IN RECOGNITION OF THE 2007 CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS FOUNDATION ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE—THE IRAQ WAR: THE COSTS, THE LESSONS, AND THE FUTURE

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the 2007 Congressional Black Caucus annual legislative conference, the speakers who presented at the forum I hosted on the war, and the reason I selected the war for an issue forum.

On September 28, 2007, I hosted a forum to address issues related to the costs, lessons and future of the Iraq war. I was honored to have as my speakers: Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, Reverend James Forbes, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, Eugene Robinson, Senator JIM WEBB, and General Anthony Zinni. I thank each of them for taking time to share their views on these important topics. I also wish to thank all of the people who attended the forum and those who watched it live via the Internet.

This is the fifth time in a row I held a forum on the war for the annual legislative conference. I decided once again to focus on the war for several reasons. There is a continuous need to explain to the American people why the war has not ceased yet. Americans are utterly confused about the politics as well as the rationale for continuing. Day in and day out Americans hear rhetoric versus solid withdraw plans and solutions. Americans are outraged and tired of the loss of life and other human tragedies associated with fighting the war. The human, financial, spiritual, and loss of reputation cost for our great country is immeasurable. I will continue to express my opposition to the war and work to bring it to an end.

The forum speakers were phenomenal and provided their ideas on how America got in the war and how America can get out. Specifically, Dr. Dyson, a professor at Georgetown University, eloquently encouraged the audience to speak out against the war and described the similarities in the Bush's administration response to hurricane Katrina to the handling of the Iraq war. Rev. James Forbes, Jr., founder of the Healing of the Nations Foundation, passionately spoke about the moral failures of the war. Congresswoman BARBARA LEE of California, discussed the difficulties she faced in opposing the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Eugene Robinson, a Washington Post columnist, discussed the administration's use of fear to build support for the war. Senator JIM WEBB of Virginia, emphasized the need for the U.S. to get out of Iraq and addressed issues related to fraud, waste, and abuse. General Zinni, a former commander of U.S. forces, explained the U.S. interests in Iraq and discussed his ideas on how the U.S. can get out of Iraq.

I would like to express heartfelt thanks to the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation chair, Congressman KENDRICK MEEK, and the Congressional Black Caucus chairwoman, CAROLYN CHEEKS KILPATRICK, for all their hard work to organize the annual legislative conference, which provides members of the Congressional Black Caucus an opportunity to highlight issues that impact the lives of Americans. The information shared by the speakers was informative and provided another outlet for critics of the war to openly express their views.

CELEBRATING THE LAUNCH OF UNIVISION'S NEW SHOW, ''AL PUNTO''

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Univision on the launch of the new political news show ''Al Punto.''

''Al Punto'' is paving the way to promote dialogue within the growing politically active and conscious Latino community. For 1 hour every Sunday, the show will bring together newsmakers, policymakers, business and political leaders, or entertainers to talk about the contemporary issues that affect the Latino community. The discussions will go beyond politics to include culture, science, and the arts. Furthermore, ''Al Punto'' will address current events in Latin America which impact the Latino community at home. This show will work to enlighten and empower the Latino community, as it will provide them with vital information on the current issues and news events that are impacting their everyday lives.

Again, I would like to recognize and congratulate Univision on the launch of ''Al Punto'' and for its contributions in educating the Latino community on political issues. I wish it continued success.

IN HONOR OF THE 2007 SACRAMENTO RIVER CATS

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise in recognition of the 2007 Sacramento River Cats, the champions of the 2007 Pacific Coast League and winners of the Triple–A Championship. I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in honoring this excellent achievement.

The River Cats remarkable playoff run began when they clinched the Pacific Coast League Southern Division by finishing the regular season with a record of 84–60. Despite falling behind two games to none against Salt Lake City in the first round of the playoffs. The River Cats came back to win the next three games. Using that positive momentum, the River Cats quickly beat the New Orleans Zephyrs in three games, winning the Pacific Coast League title for the third time in 5 years. The series final game was seen before a spirited and soldout crowd of 14,414 fans at Sacramento's Raley Field. During this impressive playoff run, the River Cats strung together seven straight playoff victories to end their season. The final victory came against the Richmond Braves in the second annual Bricktown Showdown. By defeating the International League Champion in the one game playoff, Sacramento was able to lay their claim as outright Triple–A champions.

This year's Sacramento River Cats team exhibited resilience in the face of adversity. Despite continually loosing players to their parent affiliate, Major League Baseball's Oakland A's, to replenish their injured roster, the River Cats overcame more then 180 roster changes to win the championship. This meant that they accomplished the feat by receiving contributions from numerous and sometimes unlikely sources. No one epitomized this more then Nick Blasi, who spent much of the season with Class–A Stockton before becoming a playoff catalyst and the Pacific Coast League's Series MVP. Blasi hit a remarkable .457 in the playoffs.

