

volunteers, and other human rights activists. Without the hard work of the Friends of Sierra Leone and similar organizations, these atrocities would not be receiving the attention of the media and Congress.

One volunteer in particular who educated me on this issue is Massachusetts State Senator David Magnani of Framingham. Senator Magnani spent two years in Sierra Leone and another year in Kenya as a Peace Corps volunteer in the late 1960's. Since then, he has closely followed events both in Sierra Leone and throughout Africa. I appreciate his efforts on this important issue.

Consequently, I am a cosponsor of H.R. 5147, The Carat Act, introduced by Representative TONY HALL. This bill imposes an embargo on diamonds from Sierra Leone and Angola that have not been certified by their governments. Furthermore, it prohibits the shipment of diamonds from known smuggling centers. This legislation would assure that diamonds imported from unknown sources, like those that come from the mines controlled by Sierra Leone's rebels, would be embargoed from importation into the United States.

Legislation like this lets the diamond industry and Sierra Leone's rebels know that we are very serious about not importing diamonds that have come at the cost of innocent lives. It is the responsibility of Congress to take this stand, and I urge your support for this bill.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. NORINE S.
GILSTRAP

HON. KAREN L. THURMAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 18, 2000

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an extraordinary woman and a dear friend—The Honorable Norine S. Gilstrap, Tax Collector from Citrus County, Florida. Mrs. Gilstrap is a very revered and respected tax collector who I'm sorry to say is retiring this year after 26 years of dedicated service to the people of Citrus County.

Mrs. Gilstrap is well known for being a compassionate and dynamic leader.

Even while growing up in Dunnellon during her high school years, Mrs. Gilstrap was an athlete, an artist, an enthusiast and a devoted church goer. She was active in such activities as the girls' basketball team, the theater department, in the girls' cheerleading team and in the Methodist Church Community in Dunnellon.

Ms. Gilstrap maintained high grades while holding a part time job throughout high school. She valued a college degree so much that she worked every day after school and on Saturdays as a cashier at a local food store in order to save for her education. Her work and determination to get an education certainly shows a tremendous commitment and determination.

On October 8, 1950, Norine married Robert N. Gilstrap. It wasn't long before the couple decided to start a family. As a devoted wife and mother of three children, she chose in the early years to focus much of her time to raising her family and community service. But she still longed to further her education by attending college. In 1964, she pursued her goal and enrolled at Central Florida Community College

where she studied business. There she received the training that would soon prove extremely valuable to the people of Citrus County.

On December 11, 1974, her beloved husband who was then the Citrus County Tax Collector passed away. Governor Ruben Askew appointed Mrs. Gilstrap to fulfill the final two years of her husband's term. Since then, the people of Citrus County have elected her to serve more than 25 years of service as tax collector of Citrus County.

Mrs. Gilstrap has always worked toward the betterment of our community. Throughout her life, she has participated in and held leadership roles in Altrusa, Beta Sigma Phi, Citrus County Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Citrus and the Heart Ball Committee.

Her service has been rewarded with such prestigious honors as the First Annual Ten Most Admired Women in Citrus County. She was also one of the first five women inducted into Rotary. Her commitment to our community is well illustrated by her impressive list of prestigious accomplishments.

Sharon Tenbroeck, Mrs. Gilstrap's assistant of 23 years at the Citrus County Tax Collector's office noted Ms. Gilstrap's perseverance and willingness to go the extra mile. "Her high ethics and morals will be hard to replace. Because of her compassion to serving the public in the many capacities which she does, she is considered a treasure to all that are fortunate enough to meet her," Ms. Tenbroeck said. "Her kindness and compassion have caused all of her employees to consider her family and she will be missed terribly."

Mrs. Gilstrap has touched so many lives during her lifetime of service. One such person is Alida Langley, who views Mrs. Gilstrap as a role model. "From the time the Governor appointed Ms. Gilstrap to office, she has been professional, respected and appreciated by all," Mrs. Langley said. "She is the ideal woman." Norine Gilstrap is the epitome of grace and goodness.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in paying tribute to Norine S. Gilstrap, a woman who stands for excellence, integrity and honor. We are all so grateful for her devoted service to Citrus County.

REMEMBERING BROTHER JAMES
L. ROMOND

HON. JOHN E. SWEENEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 18, 2000

Mr. SWEENEY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to remember Brother James L. Romond, who passed away at the age of 56 on October 9, 2000. Brother James dedicated his entire life to educating and guiding America's youth. He served as Principal at La Salle Institute in Upstate New York since 1982.

Brother James was born on September 9, 1944 in Queens, New York and graduated from St. Joseph's Juniorate High School in Barytown, New York in 1962. He entered the Brothers of the Christian Schools in 1963 and began a life long career of helping others. Brother James earned a bachelors degree in education from Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. in 1967. He received his

masters degree from Manhattan College in Riverdale, New York in 1971 and Certification in School Administration and Supervision from Fordham University in 1973.

Brother James believed that every child could achieve and provided the spark required to ignite their creativity, imagination and interest. He was known for teaching his students the value of community service, especially for the poor and needy. Annually from 1991-98, under the leadership of Brother James, La Salle's students contributed more food to an Upstate New York food drive than any other local school. Additionally, he brought the La Salle students together during Christmas for the annual Toy Drive in which they donated over 500 toys each year for the past 15 years. Brother James cared deeply for the disadvantaged and took steps to help them whenever he could.

Brother James was a friend and role model to thousands of youngsters. His presence will be missed in the halls, at the bus stop, and at the school's sporting events. You see, Mr. Speaker, Brother James made it a point to go out to the buses at the end of each school day to give students a few encouraging words and ensure they were safely on their way home. He cheered his students' accomplishments at every sporting event held at the campus. He arrived in his office by 6:00 am each day—ready to guide students through the days activities. Most importantly, he always made himself available to his students—twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. He created a friendly, kind, and compassionate atmosphere in which students could learn and grow.

La Salle Institute in Troy, New York was twice selected as a National School of Excellence by the United States Department of Education during his tenure as principal for grades 6 through 12. Brother James previously served in several capacities at the Good Shepherd School in New York City. He taught grades 6 through 8, served as assistant principal, and fulfilled the role of principal for grades 5 through 8. He was an extraordinary educator who touched his student's hearts and minds and allowed them to believe in themselves.

Brother James was also a major force in the planning and development of several major construction projects at La Salle. His innovative planning made it possible for the school to add on a new wing of classrooms, a state-of-the-art library and fully equipped computer room. He also laid the groundwork for construction of a new gymnasium, cafeteria, and modern kitchen facility. Brother James was particularly excited about the plans for the kitchen. He enjoyed cooking very much, and prepared meals at all the senior picnics and faculty and staff occasions. I am sure his students will fondly remember his skills in the kitchen whenever they dine in the new facility.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in remembering the significant contributions of Brother James L. Romond. Brother James' dedication to religion and education were admirable, as was his desire to see his students succeed. He was a confidante to many young people and will be remembered as an educational icon whose life mission was to instill moral values and a sense of faith in students.