

well for our future generations. I applaud John for his hard work, generosity and leadership. Long Island is proud to commend such a talented young individual.

We are fortunate to have John Plack in Nassau County.

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#### HEART OF A CHAMPION PROGRAM

### HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 6, 2002*

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, each of us shudders in horror when we hear about a school shooting or about the drug and alcohol abuse that haunts our youth. We immediately want to do something—perhaps draft new legislation—something, anything, that will make things “safe” for our children and grandchildren.

As a former teacher with three children of my own, I know the anxiety and anguish that students and their parents often experience in facing the world today—it can be a very scary place.

So, last December, I sponsored a Safe Schools Summit in Fort Worth, Texas. Five hundred middle school and high school students from across my district participated in this 3-hour session. They were students of all races and backgrounds, male and female. The purpose of this summit was to hear directly from the students about how they felt in their schools. It was an amazing day, and the students produced some remarkable and somewhat surprising results.

Today, I want to talk about what the students said about character education. The students told me that they would feel safer at their schools if there were greater attention to the development of character in those schools. We found that students overwhelmingly support character education in their school, by nearly 80%. I knew that parents and educators were supportive of quality character education programs, but I learned through that gathering of students that, these young people also know that character is the critical element for creating safer schools. Yes, there are mechanical and physical elements of a safe school, but these students identified a “human” element of safe schools, and character is a critical aspect of that element. To simplify, these students know that in order to have safe schools, we must have safe students.

On February 4th, what I believe will be one of the most effective character education programs in the nation was launched in my district. The Heart of a Champion character development program is a one-of-a-kind curriculum that combines video, and audio, with a print curriculum, to reach today's “sight and sound” generation on a year-round basis. Heart of a Champion's founder, Steve Riach, has created a comprehensive in-class program to reinforce positive character traits and virtues, and demonstrate examples of persons with high character to students in our schools.

Using positive role models, the Heart of a Champion program tells the stories of widely known athletes—stories that demonstrate virtues such as commitment, perseverance, integrity, courage, honesty, discipline, responsibility and fairness. These stories, and the ap-

plication lessons that follow, encourage students to examine these character traits, and inspire them to embrace and integrate those traits into their own lives. It is a winning formula.

The Heart of a Champion program, has already received the endorsement of several key national community and educational groups, and their representatives will meet with members of the Department of Education later this month. I believe there is nothing else like this program available for schools today. I am in full support of this program and believe it will have a dramatic impact.

President Bush has repeatedly said that character education in our nation's schools is of great importance in this day. He is aware that each year, 10 million school kids abuse alcohol or drugs; that 65 percent of youth in school say they are sexually active by the 12th grade; and that 80 percent admit to cheating in school. We know there is a problem that needs our attention. I believe that character education programs like Heart of a Champion are a solution for this generation.

My fellow members of the House, we all agree our young people are the most valuable asset we have for our nation's future. That is why I believe the Heart of a Champion program is so necessary for our country at this time. This program will provide our kids with the character our society so desperately needs; will give them direction for the future, and will create champions in our schools, homes, and communities—young men and women of character who will become leaders for the next generation. But that can only happen if leaders like you and I show our young people that we truly care about them, by getting behind this program and helping to see that no young person is “left behind” in the development of their character.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all of my colleagues to get to know the Heart of a Champion program. I am confident that you will see the powerful impact it can have on the youth of your cities and counties. Today, it is impacting my district. Tomorrow, with your help and support, it could make a difference in yours.

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#### COMMENDING TONY MONROE

### HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 6, 2002*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tony Monroe for his commitment to his community through service to disadvantaged youth and gang members in the Fresno area. Mr. Monroe rides a horse in some of the roughest neighborhoods and encourages those he encounters to find a better way of life.

Mr. Monroe has made numerous personal sacrifices to continue his service. Previously, he was a Fresno reserve police officer and a Santa Cruz County deputy sheriff. Now, he offers the children and youth a chance to feed his horse and talk about God, gangs, and life in general. A young Fresnan met Tony six years ago when he was an angry and violent street fighter. This young man credits Mr. Monroe with helping him get his life turned around.

The community has also responded by helping Tony with supplies and assistance. Jen-

sen's Armstrong Stables houses two of Mr. Monroe's horses in exchange for maintenance work. All three of his horses, Max, Gumby, and Impact, were donated when his first horse died. This generosity shows how warmly received and appreciated Mr. Monroe is in the community.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend Tony Monroe for his community service and dedication to helping those in need. I encourage my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Monroe many more years of continued success.

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#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 6, 2002*

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, March 5, 2002, I was unable to cast my floor vote on roll call number 47, on the Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended to H. Con. Res. 305, a Resolution Permitting the Use of the Rotunda of the Capitol for a Ceremony to Present a Gold Medal on Behalf of Congress to Former President Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy Reagan.

Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted “aye” on roll call vote 47.

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#### CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA INTERMODAL TERMINAL FUNDING

### HON. FRANK MASCARA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 6, 2002*

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, I submit to the RECORD a letter I have sent to Secretary Norman Mineta of the U.S. Department of Transportation. My letter is to clarify to the D.O.T. the intended use of an earmark I requested in TEA 21 for an intermodal transportation terminal on the campus of California University of Pennsylvania. I requested that earmark in order to fund an intermodal facility that would help connect the main campus to the new campus over one mile away. Now, the campus has an exciting opportunity to create a low speed magnetic levitation system connection between the two campuses and this intermodal facility would be a vital part of the system.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

*Washington, DC, March 6, 2002.*

Hon. NORMAN MINETA,  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY MINETA: I write to clarify the intended use of funding I have obtained for an important project in my district. Over the years I have been working with California University of Pennsylvania officials to acquire funding for a much needed intermodal facility on the campus. Consequently, I have secured a \$1 million TEA-21 earmark and other related earmarks for the University to construct an intermodal facility/transportation improvement project.

My intent for funding the intermodal facility was to support a people-mover system to connect the main university campus to the new auxiliary campus in the Roadman Park