Throughout this roster shuffle, every member of the 2007 River Cats demonstrated outstanding commitment to team play and hard work. Manager Tony DeFrancesco once again was a steady mentor for his young and ever changing roster. The River Cats featured some of baseball's brightest prospects who are destined to become the stars of tomorrow. The roster was anchored by contributions from recently promoted major leaguers: Daric Barton, Kurt Suzuki and Santiago Casilla, as well as prospects Jason Perry, J.J. Furmaniak and Brad Knox.

Under the leadership of President and CEO Art Savage, the River Cats players reaffirmed the front office's commitment to the people of Sacramento. On the Opening Day of the season, the River Cats unveiled the Mario Encarnacion Humanitarian Award which will annually honor a young student athlete who shows a commitment to his or her teammates and classmates. Furthermore, the River Cats Foundation has been providing support to Sacramento non-profits that assist with youth and family activities. The River Cats commitment to the community was reciprocated by the Sacramento fans, as the River Cats led the Pacific Coast League in attendance for an astounding 8th year in a row. 710,000 fans attended River Cats 71 home contests this year, and since beginning play at Raley Field in 2000, the River Cats have drawn over 6,000,000 fans.

Madam Speaker, now that the Sacramento River Cats have concluded their championship season, I am honored to pay tribute to the many hard working men and women of the River Cats organization who brought so much joy and pride to the people of Sacramento. Their successes are highly commendable. I ask all my colleagues to join me in celebrating the River Cats 2007 championship season.

IN RECOGNITION OF SOUTH TAMA COUNTY SCHOOL

HON. LEONARD L. BOSWELL

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. BOSWELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor South Tama County High School, a school in my Congressional district, for their outstanding achievements in the ''President's Challenge,'' a program sponsored by the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

South Tama County High School, in Tama, Iowa, was named one of two President's Challenge State Champion schools in Iowa for the 2006–2007 school year. The President's Challenge is designed to encourage students to find new and exciting ways to integrate fitness

and physical activity into their daily lives. The fitness program at South Tama should be a model for other Iowa schools, and is recognized by the President's Challenge as an exemplary example for its dedication to encouraging students to become physically fit and active, and its success in achieving those goals.

As childhood obesity and the chronic diseases caused by it become an increasingly serious issue in the United States, I would like to commend South Tama on its commitment to instilling the importance of a healthy lifestyle, and for giving its students the tools to make healthy decisions for years to come. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating this Iowa school—we are very proud of your accomplishments.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE 50TH BIRTHDAY OF THE NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES, (NARFE), TUSCARAWAS VALLEY CHAPTER 635

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker, whereas, the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Tuscarawas Valley Chapter 635 celebrates its 50th birthday with great joy; and

Whereas, they started with 18 members and now have over 135; and

Whereas, the organization works to better the quality of life for active and retired employees of the Federal Government; and

Whereas, they are working to put federal employees on an equal level with employees of other companies and organizations; be it

Resolved that along with his friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend you on your 50th birthday. With great appreciation and respect, we recognize the remarkable impact the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Tuscarawas Valley Chapter 635 has had in the community.

CELEBRATING THE GROUNDBREAKING WORK OF THE SCHOMBURG CENTER

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the article, "Heritage Watch: Breaking the Silence," written by Howard Dodson and published in Africana Heritage in its Vol. 7, No. 4 periodical. It details the Schomburg Center's efforts—through innovative exhibition and persistent advocacy—to render a history of slavery that grants its subjects active agency. More than mere objects of exploitation, oppression, and victimization, the enslaved population crafted a rich history, wielding the powers of critical thinking and self-actualization to transform language, religion, family, and culture.

The center boasts of its unprecedented "Lest We Forget: The Triumph Over Slavery" exhibition, the first of its kind focused exclusively on the topic of slavery. Showcasing an exhaustive 300 items, travelling versions of the presentation have made their way to 16 countries across the Atlantic and back. Its other ambitious production, "In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience," follows the major migrations of Africa-descendant people.

It led the charge for historic preservation of an African burial ground discovered in the recesses of Manhattan, a cemetery to 20,000 Africans from colonial New York. Already both a city and national landmark, a segment of the burial ground was named a national landmark in early 2006. In 2008, the Schomburg will take center stage in commemorating the bicentennial anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.

A cherished institution nestled in the heart of my district, the Schomburg Center serves an oft-unsung—but necessary—purpose. It strives to keep slavery and the slave trade a fundamental thread in the fabric of this country's heritage, so that the contributions of the enslaved will never fade from the American consciousness.

