date DOT has received very few applications from U.S. firms. DOT estimates that the Mexican government will not be ready to process the applications of U.S. carriers for at least six months. This bill will ensure that the United States is not placed at a competitive disadvantage with Mexico under a cross-border pilot program.

In 1999, Congress passed the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act (Public Law 106-159). In this Act, Congress mandated that in carrying out its duties, the Administration "shall consider the assignment and maintenance of safety as the highest priority." We must continue to use this as our guiding principle in the oversight of motor carrier transportation. Each year, more than 5,000 people are killed in large truck crashes on our Nation's roads, and more than 100,000 are seriously injured. These statistics are already far too high. We cannot afford to take a step backward in terms of safety.

DAVID GUERRA GALVAN

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, I stand here today to honor and remember a soldier, civil servant, loving husband, father, and grandfather, David Guerra Galvan.

David passed away on Friday, March 23, 2007 at Kaiser Hospital in Fontana, California.

He was born in San Bernardino, California, and was a resident of Rialto, my hometown, for 50 years.

David served his country in the Army during WWII as a Paratrooper in the 101st Airborne Division. He was honorably discharged with Distinguished Service from July 1944 to June 1946 and Good Conduct medals during the European Occupation. During his European service, he was transferred to the 82nd Airborne Division and assigned to a special detachment for the personal protection of General Dwight Eisenhower.

After his military service, David attended Skadron College of Business in Los Angeles. He began working for the Federal Government at Norton Air Force Base in the Defense Communications Agency as a Data Communications Operator, subsequently becoming Supervisor of the AUTODIN Switch Center. He retired after 40 years of highly commended and outstanding performance for the Air Force in November 1990.

David was an active member of the community and a close personal friend. I would often see him and his family at the 9 o'clock mass at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church in Rialto.

David loved to hear our daughter Jennifer singing Mariachi Music, and to dance with his beloved wife, Carmen.

After a tough day, I could always count on David to call and ask me, "Hey Trooper, how

you doing?" I will always appreciate all of the support and friendship he has given me over the years.

David is survived by his wife of 54 years, Carmen; daughter Debby Galvan; sons Jeff and Randy; grandchildren Leanne, Jason, Erick, Joshua, Lauren, and Jack; sister Mary Valdez; and brother Joseph.

Let us take the time to pay tribute to a wonderful man. Let us celebrate the life he lived and the example he led.

Although he is no longer with us, David's legacy and spirit will continue to live on through the lives of everyone he has touched.

The thoughts and prayers of my wife Barbara, my family and I are with his family at this time.

INTRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT AND ECONOMIC CONVERSION ACT OF 2007

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today, I am again introducing the Nuclear Disarmament and Economic Conversion Act (NDECA), as I have done since 1994, after working with the residents who were responsible for a ballot initiative passed by D.C. voters in 1993. NDECA will require the United States to disable and dismantle its nuclear weapons when all other nations possessing nuclear weapons enact laws to do the same. NDECA further provides that when U.S. nuclear weapons are dismantled, the resources for supporting nuclear weapon programs would be used for our growing human and infrastructure needs, such as housing, health care, Social Security and the environment.

Tragically, instead of nuclear disarmament, nations around the world have increased in efforts to seek or acquire nuclear capability. Last week, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1737 (2006) under Article 41 of the Charter's Chapter VIII, imposing sanctions on Iran for failure to halt uranium enrichment and mandating that Iran cease all sensitive nuclear activities. China's acquisition of nuclear weapons particularly underscores the dangerous spread of these weapons as a potent destabilizing force in world affairs. North Korea, at least in part in response to early aggressive talk by this administration responded in a dangerously paranoid fashion by announcing that it is expanding its nuclear capabilities, and today few doubt that North Korea has acquired a nuclear device. The North Korean threat has become so serious that the Administration recently reversed course and agreed to freeze North Korea's nuclear program in exchange for 50,000 tons of heavy fuel oil. India and Pakistan have moved back from the precipice of several years ago but each remains poised with nuclear weapons.

The invasion of Iraq and the resistance of the Administration to end the war have cost the United States much of its leadership on the nuclear proliferation and other urgent international issues. This country would be non-credible in dissuading other nations who aspire to become or remain nuclear powers if we ourselves took greater initiative in dismantling

our own nuclear weapons program. We moved in the right direction when the Senate ratified the Moscow Treaty in 2003, which provides that by 2012 both the U.S. and Russia will reduce their long-range warheads two-thirds from approximately 6,000 warheads each to 2,200. However, the Administration has failed to build on this effort. According to a recent study, *Securing The Bomb: An Agenda for Action* (May, 2004; prepared by the Belfer Center, Harvard University Kennedy School of Government): Total nuclear-threat-reduction spending remains less than one quarter of one percent of the U.S. military budget. Indeed, on average, the Bush administration requests for nuclear-threat-reduction spending over FY 2002–2005 have been less, in real terms, than the last Clinton administration request, made long before the 9/11 attacks ever occurred. Instead, the Administration has moved to increase the country's nuclear capacity.

However, the problem today even more complicated than nuclear disarmament by nation states. The greatest threat today is from inadequately defended and guarded sites in many countries where there is enough material to make nuclear weapons and many opportunities for terrorists or nations without weapons to secure nuclear materials. Astonishingly, because of the absence of presidential leadership, less nuclear material was seized in the two years following the 9/11 attacks than in the 2 years immediately preceding the attacks (*Securing The Bomb: An Agenda for Action*, May 2004).

In my work on the Homeland Security Committee, I know that threats from nuclear proliferation and available nuclear material are more dangerous in the post 9/11 era than in 1994, when I first introduced the Nuclear Disarmament and Economic Conversion Act. It is more urgent than ever to begin closing down nuclear capability here and around the world.

Today our country has 45 million people still without health insurance, a long list of other urgent domestic needs put on the back burner following the invasion of Iraq and large tax cuts to wealthy people and corporations, an economy burdened with a dangerous deficit, and millions of Americans pushed back into poverty during the last four years. As the only nation that has used nuclear weapons in war and still possesses the largest arsenal, the U.S. has an obligation to begin the arduous process of leading the world in the transfer of nuclear weapons funds to urgent domestic needs.

RECOGNIZING THE COATESVILLE VARSITY MEN'S CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM FOR ITS UNDEFEATED 2006 SEASON

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the coaching staff and talented members of the varsity men's cross-country team at Coatesville High School in Coatesville, PA, on their highly successful and championship 2006 season.

The 7 varsity members of the Coatesville cross-country team won the Ches-Mont

League, the Steel City Invitational, and the Pennsylvania Division I championships. The team then went on to earn an invitation to the prestigious Nike Team Nationals in Portland, OR, where they outraced more than 39 other teams from around the country on their way to an undefeated season and a national title.

Led by Head Coach Keith Andrew and Assistant Coach Dave Lapp, the team has made the Coatesville Area School District and its communities very proud of their dedication, hard work and determination to win. The 7 members of the team deserving of recognition are: seniors Kyle Dawson, Owen Dawson, Tom Pannulla, Jason Leonard, and Sean Ward; junior Andrew Mahoney; and sophomore Chris Rosato. These terrific young men have brought great honor, respect and distinction to their school, communities and families and are most deserving of this body's recognition.

So I ask, Madam Speaker, that my colleagues join me in congratulating the Coatesville varsity men's cross-country team for their outstanding season. They worked extremely hard and deserve all that they have achieved.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF SERGEANT ALESSANDRO CARBONARO

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember Marine Sergeant Alessandro Carbonaro. He served his country tirelessly until his death on May 10, 2006. The loss of this young, dedicated hero is felt by not only those who knew him, but also those who have been touched by the life that he led.

Sgt. Carbonaro was raised in Bethesda, Maryland, the only child of Fulvio and Gilda Carbonaro. He was a private, headstrong, and independent child who held his family dear. Over the years, Sgt. Carbonaro developed a passion for music, history, and writing. After graduating from Sandy Spring Friends School, Sgt. Carbonaro shocked his family and friends by volunteering to join the United States Marine Corps. He told his parents that he felt a strong sense of duty to his country and wanted to live the life that he envisioned.

Sgt. Carbonaro enlisted in the Marine Corps during the summer of 1998. He initially committed himself to five years of active duty. After September 11, 2001, however, his resolve strengthened and he felt an obligation to reenlist. Sgt. Carbonaro set his sights on the elite Marines Reconnaissance Unit, a status obtained by fewer than one in five who attempts it. By September 2004, he had been deployed to Iraq with the 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion. Sgt. Carbonaro was eventually awarded the Purple Heart.

Upon completion of his first deployment, Sgt. Carbonaro returned to Maryland and married Gilda Maria Arroyo on May 28, 2005. In March 2006, he returned to Iraq and was chosen to lead a unit of younger Marines. Sgt. Carbonaro did not regard these men as soldiers, but as brothers. His moral and physical strength made him the backbone of the unit. On May 1, 2006, when his unit's vehicles hit

an explosive device, his first concerns were for his fellow Marines.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring and remembering Marine Sergeant Alessandro Carbonaro, who exemplified the ideals put forth by the Reconnaissance Creed—Honor, Perseverance, Spirit, and Heart. Please also join me in expressing my deepest condolences to his parents, his young wife, Gilda, and his extended family and friends. Although Sgt. Carbonaro will be profoundly missed, his unwavering devotion to his family and country will live on in the hearts of those who were touched by the life of this fallen hero.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JEFF HENDERSON

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Jeff Henderson for his extraordinary accomplishments in the culinary field and for his success with his new book.

Jeff Henderson's life is an inspirational story of overcoming great odds and achieving one's dreams. Growing up in South Central Los Angeles and San Diego, Jeff had a run in with the law where he served almost a decade in federal prison. He did not discover his passion for cooking until doing kitchen duty. Jeff began his new found passion as a dishwasher and worked his way to the top as a Chef for restaurants such as L'Escafe and the Dining Room at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Marina Del Rey, California. He later became the Sous-Chef at the Hotel Bel-Air and at L'Ermitage Hotel.

In 2000, Jeff made history as the first African American to be named Chef de Cuisine at the Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. The American Food and Wine Tasting Federation honored him in 2001 as the "Las Vegas Chef of the Year". Black Enterprise magazine has also honored him as one of the top African-American chefs. While he is currently employed at Café Bellagio as Executive Chef, he also serves as a public speaker and motivator to provide inspiration for troubled youths.

Jeff's greatest accomplishment has come from his book entitled, "Cooked: From the Streets to the Stove, From Cocaine to Foie Gras". Since its March 2007 release, his book is now a New York Times Best Seller after just three weeks. His story has gained national attention with appearances on the Today Show and Oprah. There are even talks to star in his own reality show and to produce his life story in a motion picture starring Will Smith.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the hard work and accomplishments of Chef Jeff Henderson. He has set a fine example for everyone to achieve their dreams with dedication. I wish him luck in all his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I was absent from the Chamber for rollcall No. 205 on March 28, 2007. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

REINTRODUCTION OF ENDING TAX BREAKS FOR DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 2007 AND THE FAIR PLAY-EQUAL ACCESS IN MEMBERSHIP RESOLUTION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, today I am reintroducing a bill to end government subsidies for private clubs that discriminate against women. Ending Tax Breaks for Discrimination Act of 2007 makes it illegal to take income tax deductions for expenses at clubs with "No Women Allowed" membership policies. It is wrong for corporations to write-off big expenditures for entertainment, meetings and advertising at clubs that keep women out while they target women consumers' pocketbooks. This bill will put an end to that. With the Masters Golf Tournament coming up this Monday, April 2nd, now is the time to address these discriminatory practices.

Right now, conventions and meetings come right off corporate income tax as legitimate business deductions, including those held at private clubs that discriminate. Half the price of a business lunch is deductible. But if you're a woman, you subsidize ½ a guy's lunch with your taxes, even though you can't join the club. The whole point is that members of these clubs get financial gains—either indirectly through career opportunities and board appointments, or directly through tax deductions. Women can't get these same financial gains—just because they're women. Golf is so ingrained as a part of business success that business schools teach juniors and seniors how to make the most of country club memberships. If you can't play golf, join the "guys" after a round, and get the same elite club bonus package from your employer that your male counterparts can, you're clearly missing out.

This bill ends deductions for advertising, travel, accommodation and meals associated with these clubs. And it requires discriminatory clubs to print right on their receipts "not tax deductible".

Let me be clear, I like big business, but women must be equal players. Legitimate tax deductions should continue, but when these deductions support clubs that bar women as equal partners, equal players, equal earners—they are not legitimate. This bill is past due. The time for discrimination is over.

I am also reintroducing a resolution, the Fair Play-Equal Access in Membership Resolution, which expresses the sense of the Congress that neither the President, the Vice President, nor any Member of Congress, justice or judge of the United States, or political appointee in

the executive branch of the Government should belong to a club that discriminates on the basis of sex or race. It's common sense that our leaders and lawmakers should not belong to clubs that discriminate . . . period.

CONCERN ABOUT FARHAD ALIYEV AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN AZERBAIJAN

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I would like to call the House's attention to an important human rights case in Azerbaijan. Mr. Farhad Aliyev, the former minister of economic development and a leading pro-West reformer, has been arrested and charged with planning a coup, though I think his true crime was speaking truth to power in Azerbaijan. Too often, the United States has allowed immediate interests to blind us to the long-term risks associated with ignoring or downplaying significant human rights violations abroad. There is enormous potential in U.S.-Azeri relations, and I want to see this relationship continue to blossom. But we risk implanting a fatal flaw in this development if we are not frank about our concerns about human rights and the rule of law.

I submit a March 17, 2007, article from the Washington Times, "Ex-Azeri official held for 17 months", by Jason Motlagh, detailing Mr. Aliyev's case for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD with my remarks.

[From the Washington Times, Mar. 17, 2007]

EX-AZERI OFFICIAL HELD FOR 17 MONTHS

(By Jason Motlagh)

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN.—The view from Sabina Aliyeva's balcony commands the skyline of this reborn boomtown and the Caspian Sea beyond, but for the past 17 months one stark gray building off to the right has loomed large.

Inside, her husband, Farhad Aliyev, the former minister of economic development and a leading pro-West reformer, remains locked in solitary confinement, charged with planning a coup—though no evidence of it has been put before a court of law.

International human rights groups and U.S. lawmakers say Mr. Aliyev is a political prisoner whose rights have been violated as he awaits due process. According to Azeri law, a judge must hear his case by April or release him from pretrial detention.

The high-profile case comes amid efforts by the Bush administration to secure closer ties with the oil-rich nation, considered to be of increasing importance in a sensitive region. Critics counter that better bilateral relations must be in step with U.S. demands for democratic reform, and not allow a convenient foreign policy to obscure a grim human rights record.

Azerbaijan is a secular Muslim country on the western shore of the Caspian Sea, wedged among Iran, Armenia, Russia and Georgia. U.S. officials have stressed its value as a reliable energy supplier, citing continued Azeri oil and natural-gas deliveries to Europe as a counterweight to Russia's state-owned energy giant Gazprom.

President Ilham Aliyev—no relation to the accused—has also been a willing partner on security issues. One of the first foreign leaders to contribute troops to missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, he granted U.S. pilots overflight rights in Azeri airspace, and the Pentagon is sponsoring an upgrade of a former

Soviet airfield for potential use by American forces.

Some observers also point to the sizable and at times restive Azeri minority in Iran as a potential tool if a conflict with the United States or its allies broke out. Azerbaijan insists it will have no part in any military action against the Islamic republic.

Azerbaijan has a reputation of being heavy-handed toward its citizens. Before its November 2005 parliamentary elections, condemned by international observers as flawed, riot police reportedly beat up protesters in the streets and arrested hundreds.

Farhad Aliyev, his younger brother Rafiq, former head of the leading Azeri oil refiner, Azpetrol, and a handful of other officials were summarily arrested on charges of plotting a coup.

The vote itself was marred by irregularities, ballot stuffing and intimidation, according to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Still, President Aliyev was invited to the White House last April. Washington justified his first meeting with President Bush on the basis that his regime is in a different class than autocracies like those in Belarus and Uzbekistan, thus should be engaged rather than left to gravitate toward Moscow or Tehran.

Opponents say corruption and ongoing crackdowns on civil freedoms could have a destabilizing effect in Azerbaijan. They say Farhad Aliyev challenged the political establishment to make free-market reforms, to better integrate with the West, and is now being denied U.S. support.

"We're defending Farhad Aliyev because we defend the ideas he represents," said Murad Sadraddinov, an Azeri human rights activist and former political prisoner. "If we do not support him, we will soon lose everybody like him in Azerbaijan."

Mr. Sadraddinov said he fears the emergence of a more radical brand of Islam if democratization does not take hold, noting the growing attendance at Wahhabi mosques in the capital. One Western official said he saw "the potential," but doubted such an outcome in the foreseeable future.

Appointed by President Ilham Aliyev's father, post-Soviet strongman Heydar Aliyev, who died in 2003 at a U.S. hospital, Farhad Aliyev led a broad campaign to open the economy and reduce the power of state-affiliated monopolists that had long controlled the flow of imports and exports in Azerbaijan.

One of Farhad Aliyev's top priorities was an overhaul of the state customs committee, considered by the Azeri public and business community as a corruption machine. Azerbaijan ranked 130th among 163 countries in Transparency International's latest corruption index.

"Corruption is endemic in this country . . . [and the customs] department has been at the top of the list," said a European official working in Azerbaijan who deals directly with the government on reform matters.

Farhad Aliyev "was generally regarded as a fair and good businessman, even among a disillusioned Azeri public. The West rightfully saw him as someone to work with—someone with a promising political future."

An intense rivalry soon developed between Farhad Aliyev and customs chief Kamaledin Heydarov, whom Mr. Aliyev accused of stifling economic growth by making it hard for new business—foreign or domestic—to enter Azerbaijan's markets.

Both men used the press to try to win over the public and President Aliyev. Azeri news reports agree that state interference was reduced in entrepreneurial activities and certain meddlesome agencies were abolished.

Ali, 23, a university student who asked that his full name not be made public, said Farhad Aliyev was well liked at a time most Azeris had tuned out politics.

"He came across as someone who actually cared about people and change, not his bank account," said Ali. "His popularity was definitely growing . . . and is probably why he was removed."

Farhad Aliyev went out on a limb when he said that as far as Azerbaijan's social and economic development are concerned, "Russia is Azerbaijan's past, the West is its future."

On Oct. 19, 2005, weeks after he had told the prosecutor general's office that unspecified criminal groups had threatened to kill him, he was arrested for conspiring to overthrow the government. A corruption charge was later added.

Officials accused Farhad Aliyev of paying supporters of Rasul Guliyev, the exiled chairman of a major opposition party, to stir unrest upon his return from the United States to run in the elections. The charge was based on the confession of ousted Finance Minister Fikrat Yusifov, a reputed co-conspirator, who was released two months later.

Mr. Guliyev has categorically denied the claim or that he ever met Farhad Aliyev. Analysts queried in the capital agreed that such an association was highly unlikely, given their opposing party affiliations.

Charles Both, an American lawyer who represents Farhad Aliyev and his brother, says that since their arrest, the original charges have not been declared in court; no evidence in support of the charges has been offered; no public hearing has been held; and no trial date set.

Azerbaijan's law stipulates that pretrial detention can last a maximum of 18 months, meaning the government has until next month to hear the case.

Farhad Aliyev suffers from heart problems, including hypertension and hypertrophy, but has been denied sufficient medical attention, according to the International League for Human Rights.

To date, his wife and two children have had no contact with him. They say they have been subject to harassment and surveillance by authorities—notably on the day of his arrest when their home was stormed by armed men and valuables were stolen. The family has since moved to a guarded apartment in view of the National Security Ministry, where the brothers are being held.

Meanwhile, the business interests of the Aliyev brothers have been confiscated and sold off to "pro-Russian business enterprises favored by the Azeri authorities," according to a study by Mr. Both, the American lawyer.

He said the charges against the pair are "the direct result of Farhad Aliyev's position in open favor of [Azerbaijan's] integration into the international community, closer ties with the United States, [the] European Union . . . and successful implementation of economic reforms and anti-monopoly policy, all of which run counter the interests of many powerful domestic players."

**HONORING DR. LINDA BURNES
BOLTON FOR HER DISTINCTION
IN THE FIELD OF NURSING**

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I rise proudly to extend my congratulations to an ex-

traordinary individual—a resident of Los Angeles, California, who in mid-April will become the first African American in the United States to receive the American Organization of Nurse Executive's lifetime achievement award.

