Silver Star Families of America, their service to veterans across our nation, and ask my colleagues in the House to join me in doing the same.

HONORING FRESNO RESCUE MISSION

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH, Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Fresno Rescue Mission upon celebrating its 60th anniversary.

Reverend Clifford Phillips first envisioned the Fresno Rescue Mission with a prayer meeting, the ''Fisherman's Club'' and the concerned hearts of many local Christians. The Fresno Rescue Mission opened its doors in 1949 as a non-profit, faith-based, evangelical Christian charitable organization with the purpose of assisting local alcoholics and transient farm laborers. Since the 1950s the Fresno Rescue Mission has expanded their services to include assistance to every man, woman, child or family that walks through their doors. They stress accountability, responsible living and decision making for all residents, while encouraging them with support, training and prayer.

In 2008, the Fresno Rescue Mission served four hundred and twenty-two children at the Craycroft Youth Center, and an additional one hundred and fifty-four families with three hundred and eighty children. It shelters an average of eighty to one hundred and thirty men every night in the overnight homeless shelter for men. The Mission also averages one hundred and twenty-five men involved with the eighteen month Academy Recovery Program. Individuals that complete this program become productive, law abiding citizens. The Mission has been instrumental in changing the lives of many individuals by providing life and job skills training, literacy and GED education, computer training and a career development program. The goal of the Mission is to change one life at a time and to provide hope and renewal to abandoned, abused, neglected and addicted.

The Fresno Rescue Mission has been an integral part of the Fresno community for sixty years; saving the city, county and state millions of taxpayer dollars. Its influence has spread beyond the City of Fresno and its success was instrumental in starting twenty-two other rescue missions with the belief that people are able to rise above their mistakes to make positive changes for themselves.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate the Fresno Rescue Mission on 60 years of community building. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing the Fresno Rescue Mission many years of continued success.

CREDIT CARDHOLDERS' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the bill (H.R. 627) to amend the Truth in Lending Act to establish fair and transparent practices relating to the extension of credit under an open end consumer credit plan, and for other purposes:

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong support of H.R. 627, the Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights Act.

Last year, I was an original cosponsor of a similar bill, which passed overwhelmingly in the House by a bipartisan 312 to 112 majority (including 84 Republicans). I was disappointed that this legislation languished in the Senate.

Since last year's action in the House, many American families and businesses have been particularly hard hit by the economic crisis, including those who rely upon credit lines, who, through no fault of their own, have been subjected to predatory lending or abusive credit card practices that make it difficult for them to end the cycle of costly debt. Hundreds of constituents in my district have contacted me to express support for this critical legislation.

In 2008, credit card issuers imposed $19 billion in penalty fees on families with credit cards, and this year card companies will break all records for late fees, over-limit charges, and other penalties, amounting to more than $20.5 billion for the industry. Credit card debt in the United States has reached a record high—nearly $1 trillion—with almost half of American families carrying a balance averaging $7,300 in 2007. One-fifth of those carrying credit card debt pay an interest rate above 20 percent.

H.R. 627 prohibits credit card issuers from raising rates retroactively on existing balances. The bill also requires a 45-day notice of any rate increase and prohibits companies from charging interest on balances from more than one billing cycle.

Members of the House have collaborated with President Obama to strengthen the bill by mandating that card issuers apply payments beyond the minimum to debts with the highest interest rate, requiring card companies to inform customers about the long-term costs of paying only the minimum balance, and allowing consumers to opt whether or not they want to go over their credit limit and be charged a fee for doing so.

This legislation codifies Federal Reserve rules prohibiting unfair or deceptive bank practices related to credit card accounts and overdraft services and goes further by banning the marketing and issuance of credit cards to minors under the age of 18, banning credit card companies from imposing unfair and arbitrary fees when customers pay their bills, and allowing customers to set a lower credit card limit.

The Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights will level the playing field between card issuers and cardholders.

I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

JORDAN CONNELL

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jordan Connell who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jordan Connell is an 8th grader at Oberon Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jordan Connell is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential that students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Jordan Connell for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication he has shown in his academic career to his future accomplishments.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, April 29, 2009, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote No. 223 on final passage of the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of this important legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LARRY KISSELL

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. KISSELL. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, April 21, 2009, I was unable to vote due to a death of a close friend and missed three rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have vote ''yea'' on rollcall No. 193 to pass H.R. 388, the ''Crane Conservation Act of 2009; ''yea'' on rollcall No. 194 to pass H.R. 411, the ''Great Cats and Rare Canids Act of 2009; and ''yea'' on rollcall No. 195 to pass H.R. 1219, the ''Lake Hodges Surface Water Improvement and Reclamation Act of 2009.''

IN HONOR OF CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT PAUL AIREY

HON. ALLEN BOYD

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. BOYD. Madam Speaker, on March 11, 2009, the Air Force, the Panama City community and indeed our Nation, lost one of the most respected Airmen in the history of the Air Force—the very first Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force—Paul Wesley Airey.

Chief Airey was an Airman's Airman and a true Air Force pioneer. His legacy is the professional enlisted force we have serving our Nation today.

Chief Airey was born in New Bedford, MA, on December 13, 1923. He enlisted in the Air force at age eighteen, shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

The first chief master sergeant of the Air Force was always a leader. During World War II he flew as a B–24 radio operator and additional duty aerial gunner. On his 28th mission, then-Technical Sergeant Airey and his fellow crewmen were shot down over Vienna, Austria, captured, and held prisoner by the German air force from July 1944 to May 1945. During his time as a prisoner of war he worked tirelessly to meet the basic needs of fellow prisoners, even through a 90-day forced march.

