Trade Center bombing in 1993, Chief Downey's efforts saved thousands of lives. Sadly, with 343 of his men, Chief Downey made the ultimate sacrifice on that tragic day.

It is said that a firefighter's first act of heroism is taking the oath to become a firefighter. From there on, the rest is just part of the job. As we recognize Chief Downey today, it is important to remember not only his heroic deeds of September 11th, but his extraordinary firefighting career as well. His wife Rosalie commented, ''He never complimented himself. He always did what he had to do.'' We as a nation are forever grateful for what Chief Downey and his fellow firefighters did on September 11th. We are also grateful for what our nation's firefighters continue to do everyday in this country, saving lives and property. The spirit of Chief Downey will continue to live on through this post office in Deer Park and in the fire service forever.

JESSICA CAROLINE AITON (1983–2001), 2000–01 YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE (LOUISIANA NATIONAL RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION)

HON. RICHARD H. BAKER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2001

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, Jessica Caroline Aiton of Greenwell Springs, LA died on Monday, December 17, 2001, at the age of 18, following a tragic car accident. Jessica served as the 2000–2001 Youth Leadership Council Representative from her state for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. This means that she was one of the best and brightest students from rural America and from Louisiana.

Every year, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), through its nearly one thousand member cooperatives, hosts the Washington, DC Youth Tour. This program brings 1,300 high school students from across rural America to visit their Nation's Capital to learn about their heritage, and about their electric cooperatives. On average, Louisiana brings 25 students each year. From this group, the state association selects one outstanding individual to be its youth spokesperson for the year and to serve on the NRECA national Youth Leadership Council. Jessica was selected as the representative for the 2000–2001 school year. She was one of just 41 nationally appointed to this honor.

Jessica had been an honor student at Central High School where she graduated third in her class. This past fall, she started her freshman year at LSU. She began as an Accounting major and then changed to Chemical Engineering. Next spring, she had planned to take some political science classes, with an eye toward law school and politics. As she once said of her future in an email to one of her former YLC counselors, ''All I know is that I want to go to law school and eventually become a Senator. That much is clear.'' Jessica was also an active member of the Denham Springs Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, loved to run and ride horses, and had just recently joined the College Republicans. With a heart for God, an incredible desire to serve, and the poise, charisma, and dedication rarely seen in a young woman of her age, Jessica was well on her way to being a great Senator. The State of Louisiana, her electric cooperative family, and America will miss her.

As her high school graduating class motto said:

The past is but the beginning of a beginning, and all that is
and has been is but the twilight of the dawn. (H.G. Wells)

May the light of that dawn shine upon Jessica Caroline Aiton forever more.

IN TRIBUTE TO MARILYN HUGHES GASTON, MD

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2001

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, after a twenty-five year career in the U.S. Public Health Service, Marilyn Hughes Gaston, MD, Director of the Bureau of Primary Health Care, within the Health Resources and Services Administration, is resigning and making her transition into the private sector.

Dr. Gaston began her career as a physician. She received her medical degree from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine and completed a residency training in pediatrics. Her work over the years has been marked by staunch advocacy for the betterment of the health status of minorities, women and children. Dr. Gaston is an internationally recognized leader in sickle cell research and her contributions to the field have resulted in significant changes in the way the disease is treated and managed in children.

She is the first African American woman to direct a U.S. Public Health Service Bureau and she commands a primary health care budget that reaches $5 billion. Under her leadership millions of vulnerable and disadvantaged populations nationwide are assured access to quality, culturally and linguistically competent, primary and preventive health care. Along with her numerous other accolades, she is a former Assistant Surgeon General and the second African American woman to reach Rear Admiral, the highest rank in the U.S. Public Health Service.

Recently, Dr. Gaston co-authored ''Prime Time,'' a health and wellness book for African American women in the midyears. She is a phenomenal leader and mentor. Her work has touched the lives of many and her presence in the Public Health Service will be genuinely missed!

NEED FOR ECONOMIC STIMULUS

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2001

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, there's been a lot of talk here about the need to get our economy jump-started and about the best way to get that done.

We've heard talk of tax cuts for big business that will eventually trickle down to the rest of America.

We've heard talk of tax breaks for wealthy individuals.

Well, I'm here to tell you that won't work for the community I represent!

Some of the cities in my congressional district are facing unemployment levels as high as nine percent. Nine percent!

People who are being laid off need help now—not in the future.

They need to make sure their unemployment benefits last long enough to help their family make it through the new year.

They need to make sure their health care doesn't disappear, leaving their families in the lurch.

I urge the leadership of this House to do the right thing for American families and pass a real economic stimulus plan which gives hard-working families a real boost!

HONORING EMERGENCY SERVICE WORKERS DURING LOCAL HEROES WEEK

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2001

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, it is particularly fitting, in the wake of the tragic events of September 11th, 2001 and the courageous and selfless acts of heroism by New York's police, firefighters and rescue workers which were witnessed and acclaimed by the world, that we extend our gratitude to police, fire and emergency service workers in all of America's communities. The citizens of Bell County and Copperas Cove, Texas in my congressional district are honoring these public servants, from November 18–24, during the 10th observance of Local Heroes Week.

This expression of appreciation to our local public safety workers for their service to Central Texas, which has grown every year since its inception in 1992, raises funds from area businesses and organizations to endow scholarships at Central Texas College for their immediate families.

As a community, we owe a special thanks to the police officers, fire fighters and emergency workers we honor and our sincere appreciation to those who organize Local Heroes Week. The recent tragedies at the World Trade Center in New York and at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia remind us that every day, in every city and county in the country, these men and women put their lives on the line to protect us from harm.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Members of the House of Representatives to join me in honoring these local heroes, in Copperas Cove and Bell County, and across the nation. They define the spirit of public service and we are grateful.

TRIBUTE TO ARMY SPECIALIST JONN JOSEPH EDMUNDS

HON. BARBARA CUBIN

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2001

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to represent the great state of Wyoming in this House of Representatives.