Linda Burnes Bolton, DrPH, RN, FAAN, is Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer at Cedars Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. Dr. Burnes Bolton is a trailblazing nurse leader who has spent her career championing and implementing high quality healthcare for all patients. Dr. Bolton's energy level and commitment to transforming healthcare through nursing solutions are legendary. Not only has Dr. Burnes Bolton studied and written about disparities in care but through her many decades of visionary work on behalf of patients, Dr. Burnes Bolton has contributed to a multitude of improvement initiatives, including health literacy, reductions in medication errors, as well as studying the healthcare system to overcome nursing workforce challenges.

A past president of the National Black Nurses Association, Dr. Burnes Bolton currently serves as the President of the American Academy of Nursing. Through the academy, Dr. Burnes Bolton and her board, along with their distinguished advisory council have just launched their "Raise The Voice" campaign to recognize the contributions nurses have made and continue to make in transforming health care.

Today I stand before you to recognize the contributions made by Dr. Linda Burnes Bolton, an extraordinary leader in the field of nursing.

TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Ms. CARSON. Madam Speaker, the Tuskegee Airmen were dedicated, determined young men who volunteered to become America's first Black military airmen.

Those who possessed the physical and mental qualifications and were accepted for aviation cadet training were trained initially to be pilots, and later to be either pilots, navigators, or bombardiers.

Tuskegee University was awarded the U.S. Army Air Corps contract to help train America's first Black military aviators because it had already invested in the development of an airfield, had a proven civilian pilot training program and its graduates had performed highest on flight aptitude exams. Of the 994 aviators who trained at Tuskegee Institute, beginning in 1942, only about 385 are still alive. I am proud that one of those living heroes is my constituent, Walter Palmer.

Walter Palmer volunteered for the unit because he yearned to fly and because—"we knew the country was at war, and we felt that we had to put in our time, just like everybody else." Mr. Palmer went on to fly 158 missions during World War II throughout Europe.

Today, Walter Palmer—85 years old—will come to our Nation's Capitol to receive the highest civilian honor given by Congress, the Congressional Gold Medal. He and his Tuskegee colleagues not only volunteered to fight a war, they were the best at what they did and they helped win a war.

Collectively, the Tuskegee Airmen flew more than 15,000 missions over North Africa and Europe during World War II, destroying more than 250 enemy aircraft on the ground and 150 in the air. By historic accounts, the aviators never lost a bomber to enemy aircraft fire during their escort missions. Proudly, Walter Palmer personally helped to set that very high standard of excellence.

INTRODUCTION OF THE KA'U COAST PRESERVATION ACT

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Ka'u Coast Preservation Act, a bill directing the National Park Service to assess the feasibility of designating coastal lands on the Ka'u Coast of the island of Hawaii between Kapao'o Point and Kahuku Point as a unit of the National Park System.

Late last year, the National Park Service issued a reconnaissance report that made a preliminary assessment of whether the Ka'u Coast would meet the National Park Service's demanding criteria as a resource of national significance.

The reconnaissance survey concluded that "based upon the significance of the resources in the study area, and the current integrity and intact condition of these resources, a preliminary finding of national significance and suitability can be concluded." The report goes on to recommend that Congress proceed with a full resource study of the area.

Although under significant development pressure, the coastline of Ka'u is still largely unspoiled. The study area contains significant natural, geological, and archaeological features. The northern part of the study area is adjacent to Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and contains a number of noteworthy geological features, including an ancient lava tube known as the Great Crack, which the National Park Service has expressed interest in acquiring in the past.

The study area includes both black and green sand beaches as well as a significant number of endangered and threatened species, most notably the endangered hawksbill turtle (at least half of the Hawaiian population of this rare sea turtle nests within the study area), the threatened green sea turtle, the highly endangered Hawaiian monk seal, the endangered Hawaiian hawk, native bees, the endangered and very rare Hawaiian orangeblack damselfly (the largest population in the state), and a number of native endemic birds. Humpback whales and spinner dolphins also frequent the area. The Ka'u Coast also boasts some of the best remaining examples of native coastal vegetation in Hawaii.

The archaeological resources related to ancient Hawaiian settlements within the study area are also very impressive. These include dwelling complexes, heiau (religious shrines), walls, fishing and canoe houses or sheds, burial sites, petroglyphs, water and salt collection sites, caves, and trails. The Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail runs through the study area.

The Ka'u Coast is a truly remarkable area: its combination of natural, archaeological, cul-

tural, and recreational resources, as well as its spectacular views, are an important part of Hawaii's and our Nation's natural and cultural heritage. I believe a full feasibility study, which was recommended in the reconnaissance survey, will confirm that the area meets the National Park Service high standards as an area of national significance.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

STEWART VINCENT WOLFE MEMORIAL PLAYGROUND

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts of my constituents in Yuma to revitalize and beautify their surroundings.

The community came together to create the Stewart Vincent Wolfe Memorial Playground located in the Yuma West Wetlands Regional Park. This is a true community project as it was created from the input of over 5,000 local schoolchildren. This project united all generations to create it and was fully assembled by dedicated volunteers throughout two weeks in February.

I have heard from many parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and educators that the children have approved thoroughly of the park. And today I rise to thank the community for the park and provide my heartfelt approval and gratitude as well.

This park has an important role in Yuma, as it is a culmination of work from all aspects of the community. It also served as an educational tool. Bringing in the children to have input was an opportunity for the children to learn about planning in our community, in addition to preservation of open and friendly spaces.

There was much sweat and hard work that was put into the park, and I guarantee there will be many squeals of joy and happy families for years to come.

This important achievement will long be remembered in Yuma, and it is with pride that I celebrate with my constituents in the realization of this important park.

INTRODUCING A RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE 500TH ANNI- VERSARY OF THE FIRST USE OF THE NAME "AMERICA"

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution celebrating the 500th anniversary of the first use of the name "America." I am pleased to be introducing this resolution with my good friend from New York, Representative CAROLYN MALONEY.

Italian navigator Amerigo Vespucci was born in 1454 and traveled across the Atlantic Ocean 4 times between 1497 and 1504. During his second voyage to the Western Hemi-

sphere in 1499, he realized the land initially discovered by Christopher Columbus was not India, but in fact a whole new continent.

Eight years later, on April 25, 1507, cartographer Martin Waldseemüller, a member of the research group Gymnasium Vosagense in Saint-Die, France, published the book *Cosmographiae Introductio*. The book was accompanied by a map he designed naming the new continent "America" after Amerigo Vespucci. Incidentally, the only remaining copy of this map is housed in the Library of Congress.

Naming the new continent after Vespucci was a unique and high honor, especially since he was still alive at the time. But Waldseemüller described this decision in the book by writing: "I see no reason why anyone should justly object to calling this part . . . America, after Amerigo [Vespucci], its discoverer, a man of great ability."

On April 25, 2007, we will mark the 500th anniversary of the first appearance of the word "America" on a map on a continent bordered by the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. As such, it is fitting that the House take time to honor Amerigo Vespucci, Martin Waldseemüller, and the contributions of so many others who have made us who we are.

In the 21st century, the term "America" means much more than just a continent or a country. It is an ideal, a system of values which dedicates itself to ingenuity and greatness. The ability of which Waldseemüller wrote of Vespucci embodies the American spirit and the role which we play in the world. Indeed, we have the ability to make this world a better place for all.

It is my sincere hope that my colleagues will support this effort and join me and Representative MALONEY in honoring these two great individuals, the history of our great country and the continent on which it is located. I ask for the support of my colleagues and the swift consideration of this resolution to ensure that the House marks this celebration before the 500th anniversary.

INDENTURED SERVITUDE ABOLITION ACT OF 2007

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, thousands of foreign workers in this country are being systematically exploited and abused every day. I am introducing the Indentured Servitude Abolition Act of 2007 to ensure that these workers have basic human rights protections and safeguards against recruitment abuses.

The Indentured Servitude Abolition Act of 2007 requires that employers provide in writing and in advance of employment, specific information relating to an individual's working terms and conditions so that workers know the length of their employment, where they will be working and living, how much they will be paid, and what benefits will be made available to them. Under the Act employers will be prohibited from charging the worker a recruitment fee, and obligated to pay the worker's transportation costs. Finally, if an employer or recruiter violates the Act, they will be subject to criminal sanctions, civil penalties and injunctive relief.

Unscrupulous employers in this country are luring unskilled foreign workers with the promise of riches—that they can earn 10 times as much or more if they come to work in America. The foreign workers, most of whom come from impoverished backgrounds, are charged fees—sometimes thousands of dollars—to secure these jobs. To cover the upfront expenses many sell their land, their homes, or take out high interest loans. They risk everything with the dream of earning enough money to provide for a better life for themselves and their families.

The reality for these workers stands in stark contrast to the riches and opportunity that was promised. Employers often refuse to pay the workers overtime or alternatively refuse to schedule them for full-time work. They work in unsafe conditions, and are forced to live in squalor. Living in fear and with no ability to speak out about the abuses, workers are trapped in virtual involuntary servitude under sweatshop working conditions, indebted by usurious recruitment fees, paid inadequate wages and too often cheated out of what little they are owed.

The Indentured Servitude Abolition Act of 2007 simply demands that these foreign workers be treated with the respect and dignity that they deserve. The Act requires that the working conditions promised are in fact the working conditions that will exist. We can no longer allow employers to treat foreign workers as commodities—we have a responsibility to ensure that every individual working and living in this country is afforded labor protections and adequate legal safeguards.

NEED-BASED EDUCATIONAL AID ACT OF 2007

HON. LAMAR SMITH
OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to join the gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. DELAHUNT in introducing the "Need-Based Educational Aid Act of 2007."

Beginning in the mid-1950s, a number of private colleges and universities agreed to award financial aid solely on the basis of demonstrated need. These schools also agreed to use common criteria to assess each student's financial need and to give the same financial aid award to students admitted to more than one member of that group of schools. From the 1950s to the late 1980s, the practice continued uncontested.

In 1989, the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice brought suit against 9 of the colleges that engaged in this practice. After extensive litigation, the parties entered into a consent decree in 1991 that all but ended the practice. In 1992, Congress passed the first exemption to the antitrust laws for these colleges as part of the Higher Education Amendments of 1992. That temporary exemption codified the settlement and allowed agreements to provide aid on the basis of need only, to use common criteria, to use a common financial aid application form, and to allow the exchange of students' financial information through a third party. It also prohibited agreements on awards to specific students.

In 1994, Congress extended this exemption as part of the Improving America's Schools Act. Congress has extended the exemption twice since 1994—in 1997 and 2001. As of May 2006, twenty-eight schools utilized this antitrust exemption. This exemption expires on September 30, 2008.

I believe the current exemption makes sense, and to my knowledge there have been no complaints about it. A recent GAO study of the exemption found there has been no abuse of the exemption and stated that there has not been an increase in the price of college as a result of the exemption. The Antitrust Modernization Commission, which is due to release its final report next week, studied this exemption and found that it provides "limited immunity for limited conduct," that is, it is narrowly tailored to meet its goals of promoting access to need-based financial aid.

This bill would make the exemption passed in 1992, 1994, 1997, and 2001 permanent. It would not make any change to the substance of the exemption.

The need-based financial aid system serves worthy goals that the antitrust laws do not adequately address, namely, making financial aid available to the broadest number of students solely on the basis of demonstrated need. No student who is otherwise qualified should be denied the opportunity to go to one of these schools because of the limited financial means of his or her family. This bill helps protect need-based aid and need-blind admissions.

The last time a permanent extension of this antitrust exemption was considered by the House it passed by a vote of 414 to 0. I urge my colleagues to support this bill as well.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO RE-AUTHORIZE THE NEW JERSEY COASTAL HERITAGE TRAIL ROUTE

HON. FRANK A. LoBIONDO
OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. LoBIONDO. Madam Speaker, the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail incorporates the very best of what the great State of New Jersey has to offer the rest of the Nation. Established by Congress in 1988, the Trail unifies New Jersey's many scenic points of interest. These points of interest include a wealth of environmental, historic, maritime and recreational sights found along New Jersey's coastline, stretching 300 miles from Perth Amboy in the north, Cape May in the extreme southern tip of the State and Deepwater to the west.

The Trail's area includes three National Wildlife Refuges, four tributaries of a Wild and Scenic River system, a Civil War fort and National cemetery, several lighthouses, historic homes, and other sites tied to southern New Jersey's maritime history. Through a network of themes and destinations, the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail connects people with places of historic, recreational, environmental and maritime interest.

One exciting aspect of the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route is its focus on maritime history. There is a rich story to be told about the industries once sustained by the

Delaware Bay, such as whaling, shipbuilding, oystering and crabbing. While we often define our Nation's history through military or political milestones, the Trail will serve to remind visitors that maritime-dependent commerce was a major factor in the growth of the United States.

"Eco-tourism" along the Coastal Heritage Trail has proven to be a huge success. There is an abundant variety of natural habitats and species to be found on the Trail. Whale and dolphin watching have become extremely popular, and bird lovers from throughout the country, and in fact around the world, are realizing what Southern New Jersey residents have known all along: our region is unmatched for observing migratory birds, ospreys and bald eagles.

Today, with the support of the entire New Jersey delegation, I am introducing legislation to reauthorize the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route. This legislation would extend the authorization of the Trail to provide additional funding over 4 years to continue the work began in 1988.

The New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail has helped New Jersey residents develop pride, awareness, experience with, and understanding of our coastal resources and its history. This reauthorization will allow the Trail to continue and flourish.

I urge my colleagues in the House to support this legislation.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF MAYOR GEORGE H. WHITEHURST

HON. JEFF MILLER
OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is an honor for me to rise today to recognize the public service and outstanding achievements of George H. Whitehurst upon his retirement as Mayor of the city of Crestview, Florida.

George Whitehurst moved to Crestview in 1954, where shortly after, he opened the Whitehurst Funeral Home. In 1961, he entered the political arena as Mayor for 12 years. His passion for leadership and continuing love for the community led Mr. Whitehurst to resume his political career as Mayor in 1995.

During his tenure as Mayor, George Whitehurst advocated for increased public safety and economic development. To promote safety and deter crime, Mr. Whitehurst was at the forefront of instituting 2 police substations and a police/fire sub-station. He lobbied for the acceleration of a high rise security lighting installation at Interstate 10 and State Road 85 and the development of an emergency transportation corridor, consisting of a three-mile segment of roadway to provide an alternate emergency evacuation route in times of natural disaster. Under his leadership, a cemetery was restored, a Veterans Memorial Park constructed, and the foundation for the Crestview Library and Community Center established. Mayor Whitehurst launched a downtown revitalization effort, including: new sidewalks, pedestrian crosswalks, shade trees, increased parking, period street lighting, and park benches. There is no doubt in my mind that Crestview is better off because of this man.

For 24 years, Mayor Whitehurst has proudly served Northwest Florida as Mayor of the Hub City with passion and determination. He is a dedicated and loving husband, father, and grandfather. With his wife Annelle by his side, he has earned the respect and support of those around him. This weekend we celebrate his retirement and tireless efforts of giving back to the community. The impact Mayor Whitehurst has made on the city will leave a lasting impression, and Crestview will be forever grateful for his service and truly honored to call him one of her own.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize the achievements of Mayor George H. Whitehurst and his exemplary service to the city of Crestview, Florida—"the gateway to the Emerald Coast."

IN HONOR OF CAPTAIN ANGELA M. CARSTEN

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Captain Angela M. Carsten, an officer in the United States Air Force, who is retiring after 20 years of distinguished service.

I have had the personal pleasure of knowing Angie since she came to DLI in 2004 and I know I speak for the greater DLI community in expressing our best wishes for her continued success.

Throughout her career, both as an enlisted Air Force Airman and as an officer, Captain Carsten has personified the Air Force values of duty, honor, integrity and selfless service. As Project Manager and Associate Dean of the Defense Language Institute's Emerging Languages Task Force, many of us on Capitol Hill have been the beneficiaries of her communication talents as well as her broad depth of knowledge concerning Low-Density High-Demand languages that are critical to our nation's security in the Global War on Terrorism.

Captain Carsten's military service began in 1987, with tours of duty at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, Maxwell AFB, Alabama, and Ramstein Air Base in Germany. Captain Carsten provided communications and computer support for the local airbases. In 1999, Captain Carsten was commissioned as a Lieutenant in the United States Air Force through Officer Training School at Maxwell AFB in Alabama. From 1999 to 2003, Captain Carsten served in a variety of assignments at Hill AFB, Utah.

Since 2004, she has been an outstanding advocate for the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, located in Monterey, California, the Congressional district I am proud to represent. As Associate Dean of the Defense Language Institute's Emerging Languages Task Force, she has briefed the BRAC Committee, the House Defense Appropriations Committee, HPSCI and HASC Members, numerous Professional Staff of the National Security committees, as well as Service Secretaries, foreign dignitaries, and Department of Defense VIPs.

Most recently, as the Associate Dean, Captain Carsten authored a Concept of Operations to build a surge capability for over nine-

teen Immediate Investment and Stronghold languages to augment the current DLI curriculum.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues, I thank Captain Carsten for her commitment, sacrifice, and contribution to our National Security throughout these 20 years.

HONORING OMEGA
ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to the Omega Environmental Technologies company. In today's corporate world, they have distinguished themselves as a thriving business that is passionate about helping others.

An eighteen year old company, Omega Environmental Technologies was built from the ground up to become a multi-million dollar corporation. Founded in 1989 in Texas, the company has grown to include a worldwide customer base for their distribution of automobile air conditioner parts. Although they routinely export A/C components to 75 countries, around 75 percent of their products come from the U.S. This helps to support the American economy and has provided a welcome boost to the Dallas/Fort Worth area marketplace. Using a 65,000 square foot warehouse, the business has grown 50 percent in the last 3 years. It is no surprise that Omega Environmental Technologies has been recognized twice as one of the 100 fastest growing companies in D/FW.

Although Omega Environment Technologies serves as a model to those in the business community, the life story and achievement of the company's founder and President, Grace Davis, is an example that all of us would do well to study. Born and educated in Panama, Ms. Davis strived for excellence early on, graduating from college after studying business. After time spent in the finance industry, she looked for a new challenge and attempted to get a job in the banking world. No matter her success or qualifications, Ms. Davis found only disappointment as employer after employer offered her only secretary jobs. In need of a paycheck, she eventually accepted a secretary position only to discover the grim truth of her circumstances later on. After hearing the commercial needs of clients who called the office, she approached her supervisor with a plan to improve their international sales. Regardless of her initiative, she was ignored and told to remember her place as a secretary. Grace Davis went on to leave that company and start her own international sales company. As one of her employees put it, she proved so trustworthy and talented a saleswoman that a company grew up around her.

Today, she serves as a proud role model for minority women who are looking to succeed in life and the business world. For her part, she has made it a point never to discriminate against potential employees because of their nationality or primary language. Omega Environmental Technologies currently employs 14 nationalities with several of them political refugees. They also rely on Catholic Charities as a primary source for employee recruitment

and last year received the accomplishment of being a certified Minority Company.

I could not be more proud that Omega Environmental Technologies chooses to call the Dallas/Fort Worth area home, and I congratulate them on receiving this prestigious award.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE AMERICAN HUNGARIAN FEDERATION OF CLEVELAND

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the American Hungarian Federation of Cleveland, and Mr. John Juhasz, for their many years of service to the Hungarian-American community.

The Federation, since its founding in 1906, has been a symbol of the strong relationship between America and Hungary, a relationship that has existed since the birth of the American nation. Before former Hussar Officer Colonel Commandant Mihaly Kovats died fighting for a free America in the Battle of Charleston, South Carolina in 1779, he sent a letter to Benjamin Franklin with the words: "Fidelissimus ad Mortem", which means Faithful Unto Death. This expression has become the motto of this great organization.

For more than one hundred years the American Hungarian Federation has worked to unite and to support Americans of Hungarian origin in the United States, regardless of political, religious, or other affiliation. It has also been a strong supporter of freedom both at home and abroad. They played an integral role in providing aid for a Hungarian people in need after World War II, as well as efforts to aid refugees of The Revolution of 1956.

Under the faithful stewardship of President John Juhasz, The American Hungarian Federation continues to fulfill their mission by advocating for Hungarian causes and providing information to second and third generation Hungarian Americans. Additionally, the Federation sets an example for all Americans, who have a love for their heritage and a desire to help their people.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring John Juhasz and the American Hungarian Federation of Cleveland for their contribution to the rich cultural heritage of Northeast Ohio. May the Hungarian community continue to thrive under their leadership.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JUDI D. STEELE

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend Judi Steele, a dedicated educator, consultant, and advisor whose outstanding work in the classroom and throughout the community has motivated the Clark County School District to name an elementary school in her honor.

Judi began her distinguished career as an educator in 1965 when she taught 5th and 6th grade at P.S. 171 in East Harlem, New York.

