

CELEBRATING THE 50TH
ANNIVERSARY OF VFW POST 9588

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I am rising to speak today to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the chartering of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9588, the Bailey-Richman Post, in Monticello, New York. The Post was chartered on April 4th, 1948 at the Grange Hall in Monticello and was recently honored by the National Headquarters of the VFW with a Golden Anniversary Citation. It is an honor they justly deserve. I would like to also celebrate and honor the Post's long history of public service and commitment to their community in Sullivan County. The wonderful men and women of this post have given so much to us all in times of war and in times of peace and I want them to know that their contributions are deeply felt and greatly appreciated. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in celebrating the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Bailey-Richman VFW Post 9588.

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FAIR
HOUSING ACT

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to rise before you today to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act by designating the month of April as Fair Housing Month in Flint, Michigan.

Michigan, and the City of Flint in particular, has a long history of promoting fair housing. In February, 1968, the citizens of Flint voted to adopt the first open-housing ordinance in the country. As a member of the Michigan State Legislature, I introduced the very first Open Housing Act which outlawed housing discrimination in Michigan. In my many years of public service, I have continued the fight for fair and equitable housing because I believe our country must grant every person an equal chance to succeed in America.

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 celebrates its anniversary this year with the distinction of being one of the most successful civil rights laws in history. Thanks to the cooperation and support of hundreds of state and local governments, more and more Americans are enjoying the simple freedom of choosing where to live.

The Fair Housing Act was enacted in 1968, shortly after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination. The Act bars housing discrimination on account of race, color, religion, sex, disability, family status and national origin. The Act covers the sale, rental financing and advertising of almost all housing in the nation.

Mr. Speaker, although we have made significant strides in combating housing discrimination, we still have a long way to go. It is illegal, immoral and intolerable and it has no place in our present or future. During this month of observance of the 30th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act, let us work together to preserve the principles of this important leg-

islation by eliminating discrimination and ensuring that all Americans are afforded the opportunity to live with dignity and pride.

TRIBUTE TO EPSILON KAPPA

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Epsilon Kappa, St. John's University's Chapter of Sigma Delta Pi, the National Collegiate Hispanic Society which, for seventy-seven years has been promoting Hispanic culture and language in the United States. In light of the fact that we are honoring Hispanic heritage and culture, I am choosing to make this tribute in my native language Spanish.

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ submitted two paragraphs in Spanish.)

Successful organizations like this cannot promote themselves alone. They need the guidance and vision of talented leaders like Professor Marie-Lise Gazarian-Gautier, a renovated scholar in literature at St. John's University, Coordinator of the Graduate Spanish Program and Moderator of Epsilon Kappa, St. John's Chapter of Sigma Delta Pi. Dr. Gazarian is affiliated with universities in Paris-France, Moscow-Russia, and Santiago the 1945 Chilean Nobel Prize Laureate. She is also author of several books, among them: "Gabriela Mistral: La maestra de Elqui." In addition, she serves as Foreign Correspondent for several literary journals abroad and has hosted a nationwide series on "Contemporary Hispanic Fiction" produced by WCBS-TV and St. John's Television Center. In 1996 she was appointed Judge of the Selection Committee for the Poet Laureate from Queens. She currently serves as Vice President for the Northeast of Sigma Delta Pi.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to rise with me today in honor of the seventy-seventh anniversary of Sigma Delta Pi and the invaluable contribution its chapters are making to our Hispanic Culture and society throughout the United States. We wish Sigma Delta Pi continued success and recognize St. John's University's Chapter, Epsilon Kappa, for its outstanding work in promoting Hispanic culture in America.

FORMER CONGRESSWOMAN BELLA
ABZUG

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I came to the floor bearing the unfortunate news that former Congresswoman Bella Abzug had died. I would now like to take this opportunity to say a few words about our colleague, who affected this House and this nation deeply.

Bella Abzug was a woman ahead of her time. I am not the first to come to this conclusion, and I am certainly not the only person who will point out this fact as the world reflects on this loss. So perhaps it is fitting to go one

step further, and say: Bella Abzug was not only a woman ahead of her time. She was a woman who ushered in a new time.

I don't think it is unreasonable to say that Bella Abzug changed the way Americans think about female politicians, and for a very uncomplicated reason: she made us do so. She wasn't afraid to demand the respect she deserved, and I think maybe the perfect example of that comes from a story she told about why she started wearing her trademark hats.

"When I first became a lawyer," she said a few years ago, "only about 2 percent of the Bar was women. People would always think I was a secretary. In those days, professional women in the business world wore hats. So I started wearing hats." And as we all know, she never stopped.

But Bella Abzug didn't go into politics out of personal ambition. One of the fundamental things about her, maybe her defining element—beneath the character, beneath the voice, beneath the hats—was her tireless social conscience. She had no time for typical politicians, and even less time for politics as usual. And not only was she driven to do the right thing, but she demanded the same of everyone she came in contact with.

I remember that whenever I would talk to her, she would say to me, "Are you doing enough? Are you doing enough?" And then, occasionally, almost begrudgingly, she would say, "Well, you're doing okay." I would leave our conversation feeling as if I had received the greatest compliment one could ever receive.

That is one of my memories of Bella, and I am sure many Members of Congress have others they would like to share. That is why we will be holding a Special Order following the upcoming district work period, where I invite our colleagues with memories to share to come forward, and to give to former Representative Abzug the tribute which is surely her due.

Finally, regarding my colleague I can only conclude with this: when Bella Abzug left the House of Representatives, this chamber became a poorer place. Likewise, yesterday the world became a poorer place, though all of us are richer for having experienced Bella's presence.

REFORMING BILINGUAL
EDUCATION

HON. FRANK RIGGS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to reform the federal bilingual education program to insure its primary focus is on teaching children English.

English is our official common and commercial language. Our goal should be that every child in America entering Kindergarten will be able to read and write English by the end of the First Grade. Other students should be expected to master English within two academic years.

Over the past few years, there has been a growing amount of evidence that bilingual education classes—those using a child's native language in instruction—are having a harmful impact on our Nation's English language