HERITAGE WATCH: BREAKING THE SILENCE

Prior to the 1960s, the basis of much of the scholarship and the perspectives on slavery available derived from the abolitionist literature and campaign of the 1830s to the 1860s. This body of literature was written or collected to document the horrors of slavery. Its purpose was to show how slavery oppressed, exploited, and victimized the enslaved African population—hence the victim's perspective. A closer, more critical reading of many of the same sources, especially the slave narratives, revealed a much more complex set of relations in slavery and an equally more diverse and complex enslaved African population.

Over the next four decades, the scholarship on slavery and the slave trade shifted from the dominant victim's perspective to a more nuanced one in which the enslaved African population became the subjects—active agents in the making of their own history rather than mere victims of oppressive, exploitative, all powerful slavery systems. The results of this approach and the scholarship it produced have been stunning and quite revelatory—becoming the foundation of the Schomburg Center's action strategy to remember America's slavery past and hopefully prevent its ever being forgotten again.

Seven years ago, the Schomburg Center celebrated its 75th Anniversary and unveiled an exhibition on the slave trade and slavery. Lest We Forget: The Triumph Over Slavery became the first major exhibition on the subject in the United States. Comprised of more than 300 objects, Lest We Forget documented the origin and development of the slave trade from Africa to the Americas. Reflecting the new scholarship, however, it went a step further. It explored the ways in which critically-thinking, self-actualizing enslaved Africans transformed themselves into new people in the midst of slavery. The new languages, religions, families, and cultures they created were documented and celebrated as well as the forms of resistance and struggle they fashioned.

In conjunction with National Geographic Press, the Center published a companion book to the exhibition entitled Jubilee. An online exhibition was also created on the Schomburg's Web site. Early in 2004, the Center entered into an agreement with UNESCO to expand the site and make it one of the centerpieces of the Year to Commemorate the Struggle Against Slavery and its Abolition. In its expanded form, the site added more content about slavery and abolition in Latin America and the Caribbean. Lest We Forget, the online exhibition, is now available in four languages. The Center also collaborated with UNESCO to create traveling versions of the original Lest We Forget exhibition. A total of six bilingual exhibitions in 32 framed color panels have been created for distribution throughout the Atlantic World. To date, bilingual versions have appeared in Cameroon, South Africa, Cape Verde, Senegal, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, The Bahamas, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Trinidad, Brazil, Ecuador, Sweden, France, Finland, and Norway. While on tour, it has served as a catalyst for a variety of educational and cultural programs interpreting and/or commemorating the struggle against slavery and its abolition.

In February 2005 another exhibition, In Motion: The African-American Migration Experience, focused on documenting the major migrations of people of African descent to, within, and outside of the United States. A remarkable online version, www.inmotionaame.org. includes over 8,000 images and over 16,000 pages of text—narratives, scholarly essays, primary source documents, and curriculum modules. National Geographic Press published a companion book and the Center produced a Black History Month Kit for dissemination to teachers. A traveling version of In Motion opened for a limited time during Black History Month 2006 at Miami's Lyric Theatre. Since the rediscovery of the African Burial Ground in lower Manhattan during construction on a federal office building in 1991, the Schomburg Center has been involved in its historic preservation and interpretation. A Federal Steering Committee, headed by Schomburg Chief Howard Dodson, drafted a report to the United States Congress outlining the ways in which the burial ground should be memorialized. Following the report's recommendations, Howard University's W. Montague Cobb Laboratory conducted scientific study of the 419 remains that were excavated. The African Burial Ground has been designated as both a City and National Landmark and in February 2006, President Bush proclaimed the portion located at Duane and Elk Streets a National Monument. The full five-acre site is believed to be the final resting place of over 20,000 Africans from colonial New York.

The 419 excavated ancestral remains were reinterred at the African Burial Ground Memorial site on October 4,2003. As part of the reinterment ceremonies, the Schomburg Center organized a series of commemorative programs in five cities over a three-day period, ending with a vigil, tributes, and special programming in New York City. Since then, annual tributes to the ancestors have taken place, including a Ring Shout ceremony with New York City schoolchildren circling the original burial ground site. The Ring Shout has grown every year—reaching 3,000 participants last year.

In April 2005, the U.S. General Services Administration and the National Park Service selected Rodney Leon, of AARRIS Architects, to design the African Burial Ground Memorial. A dedication ceremony as well as celebratory events will take place the weekend of October 5, 2007. The Office of Public Education and Interpretation, located in the lobby of the federal building at 290 Broadway, continues to provide site tours of the commemorative artwork and memorial site, documentary film presentations, and programs for educators. A link documenting the African Burial Ground and the commemorative tribute programs is available on the Schomburg Center's homepage. Keeping with the goal to make New York's African Burial