In 1969, Ms. Steele began her long career with the Clark County School District as a teacher at C.V.T. Gilbert Prestige School. Throughout her career with the Clark County School District, Judi's work proved vital as she was integral to the implementation and the success of several educational programs designed to improve academic achievements and opportunities for students of all abilities.

During her time with the Clark County School District, Judi served as an integration consultant with the Intergroup Education Department, team leader for Teacher Corps, the first teacher of CCSD's Academically Talented Program and coordinator of the district's first Child Find. Judi was also the director of the Special Education Programs and Services for the Clark County School District. Among her achievements in this capacity, Ms. Steele created and executed district-wide procedures and staff development activities for principals, teachers, parents, and special student services staff to allow these educators to better serve students. She also devised district-wide programs to cater to the specific needs and requirements of the visually, orally and emotionally handicapped, learning disabled and academically talented students.

Judi also worked as the manager of the Officer of Development and Education Improvement for the Clark County School District while serving as the executive director of the Clark County Public Education Foundation, which is a non-profit corporation dedicated to improving the quality of Clark County's public schools. In 2001, Judi retired from the Clark County School District to become the president and chief professional officer of the Public Education Foundation. Under her guidance, the Foundation has raised approximately \$40 million and has instituted numerous vital programs including: Clark County READS, the Interact Online Learning Community, and the Teacher Exchange.

Judi's excellence in the field of education has gained widespread recognition as she has served on the board of the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association. She was also a member of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the Council of Exceptional Children, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the National Council of Administrative Women in Education, the Committee to Eliminate Racism in the Public Schools, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In Nevada, Judi has served on the board of directors of the Allied Arts Council, the National Alliance for Arts Education, the Nevada Association for the Handicapped, the Nevada Institute for Contemporary Arts, the New Horizon Academy, the Southern Nevada Administrative Women in Education, and the Summerlin Children's Forum.

Today, Judi continues to actively serve the community as the founder and president of the Arts Council of Henderson. She also sits on the advisory councils of the Nevada Ballet Theatre, the Nevada Public Education Foundation, CLASS! Publications, and the Clark County School District's School Community Partnership Program. Judi's distinguished career has earned her numerous awards and honors including the James Stuart McPhee Memorial Intellectual Freedom Award, the Governor's Arts Recognition Award, the Com-

munity Leaders of America Award, and the City of Henderson Community Achievement Award.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor my friend Judi Steele and her many achievements. Her dedication to the community is commendable and I wish Judi continued success in her future endeavors.

COMMENTARY FROM DAVE DURENBERGER

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to read the column below from our former Senate colleague Dave Durenberger from Minnesota. Dave continues to be a leader in health policy, having founded the National Institute of Health Policy which promotes health policy dialogue in the Upper Midwest. He also serves as a member of the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MEDPAC).

We can all learn from Dave who looks at our health system from a policy perspective, not a purely party perspective.

He is an example for us all.

[National Institute of Health Policy, Mar. 22, 2007]

(By Dave Durenberger)

NATIONAL HEALTH POLICY

MEDICARE "UNFAIR" ADVANTAGE

House Ways and Means Health Committee Chair, Pete Stark, accused AHIP of "lying, using false information" last week when the organization stated the impact that reductions in Medicare Advantage (MA) reimbursements would have on minorities.

When the GOP and AHIP cut a deal to privatize Medicare and set up a formula (benchmarks), AHIP members were positioned to set the annual "defined contribution" Congress must make to private health insurance plans to keep them in the Medicare market. That subsidy today averages 112 percent above what Congress pays for traditional fee-for-service Medicare.

Unfortunately, Republicans asked nothing in return for the subsidy. No cost containment, quality or outcome improvement, no care coordination or service integration, no equity across practices or counties or regions; no value for money. So the plans continue to employ marketing strategies to compete on increasing "benefits" (services access) and reducing beneficiary cost-sharing in "competitive" insurance markets. Both are antithetical to improving "consumer-driven" healthcare cost containment and to improving value for money paid.

When Democrats cry "foul," the AHIP rallies all those folks who now get "more for less," to preserve their unfair advantage over traditional Medicare as well as their insurance companies' profit margins. All of this at the expense of Medicare trust funds, the next generations of tax payers, doctors and hospitals whose payments will be reduced or frozen, and the road to value in medicine on which the AHIP talks a good game but has shown no good-faith effort to "walk their talk."

My suggestion to Pete Stark is that he and his colleagues focus not their anger, but their hearings on the issue of value for money from Medicare Advantage, Private, Fee-for-service Plans, Special Needs Plans,

and all the other hybrid models the financial services industry is putting into the Medicare program.

GOP PREPARES ANOTHER SERIOUS FIGHT

Democrats—and a lot of health economists—have always questioned the value of public subsidies for high-deductible health insurance financed with tax-sheltered Health Savings Accounts (HSAs). Bad tax policy, bad health policy, and bad economics. A December 2006 amendment even expanded the amount of money that can be contributed to HSAs, costing the government \$1 billion in lost tax revenue over the next 10 years.

The new majority in the House is talking about repeal or serious changes, and Republican health policy leader Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah through an aide has declared "there will be a serious fight from Senate Republicans if there is any effort to roll back these provisions." He goes on to claim proof that HSA-driven health insurance plans have reduced health care costs and made American businesses more competitive.

No doubt about it. Bigger deductibles mean cheaper health insurance, but not economies in the big-ticket medical services. HSAs are a totally tax-free wealth-enhancement vehicle and Democrats are serious about finding money to cover all kids, not just the well-born. The bank and financial services industry loves this new product and will help Republicans make a real "serious" fight out of this one.

MEDICARE'S FUTURE

The Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) chair, Glenn Hackbarth, found varying Congressional reception of MedPAC recommendations for change in physician payment and on-going payment reform initiatives. Because four congressional hearings followed quickly on release of a 300-page summary of nearly two years of work, members of Congress had difficulty finding a path through a forest of recommendations. They eventually will, of course, because they have little other choice given the huge financial consequences of living with the current SGR reimbursement-reduction formula.

MedPAC staff recommendations for changes in the physician payment formula relative to practice expense (54 percent of payment base) ran into fairly stiff resistance from physician members. The Commission is seeking ways to more accurately reflect direct and indirect costs since current formula seems to drive the growing disparity between cognitive and procedural. In another effort to more accurately reflect Medicare policy goals, the staff and commission members were uniformly critical of the MMA policy which drives growing subsidies for Medicare Advantage (MA) insurance plans beyond the payments for traditional Medicare provider expense reimbursement.

COMMUNITY BENEFIT

The Board of Trustees of the American Hospital Association (AHA) has restated its position on what qualifies as community benefit for purposes of preserving tax exempt status for not-for-profit hospitals. "Charity care, bad debt, unpaid cost of Medicare, Medicaid, SCHIP, indigent care and other safety net programs," which make up 90 percent of most non-profit hospital reports, continues to be a qualifier. The Catholic Health Association (CHA) of the United States will report to the public by April 1 on a different kind of measure—all audited data. These were developed with the VHA over the past couple years and reflect FY 2006 performance data on 95 percent of CHA hospitals.

Everyone knows that for-profit hospitals—large and small, urban and rural—operate in much the same markets as not-for-profits and have the very same under-pay and no-

pay problems. Hospital Corporation of America (CHA) claims 20 percent of unpaid charges for its hospitals, I believe. Everyone knows that it's the rare hospital that doesn't market itself to Medicare patients. It is to the credit of serious mission-driven hospitals like those in CRA and VHA who have chosen not to play the game, but to get serious about accountability to the communities that provide them the opportunity to serve. It is also to the credit of AHA members who have decided to go far beyond the AHA criteria and establish their own improved benefit criteria and accountability processes.

On a policy note: Todd Sloane at Modern Healthcare suggests this week that Senate Finance Chair Max Baucus and Ways and Means Chair Charley Rangel have gone soft on non-profit accountability, so hospitals are breathing easy. He also suggests that Senator Chuck Grassley and the IRS ought to start shining their lights on not-for-profit health insurance plans and include reserves accumulation, executive compensation and other contributions to "rising medical costs." Just when we thought only the for-profit AHPs were big in compensation and profit. Go Dean Zerbe!

COMPARATIVE EFFECTIVENESS

How can we assure beneficiaries that they receive value for their money from medical technology, clinical procedures and services? It's basically a scientific analysis of varying alternatives to diagnostics and therapy, practiced in many ways by multi-specialty groups, HMOs, and some large health plans like the Blues and the VA healthcare system. The MedPAC staff analysis recommends consideration of one national entity to perform the service for all practices ala the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) in the U.K. Commission members are split on the recommendation with a majority inclined to accept the idea with refinement and a vocal minority (including this member) suggesting that AHRQ be charged and funded by Congress with developing a policy pathway toward comparative and cost effectiveness. All of this would eventually be tied to payment systems as well as practices, and utilizing and encouraging existing practice-based research efforts around the country.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN UNIVERSAL COVERAGE

The President and his administration once again made clear their position on consumer choice for America's healthcare. In reaction to the Citizens' Health Care Working Group's Report from September, 2006, the administration agreed with the group's overall goal of providing quality health care for all Americans, but disagreed on the strategy to get there.

According to HHS Secretary Mike Leavitt, the administration supports "an approach emphasizing consumer choice and options" rather than an approach "based on mandates and government intervention." The administration also rejected the idea of creating a single-benefit—defined by a federally appointed committee—for all Americans.

The Bush Administration believes in two principles: (1) Each state legislature can reflect the "insurance benefit" that people believe is best to secure the blessings of universal coverage; and (2) The federal spending role should be confined to supporting consumer choice in the form of tax credits/deductions rather than any direct spending.

The problem with (1) is that we are talking here about the income security of all Americans, not health benefit mandates which are often the work of the medical establishment. The challenge with (2) is that reliance on tax policy alone requires a transition from regressive subsidies to income-related sub-

sidies especially when tied to a mandate. I would assert an additional (3) in that I don't believe "universal insurance plan access" is the same as the promise of universal access to health and related services every American could enjoy if we ran a more efficient health care system.

WRONG WAY CALIFORNIA

Just as the rest of the country is looking to pay physicians to improve the value of health care delivery, California employers are moving their employees away from the recognized higher-performing health care systems towards PPOs. Independent consultant, Allan Baumgarten, in his recent California Health Care Market Report tells us that large employers are moving some of the 12+ million Californians in HMOs out to fee-for-service medical care. "All of this has physicians scrambling to retool themselves . . . faced with the need to change a culture that encouraged physicians to be conservative providing care and to be 'modest' in reporting the amount of care provided, into a culture focused on maximizing fee for service payments."

Meanwhile, in the business world, a new survey by Watson Wyatt Worldwide and the National Business Group on Health shows a tendency of employees to opt for more comprehensive coverage. Despite ever-increasing healthcare costs, most employers still offer a choice in health insurance to their employees, while a small percentage (5 percent) are forcing the health insurance decision by only offering a CDHP option.

COMMUNITY FORUMS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE CONCERNS ON IMMIGRATION

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call on all Members of the House to listen to each other's concerns so that we can reach an agreement on comprehensive immigration reform.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of the bipartisan legislation authored by Congressman GUTIERREZ and Congressman FLAKE, H.R. 1645.

Recently, I held a teleconference forum with District business leaders, law enforcement officers, I.C.E. and Border Patrol agents, and representatives from the Arizona Department of Corrections and Governor Napolitano's office.

Their concerns included needing more help with the burden of incarcerating illegal immigrants, having trouble finding workers, and requiring assistance with a quick, easy-to-use employee verification system, among other issues.

Over the next two weeks in the district, I will be holding additional community forums, so people can tell me what they think needs to be done about our Nation's immigration crisis.

I look forward to hearing from members of my community on every side of the issue—immigrant rights activists, business leaders, the Minutemen, law enforcement, ranchers, and local residents.

Border Patrol Chief David Aguilar will also be joining me in the District to hear from folks on the front lines of this issue.

After listening to a range of experts and local residents, I will recommend possible improvements before we vote on any legislation.

What is clear to me is that the illegal immigration crisis is complex and impacts almost every aspect of our lives in Arizona. Therefore, a piecemeal approach will not work.

If we truly want to secure the border and end illegal immigration, we must pass a common-sense bill that will address every part of the problem.

HONORING MARY PAT ROBERTSON

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mary Pat Robertson from Princeton. Ms. Robertson is celebrating her twentieth anniversary as Director of the American Repertory Ballet's Princeton Ballet School.

Under her leadership the Princeton Ballet School has evolved into one of the most acclaimed in the country, supporting over 1200 students annually at three locations. Ms. Robertson leads a faculty of forty supremely accomplished professionals, and works with them to mentor young dancers and to pass along techniques and artistry of classical ballet.

Audree Estey founded the Princeton Ballet School on the belief that dance is an empowering activity that will benefit students all their lives. Throughout the past twenty years, Ms. Robertson has built upon this premise and has expanded students' self-esteem, self-discipline, and fitness.

Mary Pat Robertson is also a choreographer. She has choreographed 25 years of work for her modern dance company, Teamwork Dance, along with many operas for the Opera Festival of New Jersey. For this work she received a Choreographic Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council of Arts, and has been honored by the Arts Council of Princeton as one of Princeton's most esteemed artists.

The arts are a vital contribution to a child's development and learning. Through dance, children have an opportunity not only to learn, but to participate in the culture of their community. These children whom Ms. Robertson has taught the arts will continue to thrive in society.

After 20 years as Director, Ms. Robertson still finds inspiration and satisfaction in a classroom of eager young dancers. I am proud to recognize Ms. Robertson on the occasion of her twentieth anniversary with the Princeton Ballet School.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize March as National Social Work Month. National Social Work Month affords the perfect opportunity to highlight the essential role that social workers play in working with all vulnerable populations. Social workers help all people at every stage of life, while promoting dignity for everyone, especially the most vulnerable among us.

Social workers play an essential role in alleviating some of America's most difficult problems. Through education, training, and dedication, social workers provide assistance in many different practice areas including health, mental health, child welfare, end of life, adolescent health, HIV/AIDS and family violence. Social workers have the specialized knowledge and expertise to address issues facing older Americans, including providing individual and family counseling, psychosocial assessment and coordinating care.

Madam Speaker, more than 77 million Americans are considered part of the baby boom generation. Adults born between 1946 and 1964 have the distinction of being the largest generation, representing 27 percent of the population. With the aging of baby boomers and the lengthening of life spans, both the number and proportion of older people is rapidly increasing.

Social workers understand that the best elder care requires a broad view of social, environmental, psychological, economic, and health care options. It is the ability to see the intersection of these elements that allow social workers to connect clients with the best resources for them—the best resources to help them along life's journeys. Social workers strive to promote independence, autonomy and dignity for all of their clients. They offer families ways to deal effectively with long-term care responsibilities and work through hospitals nursing homes, hospices, independent and assisted living facilities, public agencies and even in client homes.

National Social Work Month is the ideal time to highlight the immediate and ongoing need for an investment in the social work labor force. As a former psychologist, educator and healthcare professional, I have had the privilege of working with many social workers. I can personally attest that social workers have the specialized knowledge and expertise to address issues facing Americans.

HONORING DR. CHARLES DARLAND

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dr. Charles Darland, an exemplary individual and friend from my Congressional District, on the occasion of his 20-year anniversary as pastor of the Immanuel Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, Kentucky.

Raised in West Palm Beach, Florida, Dr. Darland first came to Kentucky in the mid 1970's to complete a Masters Degree of Divinity at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. He later earned a Doctorate in Philosophy from the same institution. Dr. Darland's Christian mission first brought him to Grace Baptist Church in Independence, Kentucky. In 1987, he was called to the Immanuel Baptist Church in Elizabethtown.

Dr. Darland's wife, Suzanne, continues to play an important role in his ministry, sharing his passion for the Lord and dedication to his congregation. The couple has also been blessed with three fine sons: Jesse, Daniel, and Joel.

It is my great privilege to honor Dr. Charles Darland today before the entire U.S. House of

Representatives for his dedicated service to the spiritual needs of members of the Baptist faith and the community at large. He is an outstanding citizen worthy of our collective honor and appreciation.

IN MEMORY OF LIEUTENANT
COLONEL WILLIAM BENJAMIN
DIXON, SR., UNITED STATES
ARMY

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. SESSIONS of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in memory of Lieutenant Colonel William Benjamin Dixon, Sr. and in honor of his patriotism and a life dedicated to service.

After spending his life dedicated to serving this great Nation, Bill passed away on March 23, 2007. He began as an Air Observation Pilot flying an L-4 and served in the War in Rhineland and Central Europe with the 2nd Infantry Division. He received multiple honors including the EAME Campaign Medal with two Bronze Stars, American Campaign Medal, WWII Victory Medal, a Purple Heart, and two Air Force Commendation Medals for meritorious service.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Purna Lee Dixon; five children, Laura Elizabeth Hansbrough of Kansas City, MO; William B. Dixon, Jr. of Bryan, TX; John Robert Dixon of Hingham, MA; Carol Ann Erwin of Sanger, TX; and Milly Ann Vickery of Frost, TX; and 12 grandchildren.

He will be remembered as a devoted family man, a decorated Army Air Corps veteran, and a proud graduate of Texas A&M University. May God bless all those he loved, and may I convey to them my sincerest condolences and the gratitude of the American people.

WILDCATS WIN IT ALL

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. COBLE. Madam Speaker, a high school football team in the Sixth District of North Carolina recently confirmed and put a new spin the old adage that "If at first you don't succeed, try, try and try again." On December 9, 2006, Eastern Randolph High School defeated two-time defending state champion Charlotte Catholic 15-7 to capture the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) 3-AA football title. The Wildcats, determined to overcome two past losses in the title game, used a tenacious defense to smother the Cougars' high-powered offense that averaged more than 31 points and 300 yards a game during the regular season and held Charlotte Catholic to its lowest point total of the year.

Senior linebacker Seth Clapp told the Asheboro Courier-Tribune that Eastern Randolph's previous attempts to win it all fueled the Wildcats all season long. "It hasn't sunk in yet," Clapp told his hometown newspaper. "We came out here with a great opportunity.

We came down here to win and nothing else. My freshman year, we got beat and I said if we ever made it back, we're coming down here to win and nothing else." Win it all the Cougars did at Carter-Finley Stadium in Raleigh to capture the Randolph County school's first football championship since 1983.

An assistant coach when the Wildcats last won the state title, Eastern Randolph Head Coach Burton Cates told the Asheboro Courier-Tribune that he did not have to do a lot of convincing to motivate his squad this season. "They set their goals very high," he told the newspaper. "They didn't start talking about this last August, they started talking about it last January. They were very disappointed in the way the year ended last season (a 41-14 loss to Williams in the state semifinals) and they knew they could be successful and make history at ER like the 1983 team did." As a former assistant coach, Head Coach Burton Cates knows the value that a strong coaching staff brings to a championship quest. Joining him in guiding the Wildcats to the state crown were assistant coaches Greg Hardin (the offensive coordinator), Carl Anker, Lou Peters, Eric Hall, Jose Espallat, and Adam Smith on the offensive side of the ball and Ed Tysinger, Charles Arrington, Cecil Mock, Mark Heilig, Rick Larrick, and John Plimpton handling Eastern Randolph's stellar defense.

Every member of the Eastern Randolph football team played an important role in securing the school's first state championship since 1983. Among the winning Wildcats were Jerrell Milliner, Tyler Hasty, Jake Millikan, Kentrell Bartell, Ethan Rotenberry, Jarod Bowman, Patrick Wright, Kevin York, Josh Hardin, Manny Troxler, Zed Wampler, Michael Blackmon, Jeffrey Fisher, Scott Riddle, Dexter Brooks, Jordan Smith, Tyler Tuttle, Lee Spinks, Matt Simmons, Dominique Grier, Seth Clapp, John Hancox, Atiq Chaudhry, Dennis Bowden, Ryan Hammond, Michael Cheek, Ethen Bailey, Malcolm Greene, Joel Brown, Bill Stanley, Derek Spinks, Ethan Haitcock, Dennis Jones, Scottie Shears, John Scotton, Scott Staley, Trent Hughes, Zach Webster, Andrew Chilco, Preston Jones, Jakob Chilco, Daniel Ritter, Keith Walker, Lloyd Newman, Brantley Fox, Jacob Deaton, A.J. Cannon, Justin Stanley, D.J. Mabry, Nick Picard, Adam Hicks, Josh Wishon, Travis Clapp, Miguel Uribe, Kenny Lassiter, Billy Jaynes, Brent Gallimore, Justin Allred, and Heath Muller.

