much work to be done to reach the goal of having a fully operational Refuge System by 2003.

The legislation I am introducing today recognizes the vital importance of the Refuge System and the fact that the System will celebrate its centennial anniversary in 3 years. Under the terms of this bill, a Commission will be established to promote awareness of the System; develop a long-term plan to meet the priority operations, maintenance and construction needs of the System; and to improve public use programs and facilities.

The National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Commission would be composed of 11 voting members, including the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In addition, the chairman and ranking minority members of the House Resources and Senate Environment and Public Works Committees, plus the congressional members of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, would serve as ex offico members.

The Commission would be charged with the responsibility for preparing a plan to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the System, coordinating activities to celebrate that event, and hosting a conference on the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Commission would issue annual reports and would terminate no later than September 30, 2004.

Finally, this bill directs the Secretary of the Interior to prepare and submit to the Congress a long-term plan to address priority operations, maintenance, and construction needs of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Mr. Speaker, I anticipate that my subcommittee will conduct a hearing on this legislation in the near future. The American people deserve the finest Refuge System in the world. This bill is an appropriate next step in our efforts to ensure that the legacy of Theodore Roosevelt, one of our Nation's greatest conservationists, will live on in the years ahead.

Ahead, I want to thank my distinguished colleagues for joining with me in this endeavor, and I urge enthusiastic support for the National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Act.

TRIBUTE TO MS. ELIZABETH ROSE CARROLL—CELEBRATING THE FIRST PLACE WINNER OF THE 18TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL ART COMPETITION, AN ARTISTIC DISCOVERY

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I honor a very talented young lady from my congressional district, Elizabeth Rose Carroll of Springdale High School. Elizabeth is the top winner of the 2000 18th Congressional District High School Art Competition, An Artistic Discovery.

Elizabeth's pen and ink entitled ''Petals in the Past'' depicting a veiled woman of a bygone era holding a bouquet, was selected from a number of outstanding entries to this year's competition. I know that, with her obvious talent, many successes await Elizabeth.

I look forward to seeing ''Petals in the Past'' displayed along with the artwork of the other competition winners from across the country, and I am pleased to be associated with Elizabeth's artistic talents.

Congratulations, Elizabeth. I wish you the very best of luck in the future.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING VIETNAMESE-AMERICANS AND OTHERS WHO SEEK TO IMPROVE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN VIETNAM

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce this House Concurrent Resolution which expresses the sense of Congress regarding Vietnamese-Americans and others who seek to improve social and political conditions in Vietnam.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the fall of Saigon to Communist forces. The current Socialist Republic of Vietnam continues under an oppressive Communist regime that limits and denies its citizens fundamental rights, such as the right to free speech, the right to religious worship, and the right to associate with others who do not agree with the government. During the past 25 years, many people, including Vietnamese-Americans have participated in peaceful protests, freedom rallies, candlelight vigils, hunger strikes, and other demonstrations to bring awareness and attention to the social and political situation in Vietnam.

It is important that we recognize the work of Vietnamese-Americans and others who labor continuously to bring attention to the injustices and human rights conditions in Vietnam. In addition, we must never forget those who risked and gave the ultimate sacrifice—their lives—in defending and attempting to bring freedom and democracy to Vietnam.

Traditionally, the former Republic of South Vietnam and presently in Vietnamese-American communities all across America, June 19 represents a day to commemorate and honor both fallen and living heros who have dedicated or are continuing to dedicate their lives to bringing international attention to the human rights situation in Vietnam. The Vietnamese-American community may be relatively young, but it has a consistent record of bringing issues such as human rights abuses, political and religious persecution, and labor exploitations committed in Vietnam, to the attention of the American public.

Many of my own constituents have shared with me the horrors and their own personal stories of how they and their families have endured living under Vietnam's Communist regime without fundamental human rights. While many of them were lucky enough to escape from Vietnam, many more people have not been as fortunate.

It is my strongest hope that the citizens of Vietnam will one day be free: free to elect their own leaders and government, free to worship as they please, free to speak and print their own opinions without fear of persecution or harassment, and simply free to live their lives without government intrusion. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this important resolution because it reaffirms Congress' commitment to Vietnamese-Americans and others whose work keeps the spirit of freedom alive for those still living in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE MYRA (CASIMIRA) LENARD

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, today I have a heavy heart. It is in great sadness that I honor my dear friend, Myra (Casimira) Lenard, who fought her courageous and long bout with grave illness so valiantly. On Monday afternoon, May 1, Myra passed from this life after having served as the long time Executive Director of the Washington Office of the Polish American Congress. For nearly 20 years, she became the much revered force representing Polish Americans here in our Nation's Capital. Her fortitude was to be admired as she guided the Congress through the tumultuous times of Solidarity and Martial Law. What a gift that she lived to witness the fall of the Berlin Wall, and then saw the fulfillment of a life-long quest as Poland left the Warsaw Pact and became a member of NATO. She may be best remembered, though, for leading the charge to convert proceeds of the Polish American Enterprise Fund into the Polish American Freedom Foundation. It was Myra who worked tirelessly with the White House and Members of Congress ensuring that voices of Polish Americans in our country would be heard. It was Myra who sacrificed so much to fight for those unable to do it themselves.

Born in Poland, she emigrated to the United States as a small child, where she spent many years involved in Chicago's Polonian organizations. There she met the love of her life, Casimir I. Lenard, whom she married and then moved with him to Washington, DC in 1962. Once here, she immediately began volunteering her time to needy, worthy causes. Her talents were recognized as she ultimately achieved a leadership position at the Polish American Congress. Myra was the worthy recipient of numerous awards, including the Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit—the highest civilian award granted by Poland, presented by Polish Foreign Minister Wladslaw Bartoszewski in 1995. At a meeting of the Supervisory Council of the Polish National Alliance in December 1998, she and her husband were enrolled in the PNA's Legion of Merit. The list of her accomplishments cannot fully capture the fullness of this dynamic, gracious, dedicated and politically brilliant woman. Truly she was a freedom-lover.

Mr. Speaker, may we gain some small comfort in knowing the spirit and fire that Myra carried through her life that helped bring freedom to her first homeland inspired thousands who have been touched with her light and love. May peace bless her always. And may the work to which she dedicated her life—with family and career—stand as a living testament to this regal and loving woman. America is fortunate indeed that she chose this nation as her permanent homeland.