

active participant in various New York City political organizations that have produced electoral success. While participating in these activities, Mr. Bowman has managed to earn certificates and degrees from Goddard College, Pratt Institute, Staten Island Community College, and the New York Training Institute.

Married to Phyllis Bowman for 47 years, he is a father of seven, a grandfather, and a great grandfather. At age 75, Harding Bowman continues to help the community by staying active and admonishing elected officials "not to forget where they came from." I am pleased to recognize his outstanding contributions and to introduce him to my colleagues.

#### THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHARLES COUNTY COURTHOUSE

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, It is a great pleasure to bring to the attention of my colleagues the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Charles County Courthouse in Maryland. Located in the town of La Plata with a unique history, the Courthouse has special meaning to the entire region.

Court was convened for the first time at the Charles County Courthouse on May 25, 1658, in what is currently referred to as Port Tobacco. In 1674, a building was erected at Moore's Lodge about one mile from La Plata. This building was abandoned in 1728 and the courts moved back to original dwellings in Port Tobacco. This was one of the earliest known communities on the east coast and it later became the site of Charles County Colonial government.

The courthouse was completed in 1729 at a cost of 12,000 pounds of tobacco. Destroyed by a windstorm in the early 1800's, a brick structure was built on the same site and occupied by 1820. A suspicious fire completely destroyed the courthouse, reportedly due to the controversy surrounding the proposed move of the county seat to La Plata. In 1894, the legislature approved moving the county seat and provided for a special election to determine the site. On June 4, 1895 La Plata was picked to become the county seat. Completed in 1896 under architect Joseph C. Johnson, a brick Victorian Gothic edifice was built on the present site.

This new courthouse changed little over the years, until the completion of the south addition in 1954. This addition was actually much larger than the original courthouse, easily doubling the size. The courthouse was dedicated with fitting ceremonies on October 2, 1954. In the mid-1970's, the rear of the 1896 building was extended in a typical 18th century style, completely covering the old structure. Today the courthouse is in continuous use, serving as one of the focal points of the growing Charles County region.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating the fine people of Charles County on this momentous occasion and in wishing the best of luck for the courthouse and its occupants over the next 100 years.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO DECATUR AIRPORT

HON. GLENN POSHARD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Decatur Airport, owned and operated by the Decatur Park District, on the occasion of its 50th anniversary of service to the community. Since its inception in 1946, the Decatur Airport has provided an excellent facility as a gateway to the national air transportation system and a vital link to the rest of the globe. Due to the airport's emphasis of superior safety and maintenance, public relations, and Federal grant administration, it is not surprising that this facility earned the coveted Airport of the Year awards from the State of Illinois in 1988, 1994, and again in 1996, its golden anniversary year.

The Decatur Airport serves not only the various facets of aviation—general and corporate aviation, military, scheduled passenger, and air cargo carrier services—but also as an economic engine for the community. The airport and the various businesses and agencies that call it home generate in excess of \$35 million in total economic impact for the community of Decatur and the surrounding area, as well as providing employment for over 400 of its citizens.

Mr. Speaker, on August 31, 1996, the Decatur Airport will offer a 50th Birthday Party for the community to celebrate this half-century of progress with special events both on the ground and in the air for all to enjoy. I am proud to join with the citizens of Decatur and other airport users in congratulating the Decatur Park District on their foresight and efforts in developing the Decatur Airport into the superior facility it has grown to be. It is an honor to represent the Decatur area in the U.S. Congress, and I wish the airport continued success as it ventures into the 21st century.

#### ESTABLISH A 3-YEAR PILOT PROGRAM FOR KOREAN NATIONALS

HON. JAY KIM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. KIM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today—along with my colleague Mr. ABERCROMBIE—to offer legislation which would establish a 3-year pilot program that would waive the visa requirement of Korean nationals who travel to the United States in tour groups.

While I still believe that a bill that includes Korea in the overall Visa Waiver Pilot Program is the best answer, I realize there are still some obstacles that need to be worked out. Therefore the bill we introduce today is a good first step and I commend the gentleman from Hawaii for it.

My reasons for cosponsoring this legislation are twofold: First, the current situation at the U.S. Embassy's Consular Affairs office in Seoul is embarrassing and unacceptable. The problem stems from two counteracting forces: the lack of sufficient space and personnel in the Consular Affairs office and the ever increasing number of South Koreans requesting nonimmigrant, visitor visas.

Currently, the Consular Affairs office in Seoul is understaffed, over-worked and unable to meet the demands of reviewing over 2,000 visa applications per day. This unfortunate situation has resulted in extremely long lines of potential tourists to the United States who are growing more and more impatient, annoyed and disheartened with the way they are being treated.

During a recent trip to South Korea, I personally witnessed the most shameful treatment of human beings. One potential tourist told me that he had been waiting in line for 3 days. Three days. He had come all the way from the southern end of South Korea, since the United States does not have any other Consular Affairs offices in Korea. Another woman, who appeared to be in her thirties, explained her frustration at having to stand outside during a thunderstorm because there is no shelter from the elements available. I was personally ashamed, as I suspect many of my colleagues would have been, by these tales of inhumane treatment.

These are but two examples of the growing frustration and disappointment many South Koreans are vocalizing. This has resulted in a growing sentiment of discontent with the United States. They rightly point out that this is no way for friends to treat friends. If we are to retain our place in the hearts of the Korean people we must do something to reverse this trend. While I have been able to persuade the State Department to focus more resources in this area, and while the worst of these situations have been resolved—at least for the time being—there remains a tremendous backlog and frequent examples of frustrating delays and arbitrary rejections. Providing a visa waiver for tour groups would alleviate some of this problem.

My second reason for cosponsoring this legislation is pure economics. Currently, South Korea is the sixth largest trading partner with the United States. This has resulted in total United States exports equalling over \$14 billion with a cumulative direct investment of over \$1 billion by United States companies in South Korea. This ever growing market has allowed for a continued growth in personal incomes for the South Korean people. The net result has been an increased demand by Korean tourists to visit the United States.

According to the Travel and Tourism Administration, South Korean arrivals were expected to reach over 600,000 in 1995, up an astonishing 900 percent from the 1987 levels. Of the over 400,000 South Korean travelers who came to the United States in 1993, 35 percent came for vacations or holidays with another 35 percent coming to visit friends or relatives. Most of such travel has been to California, New York, Hawaii, Arizona, and Florida. With an estimated \$1 billion in potential tourism dollars to spend, it is easy to see the importance of promoting easier access to the U.S. tourist market which has experienced considerable losses over the past few years. Simply put, more Korean tourists equals more business and jobs in the United States.

My home State of California is a perfect example of how important tourism is to the United States. According to the California Division of Tourism, California's travel and tourism industry generates \$55.7 billion annually, which is 6.5 percent of the Gross State Product. Overall, California would rank eighth in terms of international tourism as a separate nation,