

HONORING CALIFORNIA HISTORY
WEEK IN THE 34TH CONGRES-
SIONAL DISTRICT OF CALIFOR-
NIA

HON. ESTEBAN EDWARD TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 8, 1997

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the rich history of the Great State of California. On Tuesday, September 9, 1997, the Native Daughters of the Golden West, Rancho La Puente Parlor No. 331, will join in celebration of the anniversary of California's admission into the Union of the United States of America.

California became the 31st State of the Union on September 9, 1850, which became known in Cal as Admission Day. The purpose of the Native Daughters of the Golden West is based on the principals of love of California, devotion to the flag, veneration of the pioneers, and faith in the existence of God. This fine organization tirelessly serves to protect and honor the cultural history of California by observing Admission Day and working to reestablish it as a State holiday by California's 150th anniversary in 2000.

In acknowledgment of the cultural, social, political, geological, and economic contributions of the Great State of California to the Nation and the world, I am proud to join with the Native Daughters of the Golden West and Californians throughout the State and proclaim September 7–13, 1997, as California History Week in the 34th Congressional District of California.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in observing Admission Day and honoring the Great State of California.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 8, 1997

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I was necessarily absent during rollcall vote 366. If present, I would have voted "no" on rollcall 366.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF BELL AF-
RICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL
ZION CHURCH

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 8, 1997

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this hallowed Chamber to ask my colleagues to join me in offering praise and congratulations on the 150th anniversary of the Bell African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, in Center Moriches, Long Island.

The humble beginnings of the Bell AME Zion Church can be traced to 1840, when a small prayer group of faithful friends gathered in the homes of family and neighbors to practice their faith. Born a slave in 1808, Abraham Perdue demonstrated the foresight that made him a successful businessman by initiating the

effort to create for the local African-American community their own church.

With the help of his brother Harry and friend Harry Howard, they purchased property on what is now Railroad Avenue in Center Moriches. For the amount of \$400—a vast sum for the time—the African-American community erected the small church, began services, and the little congregation flourished, experiencing the human joys and sorrows that visit us all. They baptized their babies and married their spouses inside, and buried their loved ones in the cemetery in back.

After an original affiliation with the African Methodist Conference, in 1897 the congregation elected to join with the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Conference. In this era in its history, less than 10 years since Abraham Perdue passed away, the congregation was held together thanks to the efforts of Sister Mary E. Bell. Following her death in 1920, church members immortalized Sister Bell's lifetime good work for the Lord by naming the church the Bell AME Zion Church.

Faced with declining membership, Bell AME Zion ended weekly services in 1914 and remained closed for several years. But an invigoration of African-American emigrants from the South, seeking jobs at local farms, allowed the church to reopen its doors in 1922, and the African Methodist Conference sent Rev. William E. Wright to serve as pastor. Five years later, a board of trustees was appointed and much needed renovations and repairs were made to the church.

By 1932, the church members again chose to affiliate with the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Conference and Pastor Rev. Elliot S. Travalee began an aggressive effort to expand the congregation and church building. Ground was broken on the addition in September 1954. Since then, Bell AME Zion Church experienced phenomenal growth, as the suburbs of New York City received millions of new residents. With growth came the blessings of a new Sunday school, the purchase of the church organ that is still used today and the creation of Christian Education classes. By 1990 a building drive was started for the many needed renovations to this vital and growing church.

Mr. Speaker, our churches, temples, and mosques are the true cornerstones of our communities, the bedrock on which our faith, values, and sense of purpose rest. With the faith and good work that makes their Christian community so vital, the Bell African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church has overcome times of want and despair, and today flourishes as a proud beacon of spirituality. We are proud and blessed to count this wonderful church as an important cornerstone of our Long Island community. May God continue to bless their work for another 150 years and beyond.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO NORMAN W.
JETER

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 8, 1997

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the distinguished career of Norman W. Jeter of Hays, KS. Mr. Jeter came to Ellis County 60 years ago after graduating

from the University of Kansas Law School. He was elected Ellis County attorney in 1938 and established his own law practice in Hays. Later, he was a member of the Hays school board and chairman of the Kansas Board of Regents.

The Jeter Law Firm grew with the county. Over the years, Mr. Jeter represented banking, oil, and agricultural interests as he saw them become the State's premier industries. The firm itself, to which Mr. Jeter's two sons Joe and Bill now belong, has produced a justice on the Kansas Supreme Court and this U.S. Congressman.

At the age of 85, Norman Jeter is the Cal Ripken of the Kansas legal profession. He still puts in at least 5 hours a day and is often the first person in the office. His dedication to his profession and his knowledge of the law are respected throughout the State of Kansas. He is the kind of elder statesman that every community needs and all too often lacks. In June, Mr. Jeter received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from his colleagues in the KU Law Society, a fitting tribute to the successful career of an extraordinary man.

When Norman Jeter boarded a train to Hays, KS, in the midst of the Great Depression, he came on the hope that Hays would be a great town someday. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, Hays grew into a thriving community, the home of an excellent State university and the commercial center of northwest Kansas. Along the way, Hays residents benefited from the sage advice of Mr. Jeter. Norman Jeter is proof that the practice of the law can still be an honorable profession and that service to one's community can still make a difference. I would ask that my colleagues join me today in paying tribute to Norman Jeter and his 60 years of service to the people of the First District.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 8, 1997

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, 1 week in our final legislative session has already passed without a vote on campaign finance reform. Members of Congress, as promised, have begun to use parliamentary procedures to slow down the legislative process. This is unfortunate, but inevitable. Frankly, I and many other Members are increasingly frustrated with the fact that no vote has been scheduled on campaign finance reform.

A front page article in the Washington Post this Sunday highlighted Senator MITCH MCCONNELL. Senator MCCONNELL's belief is that money represents free speech. While I may disagree with the Senator's views on this issue at least we know where he stands. The vast majority of Members of Congress have not made it clear where they stand on campaign finance reform. They do not have to, because they have not had to express their vote on the floor of the House. The public is demanding action on this issue. Now is the time, Mr. Speaker, to let the public know where their Representative in Congress stands on campaign finance reform. The only way that will happen is through a vote on the floor of the House.