All of the coaches and players will tell you that the support staff—those you don't see on the field—also play a vital role in completing a championship run. Congratulations are in order for team physician Dr. Robert James, statisticians Larry Ellison, Roger Whitehead and Rick Freeman, coaches assistants Bonika Terry, Dewain Baldwin and Kateira McClain, video director Mo Mower, hospitality director Sandy Hardin, voice of the Wildcats Ron Berbaum, radio play-by-play announcer Tony Wright and color analyst Neill Kivett.

All can take pride in helping Eastern Randolph become the NCHSAA 3-AA state champions this past football season. From Principal R. Parks Allen, the faculty, staff, students, families and fans of the Wildcats will confirm that if at first you don't succeed, look to Eastern Randolph to prove that if you try, try and try again, you can achieve your ultimate dreams.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CHARITABLE DRIVING TAX RELIEF ACT OF 2007

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, today, I am introducing the Charitable Driving Tax Relief Act of 2007 to remove a serious disincentive that limits the participation of many in charitable activities. Charitable organizations play an important role in our society, and it is important that Congress not stand in the way by penalizing those who wish to offer their services to these groups.

Under current law, individuals that volunteer their time and energy by driving their personal vehicles on behalf of a charitable group can end up with an unpleasant surprise in the form of an unanticipated tax bill. Specifically, volunteer drivers receiving reimbursement for the use of their vehicle are taxed on these payments to the extent that they exceed 14 cents per mile. This treatment stands in stark contrast to the 48½ cent allowance for reimbursement for the business use of that same vehicle.

The Charitable Driving Tax Relief Act will equalize the tax treatment of charitable reimbursements with those received for business driving because the point of the payment is essentially the same, that is, to cover the cost of operating a personal vehicle while performing an important service in the pursuit of a greater good.

To achieve this end, my legislation would exclude from gross income any reimbursement received for the use of a volunteer's car while assisting a charitable group, limited only by the cap the Internal Revenue Service sets each year regarding business driving. This treatment would be available only for services provided without compensation and drivers would be required to maintain sufficient records to substantiate the charitable use of their vehicles. Finally, this bill drops the requirement that charitable groups report these reimbursements to the IRS, removing an administrative and paperwork burden that detracts resources from their larger purpose.

Each day, thousands of Americans lend a hand in providing transportation services to a multitude of organizations engaged in good works. These activities include assisting individuals with their routine grocery shopping, providing the use of a four-wheel drive vehicle to transport home-visit nurses during inclement weather, delivering meals as part of a holiday food drive, helping individuals to keep their medical appointments, and many more similar activities.

These volunteer drivers are donating their time and their talents, not their vehicles, and accepting reimbursement for the use of that car, incidental to their time and talent donation, is a reasonable act, which should not result in an additional tax liability. Today, when it comes to driving a personal vehicle, our tax code makes a distinction between business and charitable uses. This distinction is a mistake; it serves as a serious disincentive to charitable activities, and it should be corrected. I encourage my colleagues to support the continued efforts of our charity-minded constituents by cosponsoring the Charitable Driving Tax Relief Act of 2007.

TRIBUTE TO THE CRUSADERS OF MOELLER HIGH SCHOOL

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker, on March 24, 2007, the Crusaders of Moeller High School in Cincinnati, Ohio, won the state basketball title, defeating Cincinnati's St. Xavier High School by the score of 43–40 in the state title match. This is Moeller High School's third state basketball title in the past decade.

Under the guidance of Coach Carl Kremer, the Moeller Crusaders have won three state basketball championships—in 1999, 2003, and now in 2007. The 2007 Crusader basketball team ends its season with a record of 25–2, which the school's longtime athletic director, Barry Borman, notes is the best record in the history of the Moeller High School basketball program.

As a proud graduate of Moeller High School and a member of the class of 1968, I congratulate Coach Kremer, Athletic Director Borman, Principal Blaine Collison, and all the faculty, students, and alumni of the Moeller Family on this tremendous achievement. I know the gentlewoman from Ohio, Representative Schmidt, who represents Moeller High School in Ohio's 2nd Congressional District, joins me enthusiastically in offering these sentiments.

Moeller High School has provided a center of learning in the finest Marianist tradition for generations of young men from my congressional district and the Greater Cincinnati area. A Catholic school, Moeller has established a reputation for excellence in academics, athletics, faith, and community service, a reputation that is renewed and reinforced by this latest achievement.

On behalf of the United States Congress, I proudly salute Coach Kremer, the 2007 Crusader basketball team, and the entire Moeller Family for this memorable victory.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW MIDDLE EAST INITIATIVE

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I would like to share with our colleagues additional information on the new initiative for the Middle East that I announced at a press conference on March 22. I submit to the RECORD the remarks of former Ambassador David Abshire, who in his capacity at the Center for the Study of the Presidency will be administering this initiative. I also submit observations on the Middle East from Dr. Robert Cooley, President Emeritus of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

REMARKS FROM DR. DAVID ABISHIRE BEFORE THE MARCH 22, 2007 PRESS CONFERENCE ON NEW MIDDLE EAST INITIATIVE

We are grateful to Congressman Wolf for his leadership, and encouragement of this initiative facilitated by the non-partisan Center for the Study of the Presidency. This initiative on Israel and Palestine is based on

recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, which Congressman Wolf also helped launch: "The United States will not be able to achieve its goals in the Middle East unless the United States deals directly with the Arab-Israeli conflict." The Secretary of State, when in Ramallah, said "I have heard a clear call for deeper American engagement, and we are absolutely committed."

The current effort that we are announcing today, which Secretary Rice supports, observes this recommendation, and we are honored that our Center, which examines the American Presidency, has been asked to contribute to such an important initiative. Eleven U.S. Presidents have had to deal with this challenge. We are therefore delighted that Ambassador Dennis Ross of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy will serve as a Senior Advisor at the Center, and bring his extensive experience to this endeavor.

In terms of exchanges, health is essential to the economy, well-being, national security, and future of the Middle East region. The goal of this part of the initiative is to foster collaboration and facilitate interactions between medical and scientific experts in Israel and Palestine to improve health. Our Center has the advantage of the leadership and experience of Senior Advisor, Rear Admiral Susan Blumenthal, M.D., who is an expert on a broad range of public health and medical issues. She served as Assistant Surgeon General in the US Department of Health and Human Services, where her work in global health included fostering a Middle East health initiative with Israel, Palestine, Egypt and Jordan.

We also will encourage more academic and scientific exchange and cooperative efforts in the model of the Israeli-Palestinian Science Organization—a non-political, non-profit organization which is dedicated to nurturing and supporting cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian scientists and scholars in joint research ventures. In doing so, IPSO brings about dialogue between the two sides, even in these highly explosive times.

On a separate track, we enthusiastically welcome the leadership of former Democratic Congressman Tony Hall, also former Ambassador to the UN Agencies for Food and Agriculture. Tony has written a truly remarkable book on his experiences here—*Changing the Face of Hunger*. Ambassador Hall and his team of diverse lay and religious leaders will seek to build better understanding between religious leaders. The Holy Land is common to the three religions that find their beginning in Abraham, and this initiative is indeed appropriate at the time when we seek peace and understanding throughout the Middle East.

REMARKS ON THE MIDDLE EAST FROM DR. ROBERT COOLEY, PRESIDENT EMERITUS, GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

First, a little background on my experience in the Land and at home, as well. My doctoral studies were in the fields of the Ancient and Modern Near East with special interest in Hebrew Studies and Syro-Palestinian Archaeology. I have excavated at five buried sites in the three countries of Jordan, Egypt and Israel. During these past 48 years, I have had the privilege of working with Palestinian Moslems, Palestinian Christians and Israelis in a variety of roles, most notably as the director of 75 study tours and as an archaeologist. Further, I have served as the Annual Professor, William Foxwell Albright Institute of Archaeology and Visiting Professor at the Jerusalem University College. Many of the citizens of the Land have become personal friends over these many years

and we continue to communicate and visit with each other. In all of these associations, I have sustained an apolitical stance, having personal values and feelings for all of the people based upon my own faith commitment and understanding of their own aspirations and vision.

In the USA, I have been a professor at Wheaton College, Evangel University, Dropsie University, Missouri State University where I served as the Director of the Center for Archaeological Research. Most recently, I served as president of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary until my retirement in 1997.

I join Congressman Wolf in underscoring the strategic role that people of faith have in creating the mood for meaningful dialog toward a lasting peace. It is time that such persons have a voice in framing the peace conversation and the solution that will allow all to have lives of dignity, freedom and tranquility. The roots of religion run very deep into the region's antiquity and cannot be separated from matters that we in the West would call secular or merely political. After all, the three major groups in the Land are Sons of Abraham and share a common understood relationship that serves as a basis for living together in harmony today. The past 50 years of failed politics have undermined communal harmony and allowed outside forces to enter and to modify relationships. Now, differences in a culture of hatred are about to fragment the greater society and turn the region into a quagmire of despair. An approach that takes seriously the Abrahamic factor can bring the parties back to his tent for conversation and where participants can look each in the eye and see each other's humanity and aspirations. The God of Abraham unifies through His promises and mercy.

It is true that religion can divide a society. This is no more true than in the Holy Land and the Middle East. Religious differences are sharp and numerous. The majority of the people are Muslims. But, within Islam, there are at least 72 sects with the Sunni and the Shi'a being the most populated. Christians tend to be identified along four lines: Eastern Orthodox Churches, Oriental Churches, Roman Catholics, and Protestants. Judaism has its own deep divides—Orthodox, Conservative and Reformed, along with other lesser groups. Of course, there are several other religious groups, due to the history of the region and they represent a variety of mixtures, such as, The Druzes, The Yazidis, The Sabians and The Bahais. Superimposed over these religious groups are the interests of politics and geo-economics.

One cannot speak about peace on the political level without taking into account the religious roots of the people. The veneration of holy sites and places is fundamental to identities, and they are multiple. The only solution is an open and free society that must be the goal of peace.

TRIBUTE TO KAY DINWIDDIE AND THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK AND TRUST REGENCY CLUB

HON. KENNY C. HULSHOF

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. HULSHOF. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Kay Dinwiddie and the First National Bank and Trust Regency Club, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Kay has been the director of the club since its inception. The Regency Club is open to bank

customers who are at least 50 years old, and has grown from a relatively small group to its present size of more than 3,700 members.

Although club members do receive special bank services and discounts, the primary focus of the club is on its group travel programs, which has taken them to numerous international locales. The club has traveled extensively throughout the state of Missouri, sampling the rich culture of the greatest state in the union. From Hannibal, the land of the great Mark Twain, through our fertile farm lands and national parks, the Lake of the Ozarks, to music of Branson, and the metropolises of St. Louis and Kansas City that bookend the state, Kay has shepherded her group to better know and love our great state.

But Kay has also led her fellow Missourians abroad, and has traveled to such far locales as Australia and Africa. Kay has personally visited six continents, about 40 countries and crossed the equator 12 times. I have been informed that her travels when all tabulated account for more than 600 days and over 100,000 miles. You would think all that travel would have tired her out; however, she remains steadfast in her dedication to the Regency Club.

I would like to commend and thank Kay for her commitment to the Regency Club and its extensive membership, my constituents. She has been a tireless advocate for club members and has worked for the greater benefit of the Columbia community. I hope to be voicing her praises in another twenty years.

INTRODUCTION OF THE AMERI- CARE HEALTH INSURANCE ACT OF 2007

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce the American Health Insurance Act of 2007. I am joined by various cosponsors in supporting this common sense solution for the U.S. to finally achieve guaranteed, affordable, quality health insurance coverage for all.

I have often spoken before this body about the great need to reform our health care system. For too long, we have been plagued with an inadequate patchwork that today leaves 45 million Americans uninsured. Our complex system requires us to spend more than any other nation on health care—30 percent on administration alone. Health care costs continue to rise, yet year after year hardworking families are faced with less access, more paperwork, and declining quality.

Our broken health system is a tremendous financial burden on our Nation's families and businesses alike. Half of all bankruptcies can be traced to medical bills. Eighty percent of people who file for bankruptcy because of medical bills have health insurance, but their benefits do not meet their needs. General Motors spends more on health care than on steel; Starbucks spends more on health insurance than on coffee.

These problems have only worsened over time. In years past, special interests have defeated attempts to reform the health system. Today, however, calls for health reform are

being heard from unlikely voices and through strange partnerships. Wal-Mart joined SEIU, which has in turn joined AARP and the Business Roundtable, to call for government action. On March 6, the AFL-CIO abandoned its support of employer-based health care and began to push universal coverage through the expansion of Medicare. Even the for-profit hospitals have put forward a proposal.

This month, the New York Times reported that a majority of Americans would like the federal government to guarantee health insurance to every American—especially children. Nearly 80 percent think it is more important to provide universal access to health insurance than it is to extend the tax breaks of recent years. Sixty percent of Americans, including 62 percent of independents and 46 percent of Republicans, said they would be willing to pay more in taxes to guarantee access to all.

These various stakeholders may not agree on exactly which road we should travel. But they do finally all agree on our destination: guaranteed, affordable quality health coverage. The bill I am introducing today is the best way to get us there.

The AmeriCare Health Care Act of 2007 is a practical proposal to ensure that everyone has health coverage in our country. It builds on what works in today's health care system to provide simple, affordable, reliable health insurance. Under AmeriCare, people would continue to obtain health coverage through their employer—as most of us currently do—or they would be covered under the new AmeriCare system.

AmeriCare creates a new Title XXII in the Social Security Act. It uses Medicare's existing administrative infrastructure, but improves upon Medicare's benefits to address some of the current gaps in coverage, such as mental health parity, coverage for children, and family planning and pregnancy-related services for women. State Medicaid programs would remain responsible for long-term care, but AmeriCare would cover low-income children, women, and others who currently receive health care services under Medicaid.

AmeriCare is financed through premiums, paid 20 percent by individuals and families and 80 percent by employers. People with incomes under 200 percent of poverty would be fully subsidized, and premiums and cost-sharing would be phased in for those with incomes between 200 and 300 percent of poverty. General revenues and state funds would help to offset these costs.

AmeriCare limits out-of-pocket spending to ensure that no one spends a disproportionate share of their income on health care. Employers could continue to offer their own coverage, so long as it is at least as good as AmeriCare. Payment of premiums would be reconciled on our annual income tax forms.

Enacting AmeriCare would provide tremendous benefits to our Nation. A recent report by the Commonwealth Fund comparing several proposals by Members of Congress and the Bush Administration concluded that AmeriCare is the only health reform proposal that would provide for truly universal care, covering all of the nearly 45 million currently uninsured Americans.

Expanding insurance coverage to all will end the cost shifting that results from the high number of uninsured we have today. This could reduce premiums for job-based insurance by as much as \$1,000 for family coverage, according to the Institute of Medicine.

Because AmeriCare builds on the highly efficient Medicare program, the Commonwealth Fund concluded that it would result in the greatest overall savings to the health system of all health reform plans they modeled. Medicare's per capita costs have grown at a slower rate than private health insurance or the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. Using Medicare as a model will reduce costs for households, employers, state and local governments.

Our Nation is at a crossroads. Our legacy should be a future where our children are not saddled with debt, where they do not fear financial ruin due to an illness. Whether we build a healthy future for our children or not depends upon the decisions we make today. True compassion means offering real solutions, not empty promises.

Working together, applying common sense approaches that build on what works, we can ensure that no-one risks the loss of insurance coverage. All we need is the will to do it.

As we edge closer to our next discussion on health reform, we need to ask, is medical care a civic and social right like police and fire services, education, and environmental protection?

Or is health care "you're on your own?"

I hope I can count on my colleagues and our endorsing organizations to advance a shared vision of higher quality, lower costs, and universal coverage through the adoption of AmeriCare.

Attached is a short summary of AmeriCare. More can be found on my website at <http://www.house.gov/stark>.

AMERICARE HEALTH CARE ACT OF 2007

Overview: The AmeriCare Health Care Act ("AmeriCare") is a practical proposal to ensure that everyone has health coverage in our country. It builds on what works in today's health care system to provide simple, affordable, reliable health insurance. People would be covered under the new AmeriCare system, modeled on Medicare, or they would continue to obtain health coverage through their employer.

Using the administrative efficiencies within Medicare and building on the existing coverage people receive through their jobs today, we can create an affordable, efficient, and stable universal health care system in America—and guarantee access to medical innovation and the world's most advanced providers and facilities.

Structure and Administration: Creates a new title in the Social Security Act, "AmeriCare." Provides universal health care for all U.S. residents, with special eligibility for children (under 24), pregnant women, and individuals with limited incomes (<300% FPL). Sets out standards for supplemental plans with a focus on consumer protection. Requires the Secretary to negotiate discounts for prescription drugs.

Benefits: Adults receive Medicare Part A and B benefits; preventive services, substance abuse treatment, mental health parity; and prescription drug coverage equivalent to the BC/BS Standard Option in 2005. Children receive comprehensive benefits and Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) coverage with no cost-sharing.

Cost Sharing: There is a \$350 deductible for individuals, \$500 for families, and 20% coinsurance. Total spending (premiums, deductibles, and co-insurance) is capped at out-of-pocket maximum of \$2,500 individual/\$4,000 family, or 5 percent of income for beneficiaries with income between 200 percent–300 percent FPL and 7.5 percent of income for

beneficiaries with income between 300 percent–500 percent FPL. There is no cost sharing for children, pregnant women, low-income (below 200 percent FPL). Sliding scale subsidies are in place for cost-sharing for individuals between 200 percent and 300 percent FPL.

Financing: At April 15 tax filing each year, individuals either demonstrate equivalent coverage through their employer or pay the AmeriCare premium based on cost of coverage and class of enrollment (individual, couple, unmarried individual with children, or married couple with children). Employers may either pay 80 percent of the AmeriCare premium or provide equivalent benefits through a group health plan (the contribution for part-time workers is pro-rated). AmeriCare does not affect contracts or collective bargaining agreements in effect as of the date of enactment, and employers may choose to provide additional benefits. Employers with fewer than 100 employees have until January 1, 2012 to comply (employees of small businesses would still only pay 20 percent of the premium).

SALUTE TO HAROLD GAULDEN

HON. MARK E. SOUDER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. SOUDER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to salute my constituent, Harold Gaulden, a former military police officer of the Tuskegee Airmen's fire and rescue squad. Mr. Gaulden has come to Washington, DC today as one of six Tuskegee Airmen receiving the Congressional Gold Medal on behalf of the corps' surviving pilots and support personnel. The reward recognizes their heroism during World War II in facing the twin battles of the onslaught of the enemy abroad and the blight of racism at home.

The Tuskegee Airmen were created by the Army in 1941 as part of an Army Air Corps program to train Black Americans as military pilots, and comprised nearly 1,000 pilots and 10,000 support staff. These men were the first Black pilots in the American military, and Harold Gaulden, originally from Louisiana but now a Hoosier in my district, spent a year at the Tuskegee airbase in Alabama valiantly and diligently helping defend our Nation. Mr. Gaulden remembers such indignities as being able to buy a Coke at the base's PX but being forced to drink it outside. Mr. Gaulden saw segregated mess hall lines at the base—one for White soldiers and German prisoners of war, and another for the Black soldiers. Harold has been an energetic airman activist for 20 years, speaking to colleges, elementary schools, and community groups about what he and his airman brethren endured for our country.

The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest civilian award that Congress can bestow upon its recipients, and I was proud to co-sponsor the legislation in the 109th Congress that authorizes this award. I am pleased to see Harold being honored today for his service to our country. Although Harold has said he would gladly fight for his country, medal or not, bravery such as this should not go unrecognized—it is what has made, and continues to make, the United States of America the best nation on earth.

RURAL WIND ENERGY DEVELOPMENT ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today I am proud join with my colleague, Representative TOM COLE, to introduce the "Rural Wind Energy Development Act," which would provide an investment tax credit to individuals—homeowners, farmers, and small businesses—to offset the up-front costs of owning a small wind turbine.

Small wind systems are electric generators that produce 100 kilowatts or less of clean and renewable energy to power homes, farms, and small businesses. With these small turbines, individuals can generate their own power, independent from the electric grid. These wind turbines will allow consumers to cut their energy bills and, at times, put power back into the grid. According to the American Wind Energy Association, a single wind turbine can provide \$2,000–\$4,000/year per megawatt or more in additional farm income.

This legislation is necessary because there is no Federal support for small wind systems. The Federal Production Tax Credit (PTC) applies mainly to large utility-scale wind projects, not to individuals who want to install their own wind systems for on-site power. An investment tax credit for small wind systems will help provide stability and certainty for the industry to make the necessary investments to grow. It will also help consumers afford this pollution-free energy. In the 2005 Energy Policy Act, residential solar systems received a similar investment tax credit and saw an increase of more than 20 percent in installations over the last year.

Specifically, this bill would provide a tax credit of \$1500 per ½ kilowatt of capacity for small wind systems, which could be carried over for a customer unable to take advantage of the entire credit within a 1 year period. The bill also calls for a 3-year accelerated depreciation for wind property.