Chief Airey held the top Air Force enlisted position from April 3, 1967 to July 31, 1969. During his tenure he worked to change loan establishments charging exorbitant rates outside the air base gates and to improve low retention during the Vietnam Conflict. Chief Airey also led a team that laid the foundation for the enlisted promotion testing system, a system that has stood the test of time and which is still in use today. He also advocated for an Air Force-level Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy and this vision became reality when the academy opened in 1973.

Chief Airey retired August 1, 1970. He continued advocating for Airmen's rights by serving on the boards of numerous Air Force and enlisted professional military organizations throughout the years. He was a member of the Board of Trustees for the Airmen Memorial Museum, a member of the Air Force Memorial Foundation and the Air University Foundation.

On the north wall of the Air Force Memorial in Washington D.C., Chief Airey's thoughts on Airmen are immortalized, ''When I think of the enlisted force, I see dedication, determination, loyalty and valor.''

Before he became Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Chief Airey was assigned to the Air Defense Command's Civil Engineering Squadron at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., where he was the unit's first sergeant. Chief Airey and his wife lived in Panama City after he retired. The Tyndall community will greatly miss the chief. An internment ceremony is scheduled for 9 a.m. on 28 May, 2009 at Arlington National Cemetery.

JORDAN HANNEBAUM

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Jordan Hannebaum who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Jordan Hannebaum is an 8th grader at Moore Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Jordan Hannebaum is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential that students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Jordan Hannebaum for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication she has shown in her academic career to her future accomplishments.

THE ELECTRIC GRID

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise to speak in support of legislation I introduced today with the Ranking Member of the Homeland Security Committee, Mr. KING, and the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, Science an Technology, Ms. CLARKE and Mr. LUNGREN.

The electric grid is highly dependent on computer-based control systems. These systems are increasingly connected to open networks such as the Internet, exposing them to cyber risks. Any failure of our electric grid, whether intentional or unintentional, would have a significant and potentially devastating impact on our Nation.

For years, my Committee has been concerned about this possibility. In 2007, the Committee learned that the electric industry was not mitigating a dangerous control system vulnerability known as ''Aurora.'' We launched a series of investigations and held two hearings to understand what was being done in the public and private sectors to mitigate this and other cyber vulnerabilities.

The findings were disturbing. Most of the electric industry had not completed the recommended mitigations, despite being advised to do so by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation. This effectively left many utilities vulnerable to attacks. Furthermore, in spite of existing mandatory cybersecurity standards, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (''NERC'') recently reported that many utilities are underreporting their critical cyber assets, potentially to avoid compliance requirements.

We must ensure that the proper protections, resources and regulatory authorities are in place to address any threat aimed at our power system. The Critical Electric Infrastructure Protection Act will do four things to improve our defensive posture:

Provides FERC with the authorities necessary to issue emergency orders to owners and operators of the electric grid after receiving a finding from DHS about a credible cyber attack.

Requires FERC to establish interim measures deemed necessary to protect against known cyber threats to critical electric infrastructure. This will improve existing mandatory standards.

Requires DHS to perform ongoing cybersecurity vulnerability and threat assessments to the critical electric infrastructure, and provide mitigation recommendations to eliminate those vulnerabilities and threats.

Requires DHS to conduct an investigation to determine if the security of Federally-owned critical electric infrastructure has been compromised by outsiders.

I believe that this legislation adopts a common-sense approach towards securing our electric grid from cyber attack, and I look forward to working with the Senate and the rest of our colleagues on bipartisan, bicameral basis to see that this bill is enacted.

CLIMATE CHANGE SAFEGUARDS FOR NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION ACT

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Climate Change Safeguards for Natural Resource Protection Act. I am pleased to be joined in sponsoring this measure by Chairman NICK RAHALL as well as . . .

Madam Speaker, in 1850, the estimated number of glaciers in what would become Glacier National Park was 150; today, it is 26. The Joshua Trees in Joshua Tree National Park are dying. Unless Congress and the Administration work together to combat climate change on Federal lands, these parks and others like them will need new names.

Forests, wildlife refuges, national parks and other federally-owned land and water represent a 650-million-acre front in the battle against global climate change, but many Federal land and water management agencies have yet to take up the fight in earnest.

The previous Administration pursued a ''don't-ask, don't-tell'' approach to climate change; scientific research was undermined and planning was discouraged through underfunding and censorship. As a result, the gap between what we know about climate change and what we are doing about it has widened.

The legislation we are introducing today is intended to narrow that gap by providing Federal land, water, and ocean management agencies and the States, the tools they need to protect our fish, wildlife, oceans, plants and other resources from the impacts we know are coming.

The bill requires establishment of a Natural Resources Climate Change Adaptation Panel made up of Federal agencies responsible for managing our Nation's natural resources. The Panel's mission will be to foster the kind of inter-agency cooperation and planning that is both critical in responding to climate change and, so far, sorely lacking.

The Panel will be tasked with developing a comprehensive, national strategy for combating climate change. Once the national strategy is in place, each Federal agency with jurisdiction over natural resources will be tasked with translating that broader plan into a climate change response tailored specifically to their agency's programs and activities. Furthermore, funding will be authorized to assist states in developing similar state-wide adaptation plans that lead to concrete on the ground actions to address the impacts of climate change on the natural resources they manage.

In addition, the bill will streamline, centralize and improve the collection and dissemination of climate-related scientific information. This provision will ensure that Federal climate research will be better funded, more aggressive and more easily available to land managers, policy-makers and the public.

Finally, the bill will create a centralized database of geographic mapping information designed to identify significant wildlife migration corridors. Such corridors must be included in