

to welcome Dr. Hugo F. Sonnenschein, President of the University of Chicago, to Washington, D.C. and the U.S. Capitol on Thursday, May 21, 1998 in recognition of his substantial contribution to American education and to the general welfare of the United States as leader of that esteemed institution. On Thursday, May 21, President Sonnenschein will pay a rare visit to the University of Chicago alumni in the Greater Washington, D.C. area, to bring them news of developments at the University, and learn of developments among alumni in the Nation's capital.

Dr. Sonnenschein has served American higher education with extraordinary distinction, as researcher, teacher, and administrator. Before becoming the 11th President of the University of Chicago in 1993, Dr. Sonnenschein (A.B., University of Rochester, 1961; Ph.D., Purdue University, 1964) served as Provost, Princeton University, 1991 to 1993; Dean, School of Arts and Sciences, University of Pennsylvania, 1988 to 1991; and as a respected scholar of microeconomics.

Mr. Speaker, President Sonnenschein's visit to the Nation's capital is particularly significant. There are some four thousand graduates of the University of Chicago who enrich the political, educational, scientific, cultural, legal and business life of Greater Washington, D.C. The university educates all manner of leaders, and in the Nation's capital alone has produced distinguished Members of this great Congress, dedicated managers and administrators in the Executive Branch, and effective judges in the Federal Courts.

In addition, the University of Chicago takes special pride in its reputation as a teacher of teachers. A great number of its graduates are educators improving the lives of students at all levels of the American educational system and all over the world.

Mr. Speaker, since its founding in 1892, the University has been uniquely devoted to the creation of knowledge, and the research of its scholars in the humanities, social sciences, biological sciences, and natural sciences has made innumerable contributions both to our national life and to international progress.

The University's Washington, D.C.-area alumni look forward to greeting President Sonnenschein on May 21 to make friends, exchange ideas, and express their appreciation for his outstanding service to that esteemed educational institution.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege to ask my colleagues in this great Congress to join me in recognizing University of Chicago President Hugo F. Sonnenschein on his visit to the Nation's capital.

STATEMENT ON THE FREEDOM
FROM RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION
BILL

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 14, 1998

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I voted against the "Freedom From Religious Persecution Act" because of conversations I had with religious leaders from around the world who convinced me this approach would not stop religious persecution, but could actually backfire.

During a meeting with a variety of Christian religious leaders organized by the National Council of Churches, I had the opportunity to visit with a number of bishops and ministers from Indonesian, Pakistan, the Middle East and the former Soviet Union. They were unanimous in their fear that the United States had very little cause to force countries to be more tolerant with different religious faiths. They were unanimous in their fear that this bill could be perceived interference by the United States and could actually make things worse for the members of their faith.

Since I've arrived in Congress I have been working to understand the role the United States plays as the remaining superpower, militarily and economically, and I would hope morally. I have met with religious and business and political leaders both overseas and here in the United States including Aung San Suu Kyi, the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize winner from Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) and known dissidents in Thailand. I am convinced we do have a constructive role to play regarding religious persecution, but this legislation does not meet that goal.

HONORING OUR GOLD STAR
MOTHERS

HON. JON D. FOX

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 14, 1998

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to our Gold Star Mothers who have suffered the terrible losses of their sons and daughters for the defense of our nation. These young men and women were in the prime of life, full of hope and youthful promise, when they died defending their country and preserving our freedom.

Their loss was and is heart-breaking for the families and friends left behind. And—enjoying the long period of peace and freedom that these young American service men and women bought so dearly—we are in danger of forgetting their great sacrifice.

But there is one group of fine Americans who are uniquely able to make sure that the rest of us do not forget. They are the Gold Star Mothers. Each one lost a child who died in the military service of our country during this war.

I am proud and grateful that we have a strong and active group of Gold Star Mothers in the Delaware Valley region including the 13th District of Pennsylvania which I represent in Congress.

The cast of "Reflections" is composed of students from Erdenheim Elementary School in Springfield Township, Montgomery County and students from Upper Dublin High School from Fort Washington, Pennsylvania as well as students from Thomas Edison and Olney High Schools in Philadelphia. The play is a retrospective of our patriotism and a testament to the sacrifices our country has asked of its mothers.

The Play was written, produced and directed by one of my constituents, Vietnam Veteran Frank "Bud" Kowalewski. I commend his tireless work in offering our young people the opportunity to honor lost lives, and teaching them the nature of valor and patriotism. The play strives to educate the nation on the

sacrifices made by Gold Star Mothers. I congratulate the cast on their achievements in reminding us all the true reason we celebrate Memorial Day in America.

On May 21st, 1998, the cast, dressed in historical period costumes, will accompany a local Gold Star Mother on a trip to Buffalo, New York. There, the cast will perform with students from Riverside High School in their Memorial Day Assembly. This production—"Reflections Going Home"—is dedicated as a Mother's Day Card Gold Card to all Gold Star Mothers.

Previously, the troupe has traveled to our nation's capital where they laid a wreath at the Vietnam War Memorial on the National Mall and were honored by Congress just last year.

The Gold Star Mothers are part of a group that had its roots in the first great conflict of the 20th Century—World War I. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed that service flags would be displayed at homes that had family members serving the country. Blue Stars were displayed for each family member in the Armed Forces. And, as the war progressed and casualties mounted, the stars were turned to Gold Stars to represent each service member killed defending our country.

The Gold Star Mothers were officially organized in Washington, DC, in 1929. But one does not have to be a formal member of the national organization to be a Gold Star Mother. The standard for entering this revered group of Americans is much, much higher and more difficult than simply joining an organization. One must have had a child who made the supreme sacrifice for our country. It is a non-profit, non-political organization which was first organized by 25 mothers in June 1928 and was incorporated on January 5, 1929. In 1936 Congress—in a joint resolution—designated the last Sunday in September as Gold Star Mother's Day. In 1940, President Franklin Roosevelt further recognized the day.

These Gold Star Mothers, perhaps better than anyone else, know the agony that comes from caring for, nurturing, and raising up a child only to see that young life lost just as it is beginning. But these fine Americans deserve the greatest admiration, thanks and respect from all of us and I find it remarkable that this group of courageous women is that they refuse to allow their grief to become the victor. Instead, they chose to channel their pain and suffering into productive work to benefit veterans and the community at large.

These ladies whose loved ones did not make it home devote themselves to caring for and helping those who did. In a supreme act of love and concern for others, many Gold Star Mothers dedicate themselves to helping the children of other mothers, children who survived war. Gold Star Mothers assist in all manner of ways. They visit veterans' hospitals to help service people there. They take part in patriotic observances that help all of us remember the sacrifices that bought our freedom.

But the Gold Star Mothers did not stop there. They wanted to expand their opportunities to assist veterans and their families and sought a Congressional Charter so they could work in veterans' hospitals throughout the country. Their charter was granted in 1984 and outlines the objectives and purposes for which they were organized including: (1) assisting all veterans and their dependents in claims to the U.S. Veterans Administration, (2)