I hope all of my colleagues will join me in supporting this important policy to promote wind power, which produces no harmful greenhouse gas emissions, involves no environmentally damaging natural resource extraction such as mining or drilling, and does not need fuel imported from foreign governments to run.

WORKPLACE REPRESENTATION INTEGRITY ACT

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. McKEON. Madam Speaker, the purpose of this legislation is simple: only those legally permitted to work in the United States should be able to make a determination on union representation in their workplace.

It defies logic that anyone who lives in this nation illegally—and works here illegally—is able to decide whether legal workers must join a union. But under current law, unions can obtain signatures during card check campaigns

without differentiating between whether they were signed by legal or illegal workers.

The Workplace Representation Integrity Act simply requires a union conducting a card check to demonstrate that any card presented for recognition be signed by a U.S. citizen or legal alien. In other words, this legislation would ensure the wishes of American citizens are not trumped by the desires of those here illegally.

This measure is particularly critical because under the recently-passed, cleverly-worded Employee Free Choice Act—which I strongly oppose, I might add—the mandatory card check would become the law of the land. And, literally, it would allow union bosses to pick and choose which workers they believe they can most easily pressure into joining the union. At the front of that line may very well be those who work here illegally. These men and women are particularly prone to union intimidation and would be more likely than most to sign the authorization card out of fear.

Indeed, Madam Speaker, those illegally working in this country should not be pressured into making major decisions—such as those involving unionization—that will only serve to further erode the free choice of workers who are lawfully here. Rather than eviscerate the fundamental rights of workers as the so-called Employee Free Choice Act does, the Workplace Representation Integrity Act strengthens American workers' rights. I urge my colleagues to support it.

TRIBUTE TO NELSON W. POLSBY

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, for more than 40 years, Nelson W. Polsby was a leading figure in American political science years he served as editor of the subject's premier journal, the *American Political Science Review*, and his friendships and books and articles on the U.S. Congress, the presidency, political parties, elections, and the media made him a mentor to generations of graduate students.

Naturally warm and gregarious—with the comic timing of a master improviser—Nelson helped to build strong communities at his beloved University of California, Berkeley, at its Institute of Government Studies (IGS), which he headed for 10 years, and in the wider political science profession.

Born in 1934, Nelson Woolf Polsby came from Yankee Jewish farming stock, based in Connecticut. His family encouraged his precocious interest in current affairs. In the early 1900s a great-uncle ran for the mayoralty in New Haven as a socialist.

His father, a successful businessman, died after a surgical mishap when Nelson was 11. At prep school (there were not many Jewish farm boys, and even fewer at prep school) he was a brilliant student, turning down offers from Yale and Harvard universities to attend Johns Hopkins. This enabled him to sit in the House and Senate galleries and observe Congress at work.

His academic breakthrough came from his association with Robert Dahl's pathbreaking study of political power in New Haven in the

1950s, *Who Governs?* (1961). His doctorate was published as *Community Power and Political Theory* in 1963 and was quickly regarded as a masterpiece. He argued that rather than a single dominant elite running things, there were different elites in different areas and that this pluralism was compatible with democracy.

Polsby spent 6 years at Wesleyan University, becoming a full professor in 1967. That year he moved to Berkeley, where he remained for the rest of his career, in spite of offers from other universities, including Yale and Harvard. At an early stage, therefore, he had developed his two chief interests; the theory of democracy and how it operates in practice.

He also developed his lifelong interest in Congress, particularly the House of Representatives, in the 1960s. He showed how it had become institutionalized and how the seniority system for allocating key roles developed. He also analyzed how the large contingent of Democrats ("Dixiecrats") from the segregationist and more conservative South, in contrast to the more liberal Democrats from the North, prevented that party from using its nominal majority to give effective leadership to Congress. Later, in *How Congress Evolves* (2004), he explored the decline of the South in the House and the emergence of sharper partisanship in its operations.

In 1964 he and his dynamic Berkeley colleague, Aaron Wildavsky, published *Presidential Elections*. Revised and published quadrennially—its 12th edition is scheduled for publication in the summer of 2007—it remains the standard text on the topic. After Wildavsky died in 1993, Polsby was the sole author and claimed that: "The only difference since Aaron's death is that I win the arguments." His prose was highly readable and marked by wide reading and incisive analysis. Polsby confessed that his insomnia was caused by noticing light in the rooms of colleagues in the early hours of the morning—they were still at work! He quipped: "While Polsby sleeps, Wildavsky publishes."

He also wrote witty pieces on politics under an assumed name, Arthur Clun (borrowed from Angus Wilson's *Anglo-Saxon Attitudes*). They prompted a publisher to offer a book contract to the mystery author. A keen observer of the British political scene, he collaborated with Geoffrey Smith, a political commentator for *The Times*, to publish *British Government and Its Discontents* in 1981.

At 37 he received the accolade of the editorship of the *APSR*. For 6 years he successfully managed, in a relaxed style, the journal's staff and coped with pressures from authors and reviewers.

Polsby was a popular choice to become director of the IGS in 1988. He seemed to know everybody and to have read almost everything. He invited visiting scholars and politicians to talk about their work and their experiences—his good friend, Chris Patten was a regular visitor. He did much to create a friendly atmosphere, and a high point was the afternoon tea at which he presided.

Having basked in the acclamation for his work he was desolate when his term expired in 1999, a consequence of the university's 10-year rule for tenure. The Institute had meant so much to him.

His *Consequences of Party Reform* (1983) was sharply critical of some of the effects of the reforms the Democratic Party made to the presidential nominating process in the late

1960s. These gave increased representation to some minorities (race and gender) but not others, and increased the influence of single-issue groups in the party's deliberations. But they also weakened the party's ability to nominate presidential candidates representative of the broad American public and to win elections. Polsby was always concerned about good government and citizenship.

If Polsby argued with someone it was a mark of his approbation. Speakers who assumed that Polsby, eyes shut and snoring in the audience, was asleep could quickly be confounded when the "sleeper" made a pertinent, or ferocious, intervention.

He received many honors, including an honorary degree from the University of Liverpool. He had the respect of political reporters, and many politicians, for his understanding of the constraints under which they worked, and he drew readily on his encyclopedic knowledge of U.S. politics to provide wise counsel. He regarded his frequent contributions to "round tables" and op-ed pages as part of a professional obligation to inform the public, entertaining "the delusion that too few of my opinions were available to the world at large".

At home, Polsby and his wife Linda provided rich hospitality for their many Berkeley and overseas friends. For a time they jointly wrote a column on restaurants for *California* magazine. He was a keen follower of the local Oakland Athletics baseball team. But most of all he loved passionate argument with friends.

I personally benefited from a number of personal contacts with Professor Polsby over the years. He always had both astute insights into what was going on in politics and a great sense of humor. But the first time I met him was perhaps the most valuable. Two or three days after I was elected to Congress, I was invited to take part in a retreat for new members from California—of which there were eight—at UC San Diego. Professor Polsby was the scholar in charge and his views on how to be effective and what to look for as a new Member of Congress have been of great value to me throughout my entire tenure in the House of Representatives.

Polsby is survived by his wife Linda, their two daughters Lisa and Emily, their son Daniel, and their grandsons Benjamin and Edward.

IN SUPPORT OF THE GREEN AMENDMENT TO H.R. 1227

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Green amendment that would extend FEMA housing assistance to Hurricane Katrina victims through December 31, 2007.

A year and a half after the terrible disaster, Gulf Coast residents still face unfulfilled promises, bureaucratic red tape, public neglect, environmental squalor and private exploitation.

This is outrageous and should be condemned. Yet again, the administration's failure to provide for the residents of the region has left it to Congress to make things right. That we are still making the same arguments over and over again to ensure that Gulf Coast residents get what's only fair is unacceptable.

The unnecessary Iraq war has diverted precious resources away from domestic emergencies. Our brothers and sisters here at home are waiting to re-build their lives and homes.

That is why the Green Amendment is so important.

Specifically, the Green Amendment would extend the safety-net of FEMA housing assistance until December 31, 2007 and thereafter transfer eligible households to HUD's tenant-based rental assistance program. Through this amendment, Section 8 vouchers would also be available to households in trailers and mobile homes.

If we do not adopt this amendment, over 120,000 families housed in FEMA-funded trailers, mobile homes and who barely cope in other rental assistance situations could be thrown into further chaos and homelessness when current assistance ends in August. This would further compound the dire affordable housing situation relating to low-income, elderly, and disabled evacuees across the country.

The region is still not back to normal. Consider the fact that there are 51 percent fewer hospital beds in New Orleans than were available pre-Hurricane Katrina according to data released by the NAACP.

Public infrastructure and public institutions are operating below capacity. In New Orleans, only about one-third of the public schools have re-opened. These statistics are staggering.

It is not only a responsibility but a moral duty to do all in our power to restore the dignity and quality of life to all citizens of the Gulf Coast region regardless of their socio-economic, cultural and political status. They are counting on us. I urge my colleagues to support the Green Amendment.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1433, The District of Columbia House Voting Rights Act.

I want to encourage my colleagues to vote to extend full representation to the District of Columbia as well as to the state of Utah. The District of Columbia has long been recognized as one of the most Democratic jurisdictions in the Nation. Utah, by contrast, gave President Bush his largest margin of victory in the 2004 presidential elections. Extending rights to both sides of the spectrum would be the most politically neutral way to ensure proper and sufficient representation for all of our citizens.

Regarding the residents of the District of Columbia, they have the full burden of Federal taxation and military conscription. These reasons alone should give the residents of the District of Columbia equal voting rights. In addition, voting rights have been extended to overseas voters, as well as to those in Federal enclaves within a State. Fairness and justice demand that Congress do the same for the citizens of the District, who are subjected to all Federal laws.

Madam Speaker, some argue that the Framers never intended to give the District

voting rights in Congress. In reality, however, the Founding Fathers never actually spoke about the District's rights because it was little more than a contemplated entity at the time. In fact, Congress has plenary power to address the welfare of the District and its residents.

Another concern voiced by those who oppose the bill claim that the residents of the District will demand more rights. This is not necessarily true. However, if the District were to demand more rights, then it would be strictly a legal question and should therefore be reserved for the courts—not the House—to decide what is permissible and what is not.

The District now has a little over half a million people, which was probably never contemplated by the Framers more than 200 years ago. It is my belief that the Framers of the Constitution would probably not support the idea that citizens of the United States are paying Federal taxes without fair and just representation in Congress.

Madam Speaker, it truly is telling and somewhat shameful when several prominent international groups such as the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the U.N.'s Committee on Human Rights have all advocated for DC residents to obtain equal voting rights. Shouldn't we do the same? I think so. I hope the rest of my colleagues share in this belief and vote favorably on the passage of H.R. 1433.

HONORING LOUISIANA EMPLOYER BASF-SHREVEPORT

HON. JIM MCCRERY

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the hard work and dedication of a local Louisiana manufacturer. The manufacturer that I am recognizing has demonstrated innovation in manufacturing operations and business growth, as well as, a commitment to community involvement.

BASF-Shreveport, located within my district in Louisiana, was established in 1985 to manufacture and package prescription and over-the-counter pharmaceutical products, liquids, tablets, and creams. Some of their well-known products include ibuprofen, acetaminophen, and silver sulfadiazine burn cream. The economic impact that BASF brings to North Louisiana is significant. The facility employs more than 167 people with an annual payroll of 13.4 million. This local manufacturer has made noteworthy advances in productivity throughout their organization resulting in substantial growth. Because of these accomplishments, BASF-Shreveport will be honored by the Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana (MEPOL), with the third annual Platinum Award for Continued Excellence, PACE Award.

MEPOL, a non-profit business resource based at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, serves to provide business and technical assistance to emerging and established manufacturing firms throughout the State of Louisiana. Since 1997, MEPOL, based on a philosophy of education, encouragement, and empowerment, has worked with manufacturers

such as BASF-Shreveport to increase their productivity and profitability.

Working with MEPOL, BASF-Shreveport identified an area of their production that could benefit from the principles of lean manufacturing. Production volume, due to increased demand from their customers, was creating a significant bottleneck in the printing department, where the name of the medication is printed on the tablets. Three days after the printing department completed the quick changeover/set-up reduction training and implementation suggested by MEPOL, the site was able to cut the changeover time required for batches from 2 hours to 17 minutes. This modernization resulted in BASF's increased throughput in the printing areas by 57 percent, allowing it to meet the customer's needs more efficiently. Their dedication to excellence is the reason that they are the recipients of MEPOL's second annual PACE award.

BASF also participates in numerous charity organizations throughout the community including the United Way, March of Dimes and the Salvation Army. I congratulate BASF-Shreveport on being a respected leader in manufacturing whose commitment to advancement and continued success has led to this outstanding achievement.

TRIBUTE TO DR. LEONARD K. PETERS

HON. DOC HASTINGS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize one of the true leaders of the national science community, Dr. Leonard K. Peters. Dr. Peters came to Washington state in 2003 to assume the role of Director of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. During his tenure, the Lab oversaw an impressive growth in business and Len led the world-class PNNL staff to enhance relationships with research universities in the Pacific Northwest. Len has a long history of establishing successful public-private relationships in the science and education sectors.

Dr. Peters came to PNNL from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University where he served as Vice Provost for Research and managed Virginia Tech's ambitious research portfolio with diverse projects ranging from biotechnology to transportation materials. Prior to his time at Virginia Tech, Dr. Peters spent almost twenty years at the University of Kentucky where he served as a professor and eventually as acting Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. Dr. Peters is a distinguished manager and educator and an accomplished researcher in atmospheric chemistry.

As Dr. Peters assumes a new role at Battelle, he will continue to lead and serve in the Tri-Cities area through community outreach programs. He is already actively involved in the region's educational community through his service on the Advisory Board for Washington State University's College of Engineering and Architecture, and the Board of Directors for Heritage University. Locally Dr. Peters chairs the Tri-City Industrial Development Council and serves on the boards of Kadlec Medical Center, the United Way of Benton and Franklin Counties, and Junior Achievement of

the Greater Tri-Cities. Dr. Peters is a committed leader who shares his tremendous experience and talent with the Washington state community.

I want to recognize Dr. Len Peters for his leadership and vision during the past 3½ years at PNNL. On behalf of the people of Washington, I wish him all the best in his new position and say thank you for his continued service to our State.

WILLING-SELLER LEGISLATION FOR CERTAIN NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM UNITS

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I am today introducing legislation to allow people who want to do so to sell lands for inclusion in certain units of the National Trails System.

The bill is identical to ones introduced in previous Congresses by my former Republican colleagues from Colorado, Representatives Beauprez and McInnis. It is cosponsored by Representatives EHLERS, KILDEE, KIND, BALDWIN, LEVIN, and PETRI. I greatly appreciate their assistance and support.

Current law prohibits people who own land associated with several units of the Trails System from selling those lands to the federal government for inclusion in those units.

The bill would revise that to allow such sales from willing sellers.

The Trail System units covered by the bill are the Oregon National Historic Trail, the Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail, the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, the Iditarod National Historic Trail, the North County National Scenic Trail, the Ice Age National Scenic Trail, the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, and the Nez Perce National Historic Trail.

Madam Speaker, this bill would make a small but important adjustment to current law. I think it deserves the support of all Members of the House.

INTRODUCING THE LEGAL SERVICES BENEFIT ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join my Subcommittee Ranking Member Mr. CAMP in reintroducing the Legal Services Benefit Act.

Many employees and retirees lost access to affordable preventive legal services when the tax-preferred status of qualified group legal plans sunsetted in 1991. This bill corrects that historic wrong and ensures that millions of workers and retirees have access to employer provided group legal service plans.

Group legal service plans provide employees with low cost, basic legal services, including assistance with the purchase of a home, the preparation of a will, probate services and

the resolution of domestic conflicts, such as child support collection. With evictions and mortgage foreclosures on the rise, legal plans can also help keep employees in their homes and focused on their jobs.

The Legal Services Benefit Act will restore the historic pre-tax treatment of group legal services under Section 120 of the Internal Revenue Code. This change to the tax code will again make legal service plans affordable for both employers and employees, and will provide access to legal services for millions of middle-income Americans who might otherwise let legal troubles get out of hand.

I thank many of my colleagues on the Ways and Means Committee who have already joined us as original cosponsors of this bill, and I urge all members to support this important legislation that will help workers and businesses across the Nation.

RECOGNIZING THE CORNERSTONE CLUBHOUSE IN PHOENIXVILLE FOR THEIR "BEYOND THE LABEL" CAMPAIGN

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend the Cornerstone Clubhouse in Phoenixville, PA for their ongoing "Beyond the Label" campaign to raise awareness of the many illnesses and challenges people with mental health disabilities face.

The Cornerstone Clubhouse is an important resource for the people struggling with mental health problems in Phoenixville and the surrounding communities of Chester County. The organization's purpose is to promote early intervention and recovery from mental illnesses by offering a support system that helps them find employment and residential living opportunities and deal with daily life issues.

Individuals with mental health disabilities join the Clubhouse and then visit the facility on a voluntary basis to raise awareness of these disabilities by passing out informational materials and writing newsletters. On any given day, up to 40 people can be found at the Clubhouse and this interaction with others helps these individuals develop the valuable social, work and life skills needed to be successful.

So, Madam Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the dedication and hard work of the Cornerstone Clubhouse in Phoenixville and its successful "Beyond the Label" campaign, which has been an important tool in the community to raise awareness and shine a light on the struggles people with mental illnesses face everyday.

COMMISSION ON SLAVERY ESTABLISHED IN ROMANIA

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, 200 years ago, the movement for the abolition

of slavery achieved a major victory with the passage of a British law banning the trade in slaves—an anniversary that is getting heightened attention with the release of a new movie chronicling those events. Ending the trade in slaves was not the same as actually ending slavery, but it was a critical beginning to the end.

Other developments have also caused us to revisit the legacy of slavery in our own country. This includes the decision by the legislature of the Commonwealth of Virginia to apologize for that state's role in the slave trade, and reports that Maryland and Missouri are considering similar steps.

With a view to our own country's painful and complicated history of slavery, and as the first African-American Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I was particularly interested to learn about commemorations held on February 20th in Romania, marking the beginning of the end of slavery in that country. In the case of Romania, however, slaves were not kidnapped and transported from a faraway land. Instead, those enslaved were Roma, a people that had settled in Romania by the 14th century.

This ethnic group—somewhere around 1,000 years ago—migrated to Europe from what is now India. Today, Roma make up the largest ethnic minority in the European Union, conservatively estimated at 10 million people.

Romania, with an estimated 2 million Roma, has the largest Romani minority on the continent. And in that country, beginning in the 14th century and ending with the establishment of the modern Romanian state in 1864, slavery to the crown, to nobility, and to the monasteries was the exclusive status of Roma.

To be clear, Roma were not serfs; they were slaves, bought and sold like chattel. In 1837, the great Romanian historian and statesman Mihail Kogalniceanu described their situation as follows:

On the streets of the Iasi of my youth, I saw human beings wearing chains on their arms and legs, others with iron clamps around their foreheads, and still others with metal collars about their necks. Cruel beatings, and other punishments such as starvation, being hung over smoking fires, solitary imprisonment and being thrown naked into the snow or the frozen rivers, such was the fate of the wretched Tsigan [Rom]. The sacred institution of the family was likewise made a mockery: women were wrested from their men, and daughters from their parents. Children were torn from the breasts of those who brought them into this world, separated from their mothers and fathers and from each other, and sold to different buyers from the four corners of Romania, like cattle. Neither humanity nor religious sentiment, nor even civil law, offered protection for these beings. It was a terrible sight, and one which cried out to Heaven.

Unfortunately, it appears that the history of slavery in Romania—and the impact of slavery on the lives of Roma—has received little scholarly attention. As a corollary, little is taught in Romanian schools about this important chapter in the nation's history.

I was very heartened, therefore, to learn that Romanian Prime Minister Calin Popescu-Tariceanu announced on February 20 that the Romanian Government will establish a commission to study the enslavement of Roma. The National Agency for Roma will play a central role in setting up this commission, and the

commission will produce recommendations for the teaching of Romani history and promoting Romani culture.

Madam Speaker, there is an awful lot of hand wringing about the deplorable situation of Roma today. Across the OSCE region, they face profound discrimination, sometimes manifested in the worst forms of racially motivated violence. Moreover, in 2003, the United Nations Development Program issued a report on the situation in five Central European countries, concluding that, "by measures ranging from literacy to infant mortality to basic nutrition, most of the region's Roma endure living conditions closer to those of Sub-Saharan Africa than to Europe."

But if you want to know where you're going, you have to know where you came from; if we want to change this status quo, we have to understand the past, which makes this new commission vital for Roma.

