

represents over 40,000 small business professional truckers across America. On October 9, OOIDA celebrated 25 years of service at the grand opening of their new headquarters in Grain Valley, Missouri.

I would like to submit the following speech, which was delivered before the celebration by OOIDA Secretary Robert E. Esler, for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This speech is a special tribute to recognize the hard work and dedication of OOIDA President Jim Johnston.

HELP!!! . . . This was the cry that was being heard from the East Coast to the West Coast. From the Northern border to the Southern border the sound resonated throughout the land. WE NEED HELP. Owner-operators, independents, and truckers in general were fed up with the way things were going in the early seventies. Fuel prices were escalating. Taxes were soaring. Rates were not keeping up with the ever-increasing costs. Government rules and regulations were becoming more and more unbearable. What can we do was the cry. Something has to be done. We can not continue on under these circumstances.

For as many questions there seemed to be as many answers. Owner-operator groups were springing up everywhere, each with their own agenda. Each group was sure that they could get immediate solutions to their specific problems. Either by public demonstrations or, as simple as it seemed, by calling on their local legislators. Surely, after bringing attention to their plight, the powers that be would see how wronged and mistreated they were and as if by magic make their problems go away. Oh how wrong they were. There were many pitfalls on the road ahead.

One such group was formed in 1973. This group went through some rough times getting organized. Trying to get a bunch of disgruntled truckers to agree on anything was like getting three lawyers to share the same viewpoint; it ain't going to happen. After a couple of years of floundering it became evident that they lacked an essential ingredient, leadership. Sure there were people elected to be leaders but none seemed up to the task. It got so bad that no one wanted to be in charge and lead. This is where the right man was at the right place at the right time. One man stood up and faced the challenge.

It was his vision that Owner-Operators should be treated as equals in the trucking industry. Not only from a governmental view point but also from the Motor Carrier industry as well. This became his focus and thus became his mantle. He has been able to do what no other person has done. And that is, take a group of owner-operators that were on a course to nowhere and turn them around. His leadership has enabled them to chart a course that has taken them to a position of being the largest, longest running, and most successful owner-operator group to date.

Where do such leaders come from? They come from the midst of our ranks. They have the unique ability to recognize a need, the vision to see a solution and the persistence to overcome obstacles. Each has a different style of leadership but they all have one specific element, focus. Focus on the job until it gets done. And without question they will all tell you the job never gets done. There is always a new task to face.

Such is a man named Jim Johnston who, nearly twenty-five years ago took a job nobody wanted. He faced the challenge. And, through years of dedication and hard work dramatically changed the course of events that now places the owner-operator on a level-playing field with all segments of the trucking industry.

On behalf of the Members, Board of Directors, and Staff of Owner-Operator Independ-

ent Drivers Association I would like to say, "Jim we all look forward to the next twenty-five years. Thanks for being the right man at the right place at the right time."

THANK YOU RAY AND JUDY
DANNER

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 16, 1998

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, today, I want to congratulate and express my appreciation to Ray and Judy Danner for their service to the people of Tennessee.

Forty years ago, Ray Danner came to Tennessee from Louisville, Kentucky to open a Shoney's Franchise in Nashville. During the next thirty years Ray grew Shoney's into one of the largest and most successful restaurant chains in our country's history.

Almost twenty-five years ago Ray was joined in marriage with Judy Danner. Together they have made unlimited contributions to the cultural, educational, and social fabric of their community.

In 1987, Ray retired from Shoney's and started the Danner Company, an investment and management firm. In a scant ten years, his venture has spawned more than forty companies, with over four thousand total employees worldwide and gross revenues in excess of five hundred million dollars.

Ray and Judy Danner represent the best of what our country has to offer. They firmly believe in the value of hard work, a loving family, a dedication to their community and a faith in God.

It is a pleasure to join their many friends in recognizing Ray and Judy Danner's service to Tennessee and I wish them the best in the years to come.

UAB RECOGNIZED AMONG
AMERICA'S BEST HOSPITALS

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 16, 1998

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, the University of Alabama at Birmingham is one of our Nation's premiere medical research universities, and one that I am proud to represent in the Sixth District of Alabama. This institution should be particularly commended for its recognition in U.S. News and World Report's 1998 Guide to America's Best Hospitals.

UAB is recognized as outstanding in five of the sixteen specialties rated by U.S. News and World Report. These specialties are cardiology and cardiac surgery, geriatrics, gynecology, pulmonary disease, and rheumatology. To be named as among the best within these categories out of the Nation's 6,400 hospitals is certainly an outstanding achievement which speaks highly of all the faculty, staff, and employees of UAB. The contributions this institution makes to the Sixth District, the State of Alabama, and people all over the country are highly commendable.

I recognize and honor UAB not only in the five areas acknowledged by U.S. News and

World Report but for all the outstanding contributions made in the areas of medicine and health care to the community and to the country. Congratulations to all of those at UAB who work daily to improve the lives and health of Americans.

INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS
FREEDOM ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, October 10, 1998

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, we are poised on the brink of a historic vote to help millions of our persecuted brothers and sisters of faith around the world. The words of our first President George Washington ring out across the years, as if written to us for this day: "I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of religious persecution."

Yesterday, with historic unity and courage, the Senate voted 98 to 0 stand against the horrors of religious persecution. I rise now, after more than a year of work on this bill, in heartfelt support for the International Religious Freedom Act. Let us finish the job. With one voice let us tell religious believers around the world that we have heard their cries and seen their suffering. And let us with one voice tell persecuting regimes around the world that we will not be silent, and that we will not let their crimes go unchecked.

Even as we speak, there are those suffering torture, imprisonment, rape, murder, merely because they seek to peacefully practice their faith. The International Religious Freedom Act creates a comprehensive and responsible structure for responding to that persecution. It is consistent with international and U.S. human rights law. It has many long-term avenues for change. The only option it does not allow is silence.

I commend my Senate colleagues DON NICKLES, who sponsored and provided such great leadership on this bill, and Senators JOE LIEBERMAN, CONNIE MACK, DAN COATS, and others, as well as all the staff who worked so hard. I commend my colleague FRANK WOLF and his staff Anne Huiskes for their hard work on the bill that laid such strong groundwork for this bill today.

What is so remarkable about this bill is its bipartisan nature. I know just how bipartisan it was, because my staff Laura Bryant was one of the principal drafters of this bill, together with my colleague from the other side of the aisle TOM DELAY's staff Will Inboden. They worked together for over a year with the staff of other Senators who share a deep commitment to freedom of religion, from both sides of the aisle, including John Hanford, Steve Moffitt, Elaine Petty, Jim Jatras, Cecile Shea, Pam Sellars, and many others.

My friend Senator COATS cautioned this morning, after the overwhelming vote, that we must not think this was easy. And it was not. There were many long hours, weeks and months of negotiations, not only within the Congress, but with the Administration and with religious and other groups. I want to commend