

It is an honor to have such an exceptional event as the Elizabeth Waterfront Festival take place in my district. I take pride in the fact the Elizabeth Waterfront Festival brings together all segments of our community and at the same time reflects positively on the city of Elizabeth and New Jersey. I am certain my colleagues will rise with me and recognize this remarkable celebration of life.

HONORING ASIAN PACIFIC  
AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 22, 1996*

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my distinguished colleagues of the Congressional Asian Pacific Caucus in celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and to honor the extraordinary contributions of Asian Pacific Americans to our Nation.

We must take time to note the struggles of the Asian Pacific American pioneers, mainly immigrants to this country. As a daughter of immigrant parents, I know firsthand the obstacles immigrants faced in beginning a new life in a new land and providing for their families. We must acknowledge the accomplishments of these pioneers who had built a foundation for the subsequent advances made by the Asian Pacific American community.

As we reflect on the significance of this month, we must certainly turn our thoughts to our friend and former colleague Norman Y. Mineta. He is remembered for his leadership in championing the causes of the Asian Pacific American community and of all people of color, culminating in the passage of House bill 442 which he introduced, that provided an apology by the U.S. Government to those Americans of Japanese ancestry who were interned during the Second World War. An outstanding legislator, Representative Mineta was a powerful force in Congress and a great role model not only for Asian Pacific Americans but for all people of colors in our country.

Representative Mineta helped create a political voice for the Asian Pacific American community and inspired others to get involved in the political process.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent California's 14th Congressional District which boasts a significant and vibrant Asian Pacific American community deeply committed to political activism and public service. I am fortunate to work with many outstanding organizations such as the local chapters of the Japanese American Citizens' League, the Organization of Chinese Americans, the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, Self-Help for the Elderly, the Asian American Manufacturers' Association, Silicon Valley for Democracy, Asian Americans for Community Involvement, as well as the Asian Law Alliance, all fostering multicultural understanding. Each brings to the forefront the concerns on behalf of the growing Asian Pacific American community in the 14th Congressional District. I am also grateful to work with the many Asian Pacific American elected officials in my congressional district such as council members Michael Chang of Cupertino, Art Takahara of Mountain View, Naomi Patridge of Half Moon Bay, Cupertino School District Trustees Emily Lee Kelley and

Barry Chang, Fremont Union High School District Trustees Homer Tong and Randy Okamura, and Foothill De-Anza Community College Trustees Paul Fong and Dolores Sandoval. I salute these organizations and leaders for their outstanding efforts and contributions to the well-being of our community.

Despite the progress the Asian Pacific American community has made, we must continue to advocate for their concerns, protecting and advancing the civil and constitutional rights of all Americans, especially when many of these issues are being threatened. I'm proud to have been invited to join the Congressional Asian Pacific Caucus which my distinguished colleague Congresswoman PATSY MINK chairs. I join the members of the caucus to ensure that congressional legislation provides for the full participation of Asian Pacific Americans and reflects the concerns and needs of the Asian Pacific American communities to the greatest extent possible.

WAIVER OF THE HUMANITARIAN  
AID CORRIDOR ACT

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 22, 1996*

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, last week, to the surprise and disappointment of the international human rights communities, as well as Members of this body, President Clinton exercised his option to waive the Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act. Passed with strong bipartisan support as part of the fiscal year 1996 foreign operations appropriations bill, the Corridor Act is essential because it exerts the appropriate pressure on countries, such as Turkey, that block United States foreign assistance to the region.

As the only Member of Congress of Armenian descent, I have a very deep understanding of how the Ottoman Empire decimated Armenians and wrote one of the darkest chapters in human history. Mr. Speaker, these attacks against Armenians continue even today. Just last month the Agency France Presse reported unprovoked Turkish military shelling of Armenian territory on April 23 and 24. I'm committed to the safety and independence of Armenia and believe we must ensure that its people are protected. Therefore I am deeply disappointed that the President waived this important and needed act.

Despite a history of suffering at the hands of others, Armenians have remained a strong people, committed to families and united by an enduring faith. Armenians have risen from the ashes of the 1915-23 genocide to form a new country from the remains of the Soviet Union, a new country which flourishes in the face of severe winters, ongoing military conflict in Nagorno-Karabagh, and the absence of strong international assistance. Today's Armenia is a living tribute to the indelible courage and perseverance of the Armenian people. Mr. Speaker, we in this body must do our part to protect Armenia. I support efforts to strengthen, enhance, and make permanent the Humanitarian Aid Corridor Act and to curtail aid to Turkey should that country refuse to abide by the standards established by the act.

I urge the President to reconsider his position.

REPEAL OF 4.3-CENT INCREASE IN  
TRANSPORTATION FUELS TAXES

SPEECH OF

HON JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 21, 1996*

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that the House voted last night to repeal the 4.3-cent-a-gallon tax.

Repeal of the gas tax is precisely the wrong step to take as we try to move forward with the more important challenges of energy independence, national security, and fiscal responsibility—challenges which, over the last several years, we have made great strides toward meeting.

First, it's clear that the tax is no more responsible for the recent price increases in gasoline than it was for the low gas prices we enjoyed in 1994 and 1995. The 4.3-cent-a-gallon gas tax has been in place for more than 2 years, but for political reasons, including helping a sagging Presidential campaign, it's only become a hot-button issue in the last several weeks.

If we take oil companies at their word, the price spike is due to increased demand, a prolonged winter, and an unrealized expectation that Iraq would again sell oil to the world market. We talk about allowing the market economy to work without interference, but we immediately talk about interfering just when the market works as predicted. Worse still, we advocate a policy that has no direct bearing on the price at the pump. Indeed, what will political leaders say to consumers when prices continue to go up in spite of the gas tax repeal or when the 4.3 cents is not passed on at the pump.

Second, Americans continue to enjoy gas prices at both historically low levels and at levels considerably lower than those paid by citizens of the other industrial nations. In inflation-adjusted terms, the price of gas is lower than it was 25 years ago, before the oil embargo.

The low prices we've enjoyed have renewed some of the habits that made us so vulnerable during the OPEC oil embargo of the 1970's and the Persian Gulf war. In truth, both to reflect real world circumstances and for national security reasons, we need to change commuting and driving habits and our dependence on imported oil.

Third, saving the average motorist, including myself, \$30 a year—and there is great doubt that the price at the pump will go down as a result of the repeal—only makes our task of balancing the Federal budget that much more difficult. How do we balance the 8.2 cents a day returned to drivers against the \$30 billion added to the deficit by repealing the tax.

Just when we're beginning to make sustained progress on bringing down the deficit, just when we are within reach of actually balancing the budget in 6 years and making a serious and principled commitment to real fiscal responsibility, we're going to add \$30 billion to the Nation's debt.

Even without this added debt, we have to realize that we have many difficult budget choices still ahead. Where should we cut? Are the American people willing and ready to cut aid to education as Majority Leader Dick Armey suggested we should do—or cancer research, or public broadcasting, or Medicare?