With respect to Roma, that means three things. First, it means understanding the history of Roma before World War II, and in the case of Romania and Moldova, that requires teaching, studying, and acknowledging the enslavement of Roma. Second, the genocide of Roma during World War II must also be remembered, and more must be done to study and understand the diverse experiences of Roma during the war in different European countries. Finally, we must put an end to the pernicious, dangerous myth that communism was "good" for Roma.

With all this in mind, Prime Minister Tariceanu's initiative is really an extremely important step in addressing so many of the problems that Roma face today. I commend him for his leadership and I look forward to following closely the work of this body.

HONORING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MONTH

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of International Women's Month, which this year we celebrated during the month of March.

Throughout the month, we have passed legislation recognizing the impact women have had on our Nation and the world itself. We have heard speeches honoring these individuals who have made life richer and better.

As March comes to a close, I want to individually honor several women from my home state of Nebraska who have made a difference.

I also want to encourage all Members of Congress to help celebrate International Women's Month all year long, through education, support, and service.

Throughout Nebraska's history, we have been fortunate to have had a number of exceptional women call our State home. It is in their name and the names of the exceptional women yet to come that we celebrate this month—and all year long.

Names such as Louise Pound, Willa Cather, and Mari Sandoz spring readily to mind when discussing Nebraska women who have opened minds and imaginations.

But during times of change, women such as children's crusader Grace Abbott and jour-

nalist Rheta Childe Dorr—the first woman to cover World War I from the front lines—have served as inspirations.

The first American Indian woman doctor was Dr. Susan LaFlesche Picotte. The hospital she built in Walthill is now called the Picotte Center.

Nebraska women have also shouldered leadership for our State. Senator JoAnn Maxey was the first African American to serve as State Senator. Senators Fern Orme and Florence Reynolds also deserve mention.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention Governor Kay Orr, who was elected the first Republican woman Governor in the United States, or Rep. Virginia Smith, who set the standard for all House Members, not just from the Third District of Nebraska.

Finally, we should also honor the women who served in our armed forces and who put their lives at risk for our freedom. In particular, let us remember Sgt. 1st Class Linda Ann Tarango-Griess and Staff Sgt. Tricia Jameson, who lost their lives in Operation Iraqi Freedom and who called Nebraska home.

Our country is blessed to have freedoms so many areas of the world unfortunately do not. We have the freedom to succeed, and many women through our history have done just that. Now is the time to encourage the next generation to follow in their footsteps.

IN HONOR OF JAIME HERNANDEZ IN RECOGNITION OF HIS EXEM- PLARY SERVICE

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. BECERRA. Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today and acknowledge Jaime Hernandez, a friend and outstanding leader for working men and women in America. On March 31, 2007, community members and leaders throughout Los Angeles will gather to commend Jaime for his 38 years of dedication to the Laborers' International Union of North America, Local 300.

Jaime was born to Antonio and Amalia Hernandez in Jalisco, Mexico in 1942. Like so many people, his parents moved the family to the United States in search of the American dream. He learned the value of union work early on from his father, who was a committed and passionate Laborer for 14 years. In this respect, Jaime and I are much alike. Just as Jaime's father spent many years as a proud Laborer, so did my father. Like Jaime, when I worked alongside my father as a young man, I learned from him the dignity and pride that comes from hard work. Whether digging ditches, laying cement, or raising manholes, I learned that if you work hard you deserve the American dream. I know Jaime and I both draw upon these lessons to this day.

Since first joining the Laborers in 1969, Jaime has fought for greater opportunities for workers, better wages, expanded benefits, and safer work sites across California. Rising from the role of a rank-and-file member, he was appointed as a Laborers' Field Representative in 1987. Then in 1994, his peers acted on their recognition of his talents and commitment and elected him President and Executive Board Member of Laborers' Local 300. His subse-

quent re-elections in leadership roles resulted from Jaime having distinguished himself in the labor community as a true leader and advocate for working men and women. Jaime is now retiring as Secretary-Treasurer—a position he has held since 2000.

A. Philip Randolph, a prominent civil rights and union leader, once said, "The essence of trade unionism is social uplift. The labor movement has been the haven for the dispossessed, the despised, the neglected, the downtrodden, and the poor." Just as his parents sought a better life for their children through hard work, Jaime has worked to keep that opportunity available to people from all walks of life. Jaime has been an integral part of the Laborers' mission by bringing justice, honor, and a voice to hard working people across America.

Jaime has been married to his high school sweetheart, Anita, for 44 years. Together, they have four children and nine grandchildren, all of whom have been raised with Jaime's understanding and reverence for social and economic justice. They have all seen Jaime work on behalf of non-profit organizations, charities, law enforcement agencies, and children's groups with the assistance of the union.

Madam Speaker, it is with pride as a friend, a former member of the Laborers' Union (Local 187 in Sacramento), and an admirer of hard work that I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Jaime Hernandez for his lifetime devotion to bringing dignity to the lives of every day Americans, and his loyal service to Local 300 of the Laborers' International Union of North America. On behalf of the countless Laborers, including me, to whom Jaime Hernandez has dedicated his career, and the entire labor community which has benefited immensely from his lifelong contributions, I say thank you and may you enjoy many more years of fruitful endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO MANATEE COUNTY SHERIFF CHARLIE WELLS

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. BUCHANAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Manatee County Sheriff Charlie Wells who will retire on April 2nd after 41 years in law enforcement. Sheriff Wells is an honorable public servant whose selfless dedication, vision, and leadership has helped to protect the more than 300,000 residents of Manatee County and earned him the respect of the community as well as his colleagues in law enforcement.

Charlie Wells was first elected sheriff in 1984 and took office in January of 1985. He was reelected five times, serving a total of 22 years, which makes him the longest serving sheriff in the history of Manatee County.

Among his greatest achievements is the enactment of the Stop Turning Our Prisoners Act, which he helped pass to require inmates to serve at least 85 percent of their prison sentence. He is also credited with pioneering and implementing several other innovative programs designed to help keep kids in school and out of trouble. They include the establishment of:

A Police Athletic League recreation complex which was expanded from a recreational program to one of Florida's first charter schools;

The first boot camp program in Florida for juvenile offenders to promote discipline, education, physical fitness, and respect for self and others;

A school resource officer to promote positive relationships with youth;

Child Protection Services to consolidate services and ensure the safety of children with family related problems; and

Victims First, which is a charity organization that provides scholarships to children whose parents have been murdered or sent to prison as a result of murdering the other parent.

Also, under this leadership, a new jail complex was built and the agency of 1,100 employees became nationally accredited in both corrections and law enforcement.

The six-term Sheriff also served in various capacities with the Florida Sheriffs Association including president and chairman of the Legislative Committee.

He began his law enforcement career with the Florida Highway Patrol where he worked for 15 years as a state trooper. He also worked for one year as an investigator with the State Attorney's office and served for two years as the Chief of Police for the City of Bradenton.

He ends his career with the successful arrest of kidnapping suspect Vicente Beltran-Moreno who is charged with kidnapping a 13 year-old boy.

Charlie Wells has prevented, investigated, and solved countless crimes. I thank him for his tireless efforts to protect the people of Manatee County and wish him the very best in retirement.

TRIBUTE TO ELKS USA

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, let me take this means to pay tribute to the Elks USA for their continued dedication to communities across the nation and their contributions to the veterans of this country.

Founded after the Civil War with a goal of promoting friendship and charity, the Elks are the nation's oldest and largest fraternal organization, with 1.1 million members and lodges in all fifty states. Last year, they donated 9.7 million hours and contributed almost \$263 million to a variety of charitable and philanthropic causes.

One of the major tenets of the Elks is a commitment to the military and its veterans. In 1918, the Elks built a 700-bed hospital in Boston to rehabilitate World War I wounded and gave it to the nation. Elks made a solemn pledge that "so long as there are veterans, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks will never forget them." This commitment still stands through an extensive visitation program in VA hospitals and nursing homes. As the VA's only source of leather, the men and women of the Elks gather animal hides, pay for the tanning, and provide wheelchair gloves and leather used for therapy programs at VA medical centers nationwide. In 2005, they logged 1,037,932 hours visiting hospitalized veterans and taking many of the patients to baseball games, fishing trips, and other outings.

The Elks were among the first groups to endorse the World War II Memorial, donating \$1.2 million towards its construction. In addition, the Elks raised a similar amount to aid the victims of the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks.

During World War II and the Korean War, the Elks operated canteens for the troops. A decade ago, they gave \$100,000 to service chaplains to support the families of the Gulf War wounded at Walter Reed and other military hospitals. A current project, dubbed the Army of Hope, provides support for the families of reservists and National Guard personnel who have been called to active duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. For the citizen soldiers whose lives have been disrupted, Elks are helping with the kids, making minor home repairs, writing wills, and providing other assistance for their families.

The Elks were founders of Flag Day, a concept President Harry Truman (himself an Elk) signed into law. They promote the flying of the Flag, promote the observance of Veterans Day and Memorial Day, and sponsor parades along with other patriotic events.

Madam Speaker, I know the Members of the House will join me in commending Elks USA for their commitment to bettering our country and we thank them for their dedication to our military families.

INTRODUCTION OF MAKING BROWNFIELDS TAX INCENTIVE PERMANENT LEGISLATION

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, Thank you for the opportunity to offer an introductory statement regarding legislation Congressman BECERRA and I are introducing today making existing brownfields tax incentives permanent.

As you may know, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the Government Accountability Office estimate that there are more than 400,000 brownfield sites across the country. They exist in every state and in many of our districts, rural and urban. We have all seen them . . . they are abandoned gas stations and warehouses and manufacturing facilities that have been closed down. These sites once housed vibrant and productive businesses, but today are in desperate need of revitalization and redevelopment. Before they can be redeveloped, however, existing environmental contamination must be cleaned up.

The cost of cleanup can be significant and, when this is the case, often stand in the way of re-development projects. In some cases, the clean up costs can exceed \$1 million. The legislation we are introducing today helps make these clean ups more affordable by removing obstacles in the federal tax code that create obstacles to clean up.

Specifically, this legislation does two things: Make the Internal Revenue Code Section 198 expensing provision permanent. This provision allows for the expensing of brownfield clean up costs. Currently, this provision expires at the end of 2007;

Repeal the provision in the law that recaptures the expense deduction as taxable income when the property is sold.

A recent survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors of 187 large and small cities found that if their existing brownfields were redeveloped, it could bring additional tax revenues to their cities of approximately \$2 billion and create up to \$500,000 jobs.

The issue of brownfield cleanups has been important to me since I joined the Ways and Means Committee in 1996. This new legislation represents more than a decade of work on this issue. These final steps involve making the tax incentive permanent and repealing the recapture requirement. I look forward to working with Mr. BECERRA to getting these final steps made into a permanent part of our tax code.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK COMFORT

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of a distinguished educator, coach Frank Comfort. It is fitting that we recognize this exceptional gentleman for his remarkable contributions to higher education, his manifold successes and abiding dedication to college athletics, and his enduring influence on generations of college students.

Frank Comfort has the distinction of being the winningest dual-meet swimming coach in NCAA history. He has amassed an unparalleled record of leadership and has devoted his time, skills, and energy to cultivating the very best in student-athletes. His career has been defined not only by athletic achievement, but by a dedication to the development of young men and women who are student-athletes in the finest sense: those who successfully combine athletic prowess with academic achievement.

Frank Comfort is a 1967 alumnus of Syracuse University, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in history and physical education. He went on to earn a Master of Arts in physical education from the University of North Carolina, UNC, and in 1968, became the head swimming coach for men and women at Johns Hopkins University. At Hopkins, his swimmers won 12 NCAA individual titles and one NCAA relay title. In 1977, Frank Comfort returned to UNC, where his consistent leadership and dedication to excellence for 30 years as Head Coach have made him one of the most respected college swimming coaches in history.

Many people have made notable contributions to collegiate athletics. Few leave the legacy of Frank Comfort. He has developed swimming teams that have thrilled the collegiate athletic world with their courage, skill and achievement. Frank Comfort's swimmers and divers have won often and won big. Of his 578 dual meet wins, 308 have come while coaching men's teams and 270 while coaching women's teams. More than a decade ago, Frank Comfort became the winningest swimming coach in the history of the Atlantic Coast Conference in terms of league championships won. Overall, he has led Tar Heel teams to 25 Atlantic Coast Conference championships during his tenure—the most in conference history by a single coach. In his 30 years at UNC, his women's teams have been a consistent national force, finishing in the top 25 an astounding 25 times, including nine seasons in the top

ten. During his long tenure at UNC, he has taught many National Collegiate Athletic Association, Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women and U.S. Swimming national champion swimmers. Several of his swimmers were chosen to represent the United States in the Olympics as well. Because of these accomplishments, Frank Comfort's stature as a coach has solidified in the amateur and international ranks. Among his many additional coaching positions, he served on the coaching staff at the U.S. Olympic Festival on six occasions and as the head coach of the U.S. Women's Team which competed in the Goodwill Games in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1994.

It comes as no surprise that Frank Comfort's name has been on the U.S. Swimming International Coaches List consistently since 1976, an honor going only to the most elite coaches in the United States. He was named the youngest recipient ever of the Master Coach Award from the College Swimming Coaches Association and was inducted into the Johns Hopkins Athletic Hall of Fame.

Frank Comfort is a living testament to the positive role that collegiate athletics plays in our national experience. His guidance has empowered both teams and individuals to fulfill their promise and to extend their purpose and passion, to step out of their comfort zone and excel. Athletic achievement is not an endeavor that runs itself. It requires the constant leadership, foresight, encouragement, and discipline that can be afforded only by dedicated coaches. Coaches are one of the best examples of what is great about our country. They inspire students and athletes to become better people; to give their best in every endeavor and to make the most of their God-given abilities. Frank Comfort's leadership is about cultivating the promise of the human spirit and encouraging those who work daily to make that promise a reality.

Frank Comfort's career will soon come to a close. After almost 40 years as a coach and educator, he has left an indelible mark on college athletics and on countless students whom he has coached, mentored, advised, and inspired. Please join me in commending Frank Comfort, distinguished coach and educator, and an exemplar of strong character and leadership.

WOUNDED WARRIOR ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2007

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the Wounded Warrior Assistance Act, H.R. 1538.

This legislation will enhance the way the Department of Defense provides medical care for wounded warriors. Furthermore, the legislation will improve the transition of soldiers from the Department of Defense health care system to the Department of Veterans Affairs. An evaluation of care that our wounded men and women are receiving is requested in the legislation. I strongly support these provisions.

The Wounded Warriors Assistance Act will help address and eliminate the red tape that veterans and soldiers get tangled in.

My home district in Albuquerque is home to one of the premier VA hospitals in the country. They provide excellent care and support to our veterans. This legislation will improve the transition that New Mexico Service Members may face when leaving the Department of Defense medical system and returning to New Mexico to receive care at Albuquerque VA hospital. Specifically, the improvements will include a written transition plan specifying the schedule of milestones for transition of the member from the military service before the date of separation or retirement and set up a formal process for transmittal of records and other information to the Department of Veterans Affairs on or before the date of separation or retirement during a formal meeting. Furthermore, the legislation would require the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish a single medical information system, which will be a significant improvement for our service members.

I look forward to the findings of the many reports requested in the legislation. It will allow us as a body to evaluate these findings and implement improvements and initiatives that will continue to support our brave men and women. I am grateful to all who serve their nation and we as a Congress have a responsibility to ensure they receive the best possible care. In this war on terrorism, the greatest burdens have fallen on the shoulders of a relatively small number of Americans who have volunteered to take great risks on our behalf. Events over the last few years have made a new generation of Americans realize just how precious our freedoms really are. We owe our freedom fighters—past, present, and future—a debt of gratitude for their selflessness and sacrifice. I will continue to fight to ensure that our veterans get the benefits they were promised, the health care they deserve, and the recognition that our nation owes them.

HONORING CESAR CHAVEZ

HON. PHIL HARE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. HARE. Madam Speaker, this Saturday, March 31, marks the 80th birthday of Cesar Chavez. I am honored to rise before you today to pay tribute to Mr. Chavez's dedicated advocacy for workers.

As a young child, Cesar Chavez experienced the long hours, horrible wages and other deplorable conditions and discrimination faced by migrant farm workers, which emboldened him to fight for justice and fairness for all working people of this country.

In 1962, Mr. Chavez founded the National Farm Workers Association (now known as the United Farm Workers of America), through which he organized migrant workers in campaigns for safe and fair working conditions, reasonable wages, decent housing, and the elimination of child labor.

His tireless leadership and use of nonviolent tactics, such as fasts, boycotts, strikes and pilgrimages, brought awareness to the conditions of farm workers and their struggle for better pay and safer working conditions.

Mr. Chavez is credited for the passage of the groundbreaking 1975 California Agriculture Labor Relations Act, which remains the only

law in the Nation that protects farm and migrant workers' rights to unionize.

Madam Speaker, I came out of the labor movement as a lining cutter at Seaford Clothing factory in Rock Island, IL. I owe Cesar Chavez a great deal of gratitude for his diligent efforts to achieve dignity, respect, fair wages, medical coverage, pension benefits, and humane living conditions for all workers, which laid the ground work for the additional labor protections I was able to fight for while President of UNITE Here local 617. Mr. Chavez has and always will be an inspiration to me, as well as a reminder of what can be achieved by the will and conviction of one person.

I am happy to see that several states have acknowledged the contributions of Cesar Chavez by dedicating a state holiday in his honor, including my home state of Illinois. For four consecutive Congresses, Congressman JOE BACA has led a movement to recognize the contributions of Cesar Chavez with a national holiday. I am honored to join the distinguished gentlemen from California and 51 of my colleagues as a cosponsor of H. Res. 76, the Cesar Chavez Holiday Act.

Not only does this legislation recognize the contributions Cesar Chavez made to the labor movement but it also aims to educate students on the life and work of this courageous man.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to honor Cesar Chavez by supporting the Cesar Chavez Holiday Act.

WOUNDED WARRIOR ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 28, 2007

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, due to a technical glitch, my vote on rollcall No. 204 was not recorded. Had my vote been recorded, I would have voted "yea."

REINTRODUCTION OF THE PLEA ACT

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, today I rise to reintroduce the PLEA Act to protect our citizens and to protect our law enforcement officers.

The PLEA Act would ban the Five Seven handgun, a weapon that has been designed by FN Herstal of Belgium to have the power necessary to pierce a bulletproof vest while still being small enough to conceal. In other words, it is the perfect weapon for criminals to use against police officers.

It is not useful as a hunting weapon and there are certainly other reasonable options for self-defense. So why do we need such a dangerous gun on our streets? The answer is that we do not.

Some in the gun lobby have said the claims about the gun's power have been exaggerated. But I have seen a demonstration of the

handgun myself. It is so powerful it can penetrate a bulletproof vest from as far as two football fields away. It is every bit as deadly as an assault rifle, but the Five-Seven can easily be concealed, putting law enforcement officials even more at risk.

Bulletproof vests are unfortunately sometimes the only protection that our law enforcement officials possess. If vests are no longer able to protect them, we are putting all of our police officers in great peril.

In fact, earlier this month there was a report in the press that a Mexican police officer was shot and killed by a Five Seven handgun despite the fact he was wearing a bulletproof vest.

Do not let this tragedy repeat itself here in the United States.

This is the type of gun that one would expect only to be available to the military, not citizens on the street. But I have heard from law enforcement officials in my district, in New York, that these guns have been confiscated all across the country. And not long ago, the Brady Campaign was able to purchase one just a few miles from here in Woodbridge, Virginia.

Now is the time for Congress and the Bush administration to ban this weapon.

That is why today I am reintroducing the PLEA Act to ban the sale, importation and possession of this gun.

I ask my colleagues to join me and the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence in supporting this important legislation. If you support law enforcement officers, then you should support banning this weapon.

INTRODUCING THE WILLIAM H. FRIST GIFT OF LIFE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the William H. Frist Gift of Life Congressional Medal Act with my colleague, Mr. CAMP of Michigan. This legislation creates a congressional commemorative medal for organ donors and their families, recognizing the brave and selfless act of organ donation. It is an important piece of legislation that I hope will continue to receive bipartisan support. I also want to thank Senator DURBIN and Senator GRASSLEY for introducing the companion bill in the Senate.

Former Senate majority leader and transplant surgeon Dr. William H. Frist was a tireless advocate of organ donors and their families during his time in the Senate. Dr. Frist worked on behalf of the Gift of Life Congressional Medal Act for years, and I'm pleased to name the bill in his honor.

There is a serious shortage of available and suitable organs for donation. Nearly 100,000 people are currently waiting for organ transplants—over 2,000 of these are children under age 18. The national waiting list has grown substantially every year. Since the waiting list began, at least 75,000 donation-eligible Americans have died waiting for an organ to become available—in 2005 alone, over 6,000 people died for lack of a suitable organ. Donating an organ to someone whose life de-

pends on it is laudable, and should be recognized and encouraged. The Gift of Life Congressional Medal Act is an important bill which would do just that.

Health and Human Services—HHS—has already implemented initiatives to raise the public awareness of this vital act of giving life. The Gift of Life Congressional Medal Act is a great opportunity for us to work with HHS to draw attention to this life-saving issue. It sends a clear message that donating one's organs is an act that should receive the profound respect of our Nation.

The Gift of Life Congressional Medal Act establishes a nonprofit fund to be used to design, produce, and distribute a congressional commemorative medal to organ donors or to a surviving family member. Enactment of this legislation would have no cost to the Federal Government. Startup costs are provided by the Treasury Department in the form of a loan, which would be fully repaid. Subsequently, the program would be self-sufficient through charitable donations.

This is noncontroversial, nonpartisan legislation to increase the rate of organ donation. I ask my colleagues to help bring an end to transplant waiting lists and recognize the enormous courage displayed by organ donors and their families. This bill honors these brave acts, while publicizing the critical need for increased organ donation. I urge swift passage of the William H. Frist Gift of Life Congressional Medal Act.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOSTON HIGASHI SCHOOL

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Boston Higashi School's 20th anniversary. Since 1987, the Boston Higashi School has been treating children with autism and pervasive developmental disorders. Their dedicated work helps students benefit from and contribute to society while bringing hope and joy to their families.

Autism, a lifelong, nonprogressive developmental disability, results from still unspecified impairments to normal brain development. Impairments in social interaction, communication and in the capacity for imaginative and symbolic thinking characterize this syndrome. Autism varies in severity from person to person. Therefore, individuals are often described as having autism spectrum disorder.

The Boston Higashi School bases its philosophy in the world-renowned tenets of Daily Life Therapy developed by the late Dr. Kiyo Kitahara of Tokyo, Japan. Dr. Kiyo Kitahara's method provides children with systematic education through the intermingling of academics and technology, as well as art, music and physical education. This educational approach is intended to help individuals achieve social independence and dignity.

Madam Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with the faculty, students and families of this fine institution in celebrating the school's 20 years of dedicated service. I would like to commend their perseverance and patience in coping with

the day-to-day realities of this disorder and wish them well. I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing the mission and accomplishments of the Boston Higashi School and its dedication to helping students and their families.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACCELERATION ACT OF 2007

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I introduce, along with Representatives PHIL ENGLISH and MIKE THOMPSON, the Broadband Deployment Acceleration Act of 2007. This legislation will allow immediate depreciation of the costs of new broadband infrastructure investments, speeding the deployment of broadband communications technology. The U.S. currently lags far behind many other industrialized nations in broadband deployment. At a time when America's global economic leadership is facing rising challenges from abroad, this bill will promote innovation and keep America competitive.

By increasing the reach and capability of America's broadband network, the Broadband Deployment Acceleration Act is a strategic investment that will benefit the education of our children, the delivery of health care and the overall economy. In the classroom, broadband will provide children and teachers with access to new information and learning tools, and allow for remote learning opportunities. At hospitals and doctors' offices, broadband will facilitate the application of information technology to health care, reducing costs and improving the quality of care that patients receive. Broadband will also increase productivity and efficiency in homes and at businesses, while giving our constituents access to information and communications capabilities as never before. The need for the Broadband Deployment Acceleration Act is clear and now is the time for Congress to act.

Similar legislation received broad bipartisan support in the past, with as many as 225 House cosponsors and 65 Senate cosponsors. This bill was an important priority for my late husband, who worked along with Mr. ENGLISH, Senator ROCKEFELLER, Senator BAUCUS, and the late Senator Moynihan to craft it in 2000. It passed the Senate three times, only to be stripped out in conference by the House. I wish that our constituents were already benefiting from the effects of this legislation, and we should not delay enactment any longer.

The Broadband Deployment Acceleration Act will provide a temporary, two-tiered tax incentive to stimulate new investment in this crucial infrastructure: 50 percent expensing for investment in "current-generation" broadband infrastructure in rural and underserved areas, and full expensing for "next generation" broadband investments in those same areas, as well as residential areas generally. The purpose of this mechanism is to push broadband providers to roll out services in areas and at speeds that would not be economically feasible in the absence of this legislation. Therefore, this bill will not reward action that is already occurring.

To facilitate that goal, the Broadband Deployment Acceleration Act it is designed to be technology neutral, making delivery of service, not the delivery medium, the factor for eligibility. This will ensure that this tax incentive does not inhibit competition among broadband providers, thereby maximizing choice for consumers. Any broadband provider meeting the required speeds, measured in megabits of data delivered to and from the consumer per second, is eligible, whether such service is provided over telephone wire, cable modem, optical fiber, wireless, satellite, or other forms of technology.

It is past time that Congress took action to ensure that all Americans have access to broadband communications technology. The Broadband Deployment Acceleration Act is a practical and effective mechanism that will help provide our constituents access to this important technology. I hope that my colleagues will support this legislation to bolster the innovation and competitiveness of this Nation.

REMEMBERING THE 1947 TEXAS CITY DISASTER

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, in recognition of the sixtieth anniversary of the explosion of the *Grand Camp* ship in the Texas City harbor on April 16, residents of Texas City, in my congressional district, will come together to honor those who lost their lives in the 1947 explosions. I am honored to join my constituents in commemorating those who lost their lives in this tragedy.

Early in the morning of April 16, 1947 the *Grand Camp* caught fire. As the fire combined with the ammonium nitrate on the *Grand Camp*, a bright orange flame lit up the sky and smoke soared an estimated 2,000 feet into the air. Within seconds of the explosion, the Monsanto Chemical Plant was in flames. The fire spread quickly to the refineries that made up the Texas City industrial complex, causing entire buildings to collapse.

The destruction was not limited to Texas City. Windows rattled in Baytown, while a mist of black oil reigned in the city of Galveston. The tragedy and destruction did not end there. A miniature tidal wave resulted when the water from the bay, which had been driven out by the explosion, rushed in over the docks and rushed 150 feet inland, subsuming everything within its path. By nightfall, rescue workers were still searching for those trapped in the wreckage. But the devastation would continue.

At 1:10 a.m., another ship, the *High Flyer*, which was loaded with ammonium nitrate and sulfur, exploded. This explosion destroyed another ship, the *Wilson B. Keene*, as well as a concrete warehouse and a grain elevator.

A week passed before all of the fires were extinguished, and a month passed before the last body was pulled from the rubble—although some bodies were never recovered. Approximately 600 people lost their lives because of this tragedy. Almost every member of the Texas City fire department gave his life fighting the first explosion. Plant workers, dock

workers, and bystanders were among the other victims. Perhaps most tragic of all, the flames claimed the lives of several children.

A memorial cemetery now sits near Loop 197 in Texas City as a silent reminder of the 63 unidentified dead who are buried in numbered graves. In 1980, a memorial park was created to honor the others who died in the tragedy.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I take this opportunity to join my constituents in paying my respects to those who lost their lives in the 1947 explosion of the *Grand Camp* in Texas City.

HONORING KEN HOUSE

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, there have been many giants in the transportation history of this Nation.

During his time as a Postmaster General, which included service both before and after American independence, Ben Franklin surveyed, rerouted, and marked post roads in the 18th century. In the 19th century, great companies with names like Baltimore and Ohio, Union Pacific, and Burlington Northern networked a growing industrial America from coast-to-coast with railroads. DeWitt Clinton helped bring the Erie Canal into existence. In the 20th century, new transportation visionaries like the Wright brothers led the Nation to unprecedented mobility and economic growth.

Many transportation experts have toiled quietly behind the scenes in the 230 years of the United States to maintain and build on these legacies and utter necessities of American prosperity.

Kenneth House, of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure staff, has been one of those individuals for more than a quarter century. Madam Speaker, I rise today in tribute to and gratitude for Ken House's service to this great institution and the American people.

Ironically, Ken House is indeed a giant physically. At 6 feet 5 inches tall, Ken's first success was not on the roads but on the courts. His high school basketball prowess in Baltimore led to a scholarship and distinction at New Jersey's Seton Hall University. How good was Ken back then? Decades later, Ken remains Seton Hall's third-highest rebounder and its ninth-highest basketball player in points scored.

While in graduate school, Ken worked as assistant basketball coach at Seton Hall. He continued coaching and mentoring young people even after he completed his master's degree. Had he chosen to turn pro, NBA history might have been changed as transportation history certainly was transformed—and for the better—with Ken's help.

In 1977, Ken worked on the National Transportation Policy Study Commission to examine the transportation needs in the United States. The Commission had been created in the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1976. After the Commission's report was submitted to Congress in 1979, Ken went to work in the Carter Administration. Ken was a congressional relations officer for the Department of Transportation,

DOT, advocating the President's transportation policies and responding to congressional inquiries—such as mine—about those policies and other DOT programs.

In 1981, Ken came to the House of Representatives and began his long professional career in what was the Subcommittee on Surface Transportation of the Committee on Public Works and Transportation. He is now recognized by his colleagues in the transportation field as an encyclopedia of knowledge on transportation issues.

Ken is warmly regarded by all as a professional in every sense. Soft-spoken and always approachable, Ken is a walking storehouse of transportation history, programs, principles, and impacts. It is virtually impossible to ask him a question on any highway or transit issue to which he will fail to provide an objective, well-reasoned, and insightful answer. His only agenda: public service.

After three decades of public service in both the executive and legislative branches of the Federal Government, Ken has retired. Many tried to change his mind, but his decision was as all others: well-reasoned. As was true on the basketball court for Seton Hall, for Ken, it was simply time to pass the ball to a colleague.

Thus, Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today, but I do so gladly. I do so to recognize a rare individual among us. The long, selfless, dedicated, and faithful service of Ken House to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, to the House of Representatives, and to the United States, has been replete with countless sacrifices during his distinguished career. It is now our turn for the sacrifice as we miss his counsel and friendship. All of us in the transportation community wish Ken and his family all the best in the years ahead.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CLARK HIGH SCHOOL

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Clark High School for being recognized as one of the nation's premier high schools for its Advanced Placement courses.

Clark High School was recently honored as a recipient of the 2006–2007 Siemens Foundation Award for Advanced Placement, making Clark High School one of only 50 high schools nationwide to receive this recognition. The Siemens Awards were established in 1998 to strengthen the quality of math, science and technology aptitude within our nation's schools and to identify the partnership between the Siemens Foundation and the College Board. Clark High School was chosen as one of this year's recipients for its commitment to their students and the school's leadership in Advanced Placement participation and performance.

Edward W. Clark High School opened its doors to Las Vegas students in the fall of 1965 with the Space Age student in mind. The Clark County School Board designed and constructed the building to provide each student with the right type of atmosphere for learning. The school's mission statement focuses on

the preparation of each student to pursue life-long learning. In the Curriculum and Professional Development Division of the Clark County School District, Clark High School is one of nine high schools in the district to offer magnet programs to its students which include The Academy for Mathematics, Science, Applied Technology; The Academy of Finance; and The Teacher Education Academy at Clark High.

The school's highly deserved recognition is for the admirable job the faculty of Clark High School, specifically those involved in the Academy of Mathematics, Science and Applied Technology Magnet Program, for their hard work in strengthening the math, science and technology education in their Advanced Placement classes. The faculty at Clark High School has truly done an exemplary job in preparing its students for the high tech workplace in today's global economy. For the incredible commitment they have made to the success of Academy of Mathematics, Science and Applied Technology Magnet Program, I would like to commend the following individuals: Shirley McLees, Sidney Lupu, Erin Buchner, Gabriele Ward, Nicholas Bean, Aaron Dehne, Brian Blank, Rosa Leathers, Cynthia McCoy, Nadine Gary, Donna Gonzalez, Manami Mata, Phil Bombino, Ron Jederberg, Jeff Lacoff, Brian Kahre, Leslie McNamara, and Roger West.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the Academy of Mathematics, Science and Applied Technology Magnet Program and the Advanced Placement teachers at Clark High School. Their recognition by the Siemens Foundation is truly honorable and is a direct result of the dedicated and expert faculty of the Program. I applaud their success and wish them the best in their future endeavors.

U.S. TROOP READINESS, VETERANS' HEALTH, AND IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 23, 2007

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this supplemental funding bill which will for the first time assert the will of Congress and the American people to change the President's failed plan of "Stay the Course." For far too long, the President has ignored the will of the American public. In passing this bill, we will send a message to the President that this is no longer acceptable.

This legislation includes meaningful benchmarks and deadlines that provide the Iraqis with incentives to take responsibility for their own security and makes way for the return of our troops. The bill also requires the Iraqi government to take meaningful steps towards national reconciliation by distributing oil revenues fairly, providing opportunities to the Sunni minority, and amending the constitution to discourage further fragmentation.

We can no longer afford to give the President a blank check for the war in Iraq. There are thousands of brave men and women deployed overseas in harm's way right now who are depending on us. We need to put Iraqis up front, so that we can remove Americans

from the front lines. This legislation will encourage the Iraqis to stand up and be accountable for the security of their country. I urge my colleagues to support this emergency supplemental funding bill.

HONORING THOMAS BOGGS

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Thomas Boggs, the CEO of Huey's, Inc. of Memphis, Tennessee. Huey's Restaurant is a Memphis fixture, which has been serving blues, brews and burgers to its regulars for over 35 years with great service and better people. Since 1970, Huey's has grown from a favorite local hangout in Midtown Memphis to become a highly successful family-run restaurant and bar, with locations across Greater Memphis.

Mr. Boggs began his career in music, yet another example of the rich culture of Memphis, first playing for Tommy Burk and the Counts and Flash and the Board of Directors, before joining the blue-eyed, soul group the Box Tops as drummer. The Box Tops were best known for their hits "The Letter," "Cry Like a Baby" and "Soul Deep," songs which are permanent parts of the rock and soul landscape.

Later, married with children, Thomas finished his history degree while waiting tables at T.G.I. Friday's. A business "natural", Thomas Boggs quickly moved up to Friday's corporate offices in Dallas. But the pull of his beloved Memphis was strong. Not long after returning, he moved into management at Huey's bar and, using his restaurant expertise, expanded the enterprise into a restaurant and, eventually, to seven locations.

Since Mr. Boggs came on board in 1975, Huey's has flourished. It is currently in its 22nd year as the "Best Burger" in Memphis, according to an annual ranking by Memphis Magazine. Mr. Boggs has won the highest award given by the 400 members of the Memphis Restaurant Association and the Newt Hardin Award, given for outstanding service to the restaurant industry. He also received the Jefferson Award in 2002, which is given by the American Institute for Public Service in recognition for outstanding community and public service.

Thomas Boggs has been a true public servant in Memphis, continually giving of himself to the community. He has served on the Memphis Zoo Board, the Aloysius Home board, and as chairman of the Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau. He served as Food and Beverage co-chair of the Blues Ball, and has served as both Vice-President and President of Memphis in May. He was president of the Memphis Restaurant Association as well as the President of the Advisory Board of the Food Bank and has been an active participant of Leadership Memphis. 2007 marks the 18th Earthquake Open, Huey's annual golf tournament which was created and is hosted by Thomas Boggs and which benefits the Memphis Zoo.

Thomas Boggs is the kind of citizen who makes us all proud. He gives his time, his energy and his heart to make his community a

better place to live. He is a credit both to his profession and his city. I'm proud to call Thomas Boggs my friend and pleased to honor him today on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DOTTIE WHITAKER

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend Dottie Whitaker for her remarkable dedication to ending prescription narcotic abuse.

Dottie began her activism as a result of the tragic and untimely death of her beloved daughter, Tammie Armato. Tammie passed away on September 14, 2005, from an accidental prescription drug overdose. Tammie became addicted to prescription pain medication while being treated by a doctor for injuries she sustained in a car accident in 1995. The doctor she had been seeing at the time of her death was unfamiliar with Tammie's health history and gave her a large prescription of two different pain medications.

After Tammie's death, Dottie learned that prescription drug overdose is a nationwide epidemic. Three out of every five individuals who attend drug rehabilitation do so for prescription drug abuse. Additionally, more people die each year as a result of prescription drug overdoses than as a result of illegal drug overdoses. Inspired to do all she could to prevent others from experiencing the terrible loss that she has suffered, Dottie created Project Tammie. Project Tammie is an organization dedicated to combating accidental prescription narcotic overdose.

In an effort to save lives and prevent other individuals and families from suffering the effects of prescription drug addiction, Dottie has become a passionate advocate for a nationwide Prescription Monitoring Program. This program will allow doctors and practitioners to become familiar with a patient's prescription drug history, other prescribing physicians, pharmacies and pertinent information before prescribing narcotics. A number of states have already established statewide Prescription Monitoring Programs, but Dottie believes the only way to truly prevent prescription drug abuse and overdoses is to establish a nationwide program. Through Project Tammie, Dottie has worked tirelessly to create awareness and gain support for legislation that would require all states to set up Prescription Monitoring Programs. Dottie's hope is that this program would not only prevent patients from "doctor shopping," but would also help practitioners recognize addiction and help patients seek treatment.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Dottie Whitaker for her efforts in organizing Project Tammie. In the face of a heartbreaking loss, she has chosen to make a difference and find a solution that will help others. She is an inspiring example of strength, courage and selflessness. Her dedication and tireless activism is truly commendable. I applaud her outstanding commitment to this important issue and wish her the best in her future endeavors.

MADERA WATER SUPPLY
ENHANCEMENT ACT

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Madera Water Supply Enhancement Act, which authorizes the Bureau of Reclamation to participate in the design and construction of the Madera Water Supply and Enhancement Project. This important water bank project will help improve water supply in California's San Joaquin Valley.

The Bureau has completed its final appraisal study and has concluded that the Madera water bank will increase water supply, provide groundwater resource protection, mitigate the water supply impacts of the San Joaquin River restoration project, contribute to habitat conservation and have other positive impacts on the severe water supply and reliability problem in the area.

The Project will be located on the over 13,000-acre Madera Ranch, where the soils on and underneath the land are ideal for percolating water from the surface to the aquifer for storage. The land is also a valuable habitat for numerous species and contains large sections of the region's native grasslands.

In the 109th Congress, the Resources Committee held hearings on this legislation and the House unanimously passed H.R. 3897, the predecessor legislation. There are two changes in this legislation from the bill that passed in the last Congress. First, we are immediately authorizing construction of the Project without further study. Second, the legislation caps the total cost of the Project, limiting the Federal government's contribution to 25 percent of total cost, which cannot exceed \$90 million. We have made these changes for the following reasons.

First, the water supply and reliability problems in the area are, as the Bureau has acknowledged, severe. The Bureau's Friant Division is falling almost 1 million acre-feet of water per year short in meeting its contractual commitments, and groundwater pumping is exceeding groundwater recharge by approximately 100,000 acre-feet per year, causing severe groundwater level declines. The proposed San Joaquin River restoration could reduce Madera's water allocation, already insufficient, by an additional 10–20 percent or more. The water bank, by storing excess water in wet years, will provide a much needed source of water in dry years, facilitate the restoration of groundwater levels over time and mitigate the adverse impact on water supply as a result of the San Joaquin River restoration project.

The Madera Irrigation District has already invested over \$40 million to acquire the land and plan this Project. The region's economic well-being depends on having a secure, sufficient and reliable water supply. We simply cannot continue to delay making the Madera water bank a reality.

Second, the Madera water bank represents a very unique situation. As the Bureau stated in the Final Appraisal Report, "[t]he Madera Ranch Groundwater Bank is a project that has been investigated for approximately 10 years for its potential to improve water supply reliability and reduce groundwater overdraft con-

ditions." Over a decade ago, the Bureau of Reclamation tried to buy the Madera Ranch and build its own water bank. As part of this effort, the Bureau conducted extensive studies regarding the feasibility of this Project and concluded that the Project was feasible. After the Bureau decided not to go forward with the Project because of local opposition, private entities conducted further studies with the same positive results. Most recently, the Madera Irrigation District has undertaken additional costs studies conducted by the same engineering firm that worked for the Bureau, further technical studies regarding the Project's feasibility and a completed and certified environmental impact study.

To date, over \$8 million has been spent on studies related to the Project, not counting the Bureau's own substantial efforts to study the feasibility of a water bank at the site. All of this work, including four successful pilot tests, has verified that the Project is not only feasible, but with a certified Environmental Impact Report in place, ready to move immediately to the construction phase, most especially in light of the area's water supply problems.

The legislation lists no fewer than 18 studies and reports regarding this Project that have been undertaken over the past 10 years, many of which done by the Bureau or with the Bureau's knowledge and involvement. Clearly, no further study is required given the urgent need and unique history of the Project.

Third, we recognize that when committing to support a project, the Federal government requires assurances regarding the extent of its financial commitment. The Madera Irrigation District has already evidenced its commitment to the Project by investing to date over \$40 million. The legislation establishes a ceiling of \$90 million for the total cost of the Project. With the prevailing 25 percent federal cost share for such projects, the Federal government's financial commitment is limited to \$22.5 million or 25 percent of total cost, whichever is less.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to expand water supply opportunities in California's San Joaquin Valley.

THE AGRICULTURE BUSINESS
SECURITY TAX CREDIT ACT

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise to inform my colleagues of legislation I have introduced today to strengthen security at facilities where agricultural chemicals and fertilizers are manufactured, transported and stored.

The legislation that I have proposed, The Agricultural Business Security Tax Credit Act, extends tax initiatives to help defray the high costs agricultural businesses now face enhancing on-site security. I have introduced similar legislation in the past two Congresses.

Farm-use chemical production is unique in its use, distribution and security needs. Pesticides and fertilizers, while important to farmers and agricultural businesses, can also be used as agents for manufacturing illegal drugs such as methamphetamine. Some chemicals can even be used to develop explosive de-

vices, making these sites a potential target for foreign and domestic terrorists.

I believe the incentives offered in The Agricultural Business Security Tax Credit Act will promote improved security at agricultural facilities that handle chemicals and fertilizers, helping them take the necessary steps to better protect U.S. agriculture and the American public from potential threats and other illegal activity.

I urge my colleagues to consider supporting this bill.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ESTES
McDONIEL

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of my friend Estes McDoniel, a former Mayor of Henderson, Nevada and a Basic High School Principal.

Estes earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Education from the University of Arizona. After college, Mr. McDoniel moved to Henderson where he began his long and distinguished career in the Clark County School District as a teacher at Basic High School. Estes' teaching career was interrupted when he enlisted in the Navy and served in the Pacific theater off the coast of Okinawa, Japan during World War II.

Following his service, Estes returned to Basic High School where he continued his exemplary teaching service. Estes was a science teacher, vocational carpentry and industrial studies educator, head coach of the football, basketball, and track teams, Athletic Director, Assistant Principal, and Principal. Estes' dedication to the community expanded beyond the walls of the classroom where in 1969 he was elected Mayor of Henderson, Nevada. In 1988, Estes' great service to the Clark County community was recognized when an elementary school was named in his honor.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the life and memory of my friend Estes McDoniel. His dedication to the Clark County community and the City of Henderson was commendable and should serve as an example to us all.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON
THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR
2008

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2008. At a time when we need to be fiscally responsible, the Democrats unveiled a budget plan that would increase taxes and increase spending.

Cutting taxes, not increasing taxes, is the solution to spurring economic growth. Our economic recovery after the \$2 trillion of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 was directly related to these creative tax cuts. We

have witnessed more money being kept in the taxpayers' pocketbooks and more small businesses being established due to the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts. In fact, my district, which was hardest hit community after September 11, 2001, is now recovering due to accelerated depreciation and other tax incentives.

Instead of recognizing this truism, the Democrat budget will impose the largest tax increase in American history. The tax relief Americans have been enjoying would cease to exist under this legislation. The Marriage Penalty Relief would be eliminated and 23 million taxpayers would see their taxes increase by an average of \$466 in 2011. As we continue on down the list of tax hikes, 31 million taxpayers would be affected by the Child Tax Credit being cut in half. Their taxes would increase by an average of \$859 in 2011.

These tax increases are not for a greater good of reducing the deficit but to allow Democrats the freedom to spend more and expand the government. My colleagues seem to be living up to their moniker "Tax and Spend" Democrats. This budget is above and beyond the President's request and would amount to some \$22.5 billion in spending in 2008 alone for nondefense and nonemergency appropriations. The bill also does not include any meaningful entitlement reform—the most problematic detriment to our deficit.

This is not a plan for fiscal responsibility. This is a plan to spend the taxpayers' money flippantly. We need to be conscious of how the American taxpayers' money is spent. As Members of Congress we were sent here to look out for the best interests of our constituents and this budget resolution in not proving to do that.

HONORING THE OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY SERVICE OF THE KRAECK FAMILY

HON. PATRICK J. MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the Kraeck family for their dedication to American soldiers. They coordinated a project to donate care packages to the troops at Fort Dix before deployment and they also shipped packages to troops overseas. The packages contained valentines, supplies and snacks, as well as encouraging words from nursery, elementary and middle school students.

The Kraeck family undertook this remarkable project as a way to remind all of us, especially those deployed in a war zone, that our admiration and gratitude for our military is limitless. The broad reach of the donations prove this point.

This impressive project united hundreds of people toward a common cause: supporting our troops. With the help of students, parents, teachers and principals, as well as area librarians, businesses, newspapers and Girl Scout troops, the Kraecks tirelessly organized the collection and distribution of Girl Scout cookies, toiletries, and snacks to the soldiers. Additionally, more than 1,000 valentines, handmade by local children, were sent expressing their gratitude, esteem, and compassion for the troops.

The Kraeck family has already shipped more than 620 boxes of Girl Scout cookies and delivered supplies to Fort Dix to be distributed before deployment. They plan to continue sending even more shipments overseas in coming months and I encourage their efforts.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to congratulate and thank Kathy, Emily and Alison Kraeck and all those involved in these noble efforts. On a personal note, as an Iraq war veteran, I especially appreciate the Kraeck family's work on this worthy project.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO LOIS AND JERRY TARKANIAN

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Lois and Jerry Tarkanian for their commitment and dedication to the Clark County community and congratulate them on being selected by the Clark County School Board to have a new middle school named in their honor.

Lois Tarkanian has been actively involved in a number of organizations dedicated to improving the lives of Nevadans. After receiving her Bachelors of Arts in education, a Master of Arts in Speech Pathology as well as a Doctorate in leadership and human behavior, a certificate in speech pathology, language, and audiology, Lois began a long and distinguished teaching career. She wanted to give more to her community and expand her knowledge as she worked as a speech pathologist, principal, central office administrator and as a college instructor both in Nevada and California. Lois has also served as a member of the Clark County Board of School Trustees for 12 years. In addition to her commitment to enriching the lives of her students, Lois has also conducted clinical work with autistic, deaf and aphasic children. Presently, Lois serves as the Las Vegas City Councilwoman in the 1st Ward, a position she has held since 2005, she also serves on the City of Las Vegas Real Estate Committee and Yucca Mountain Nuclear Repository Committee.

In addition to her professional success, Lois also has a number of philanthropic pursuits. She serves as a board member for the Catholic Charities, the Clark County Public Education Foundation, Family and Child Treatment Center for Abused Children and the Oralingua School for the Hearing Impaired. Lois has received a number of accolades as a result of her dedicated services, such as the Humanitarian of the Year by the Catholic Community Services, and the Distinguished Woman of Nevada and Citizen of the Year by the Nevada Family and Child Treatment Center.

Jerry Tarkanian played basketball for Fresno State and later earned his master's degree with honors in Educational Management. Along with his wife, they understand the importance of education and donated \$100,000 to the University of Fresno State's Madden Library and initiated the "Baskets for Books Program". In addition to his dedicated service of enriching the lives and educational experiences of students, Jerry is known for his ex-

ceptional coaching abilities. He started coaching in 1956 at San Joaquin Memorial High School. On the collegiate level, he has coached Long Beach State, Fresno State and UNLV. Jerry has spent over 38 seasons as a head coach in collegiate basketball. Not only has he taken Fresno State to NCAA Tournament appearances in 2000 and 2001, 2001 WAC title and 2002 WAC Tournament Championship, but he has lead UNLV to four NCAA Final Four appearances and a national championship in 1989–1990. In 1999, Jerry was inducted into the California Community College Sports Hall of Fame. Jerry has an exemplary coaching record, having never had a losing season. Furthermore, Jerry has had 42 of his players drafted to the NBA's with 12 first round picks.

The Tarkanians continue to support their love of education through a number of avenues, such as speaking engagements at hospitals and school rallies.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Lois and Jerry Tarkanian. Their dedication to education and the community are truly commendable and have enriched countless lives. I congratulate them on their much deserved recognition by the Clark County School District in having a school named after them. I am certain that this educational establishment will embody the education excellence that the Tarkanians have long advocated.

IN SUPPORT OF THE GULF COAST HURRICANE HOUSING RECOVERY ACT

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act (H.R. 1227). This bill is critical in providing affordable housing to low-income families affected by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma.

It is the responsibility of all national governments to prepare, plan and defend its citizens against all known and potential natural and man-made disasters. Such was the case that confronted the Bush administration in August 2005. But because of the Bush administration's lack of preparation, misplaced priorities and ineptitude, the combination of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma severely devastated the Gulf Coast to such a degree that many lives and property were lost and the effects of disrupted lives and businesses are still being felt nearly 2 years later. Frankly, the response of the administration has been unacceptably slow in the aftermath of the hurricanes and the needs of displaced residents of the Gulf Coast have been left unmet.

The Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act offers significant relief to the displaced families of the Gulf Coast. Specifically, the bill directs FEMA to be flexible in the application of its funds for the Louisiana Road Home program that provides financial incentives for people to come back and live in the State.

The bill further directs HUD and the New Orleans Public Housing Authority to engage its human and material resources to preserve the supply of affordable rental housing.

The bill incorporates an important fair housing enforcement component that makes funds

available as may be necessary to qualified private fair housing enforcement organizations to carry out the mandate of section 561 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1987. That provision authorizes the Secretary of HUD to make grants to these organizations to formulate or carry-out programs to prevent or eliminate discriminatory housing practices, enforce the rights granted under the Civil Rights Act of 1968 or State and local laws that provide rights and remedies for alleged discriminatory housing practices. Education and outreach programs designed to inform the public concerning rights and obligations under the laws referred to by the Civil Rights Act are also allowable expenditures. We are all too familiar, sadly, with the historical exploitation of low-income populations many of whom are members of minority groups in this country. That is why this provision is so important.

This bill also recognizes the many individuals, groups and communities that offered a helping hand by assisting evacuees in the immediate aftermath of the hurricanes. It is gratifying to know that through this bill we would be fulfilling the nation's promise to crucial partners that stepped-up in times of need. This bill replenishes the CDBG funds of localities that were used to provide rental housing assistance to evacuees. It authorizes reimbursements to landlords who participated in the FEMA Section 403 program to provide emergency shelter in response to Hurricane Katrina, Rita or Wilma in spite of FEMA's subsequent renegeing on its promise to provide reimbursements under this program.

This is an important piece of legislation that will help put the Gulf Coast back on a path to full recovery. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE JANUARY-MARCH, 2007

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, when you accepted the gavel, you pledged that the House under your Leadership would waste no time in addressing the pressing needs facing our nation. Your legislative initiative for the first 100 hours of the new Congress proved that you meant what you said.

In those first 100 hours, the House passed six major bills, including legislation to implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, raise the minimum wage, and help older Americans afford prescription drugs, and help their grandchildren obtain student loans. It also adopted Rules to help restore the people's trust in this Chamber.

In those hours, Madam Speaker, you showed America that you were going to waste no time in getting important things done for this country. I thank you and the Majority Leader, Mr. HOYER, for your tireless efforts.

In that spirit, I would like to call your attention the accomplishments of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which I am honored to chair.

Since the Committee held its organizational meeting January 17, our Committee has met

34 times in full or Subcommittee session. We have held 28 hearings, including two field hearings. In the first three months of 2007, we have met for nearly 80 hours, and gathered testimony from 165 witnesses. The Committee has initiated a series of hearings on reauthorizing the Federal Aviation Administration, which must be completed this year, and begun the hard work of considering the myriad issues of reauthorizing the highway, transit, and highway safety programs in 2009. We have begun to restore vigorous oversight to the programs, policies, and agencies in the jurisdiction of our Committee that is critical to ensuring that our transportation and infrastructure laws implemented effectively and efficiently.

The Committee has held seven markups, including three Subcommittee markups and four Full Committee markups. The Committee has acted on 29 bills, including 24 bills that have passed the House—each with an overwhelming bipartisan majority. Among the many Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure bills, the House has passed:

H.R. 720, a bill to authorize \$14 billion for the Clean Water State Revolving Funds and provide the necessary resources to help States address their critical wastewater infrastructure needs;

H.R. 569, a bill to authorize \$1.7 billion for States and communities to control combined sewer overflows and sanitary sewer overflows to address public health and safety and environmental concerns with such overflows;

H.R. 802, a bill to reduce air emissions from maritime vessels and implement Annex VI of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships;

H.R. 1195, a bill to make technical corrections to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users; and

H.R. 798, a bill to direct the Administrator of General Services to install a photovoltaic system on the headquarters of the U.S. Department of Energy.

The Senate has passed four of the 24 House-passed Committee bills and the President has signed each one.

Madam Speaker, such success cannot be accomplished without incredible effort and I thank each of our Committee Members, particularly Ranking Member MICA and the Subcommittee Chairs and Ranking Members, for their enormous bipartisan efforts to carry out the agenda of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

It also cannot be accomplished without a talented, dedicated staff, and I would like to recognize each one by name:

Staff Director David Heymsfeld, Chief Counsel Ward McCarragher, and Administrator Dara Schlieker. Also in the front office: Jimmy Miller, Sharon Barkeloo, Helena Zyblikewycz, Jennifer Walsh, Erik Hansen, Keelin Haddix, Elisa Yi, and Mike Obrock.

Our Communications staff: Jim Berard, Mary Kerr, and Julie Carpenter Lotz.

On the staff of our Subcommittee on Aviation: Stacie Soumbeniotis, Giles Giovinazzi, Jana Denning, Christa Fomarotto, and Pam Keller.

The Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation: John Cullather, Richard Hiscock, Lucinda Lessley, and Ianta Summers.

The Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Man-

agement: Susan Brita, Mike Herman, Elliot Doomes, and Alexis Barrios.

The Subcommittee on Highways and Transit: Jim Kolb, Art Chan, Amy Scarton, Jackie Schmitz, Kathy Dedrick, and Peter Gould.

The Oversight and Investigations staff: Trinita Brown, Clay Foushee, Leila Kahn, and Laurie Bertenthal.

The Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials: Jennifer Esposito, John Drake, Niels Knutson, Nick Martinelli, and Rose Hamlin.

The Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment: Ryan Seiger, Ted Illston, Ben Webster, Beth Goldstein, Rod Hall, and Mike Brain.

The Editorial staff: Tracy Mosebey and Gilda Shirley; and our Information Systems team: Keven Sard and Scott Putz.

Madam Speaker, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has a history of bipartisan cooperation, and our Committee staff on the other side of the aisle share in our success this year. I thank Chief of Staff Jim Coon, Counsel Charles Ziegler, Policy Director Fraser Verrusio, and the rest of the Minority staff for their hard work and cooperation.

The Committee has no plans to slow down. We are hopeful that the House will consider H.R. 1495, the "Water Resources Development Act of 2007", in the coming weeks. We have scheduled 11 hearings and 2 markups for late April and early May. We are just hitting stride.

Madam Speaker, in the words of Vaudeville entertainer Al Jolson, "You ain't seen nothin' yet!"

PAYING TRIBUTE TO OCIE PIGFORD

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of Ocie Pigford, a true legend in law enforcement, who passed away Sunday, March 11, 2007.

Ocie Pigford resided in LaVerkin, Utah, and left a lasting impression on the Las Vegas community. After serving his country in the United States Air Force, Ocie joined the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. Of his many accomplishments as a member of the Metropolitan Police Department, Ocie was most famous for bringing two of the most notorious criminals to justice. In December 1959, he along with his partner, stopped and arrested Richard Eugene Hickock and Perry Edward Smith. They ended a six week nationwide manhunt which started in Holcomb, Kansas. After their arrest these two men were subsequently tried and convicted of killing the Clutter family. Ocie was instrumental in bringing these criminals to justice while protecting the people of Las Vegas.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the life and memory of Ocie Pigford. His service to his Nation and to the people of Las Vegas was commendable. He was truly a dedicated public servant who enriched countless lives in Southern Nevada. He will be profoundly missed.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, on March 26 and 27 I was in my district visiting an area severely damaged by tornadoes that struck over the weekend. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall vote No. 187, "aye" on rollcall vote No. 188, "aye" on rollcall vote No. 189, "aye" on rollcall vote No. 190, "aye" on rollcall vote No. 191, "aye" on rollcall vote No. 192, "aye" on rollcall vote No. 193, "aye" on rollcall vote No. 194, "aye" on rollcall vote No. 195, "nay" on rollcall vote No. 196, "nay" on rollcall vote No. 197, "aye" on rollcall vote No. 198, "aye" on rollcall vote No. 199, "nay" on rollcall vote No. 200, and "aye" on rollcall vote No. 201.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ON
THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR
2008

SPEECH OF

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. FARR. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Democratic House budget resolution H. Con. Res. 99) that adopts and implements funding priorities that reflect the core values of our Nation and provides a responsible fiscal blueprint to lead our nation out of deficit spending. Medicare, Medicaid and education funding like Pell Grants.

H. Con. Res. 99 puts the Federal Government's fiscal house in order by committing to a PAYGO budget rule. Enforcing PAYGO means that all new federal spending must be offset so that we are not adding to the red ink that endangers our nation's fiscal security.

The budget resolution does not increase taxes. In fact, it extends beyond 2010 of important tax cuts for the middle class—including the child tax credit, marriage penalty relief, estate tax reform, and the deduction for state and local sales taxes—an important credit for California taxpayers. It also extends the Research and Development tax credit to spur innovation.

H. Con. Res. 99 allocates over \$85 billion for veterans programs and exceeds the President's request by \$3.5 billion. This long overdue increase for our veterans will help provide the immediate care our new veterans require and address the long-term care issues facing many of our older wounded warriors. In addition to covering the basic issues of care and rehabilitation, the FY2008 Budget Resolution includes additional funds for post-traumatic stress disorder research, identification, and treatment, and funds for the elimination of the nearly 400,000 cases currently residing in the claims backlog. As Vice-Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans' Affairs and Related Agencies, I am pleased we are able to be generous to our nation's veterans who have earned these benefits.

The Democratic budget rejects the President's cuts in environmental programs and instead supports valuable research and natural resource conservation programs, such as NOAA's Education Program and the Ocean and Coastal Management program.

Despite the President's past assertions of making education one of his legacy programs, his FY2008 budget request to cut much needed funding for core education programs including No Child Left Behind. The Democratic House budget continues a long tradition of putting children first by adding over \$3 billion to core programs under No Child Left Behind as well as special education (IDEA), Head Start, child care and funding to help students afford the ever-increasing cost of college.

Affordable housing on the Central Coast is one of the most pressing issues for families in our community. I am very pleased that the Democratic budget helps address this crisis by including a reserve fund to finance efforts to reverse the decline in affordable housing without increasing the deficit. I am proud to vote in support of H. Con. Res 99 and strongly urge my colleagues to support this budget that prioritizes America's important needs.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ROBERT
FERRARO**HON. JON. C. PORTER**

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend Robert "Bob" Ferraro

for his many years of service to both the state of Nevada and to the residents of Boulder City, Nevada, where he has served with great distinction and honor.

Bob is a native Nevadan. He attended the University of Nevada, Reno and earned both a Bachelor of Science degree and Master of Science degree. After completing his education, Bob worked at his alma mater for 10 years before moving to Las Vegas to begin working in an engineering firm.

Bob moved to Boulder City in 1970. He began his career in public service in 1976, when he was appointed to a vacancy on the Boulder City Council. This appointment was the beginning of over 30 years of distinguished service to the citizens of Boulder City. Since 1976, Bob has served continuously, either as a council member or as mayor. Bob's service on the Boulder City Council has led to involvement in a number of other organizations. He has served on the Executive Board of the Civilian Military Council, the Nevada Development Authority and the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition/Clark County Debt Management.

Bob has served in his current position as Mayor of Boulder City since 1999. In June of 2003, he was elected to a second 4-year term. During his tenure as Mayor, Bob has committed himself to leading with integrity, vision, and dedication. His leadership philosophy is based upon the notion that the citizens of Boulder City should have access to their elected officials and city government. Additionally, during his tenure as Mayor of Boulder City, Bob has overseen a variety of civic and public works projects that have enhanced the overall quality of life in Boulder City.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor my good friend Robert "Bob" Ferraro. Over the past 30 years, he has demonstrated exceptional commitment to improving life for the residents of Boulder City. I commend him for his leadership, his dedication and his distinguished record of service to the Boulder City community. I applaud his service as Mayor of Boulder City and I wish him the best in his future endeavors.