

TRIBUTE TO MS. DOROTHY "DOT"
B. THOMAS

HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2002

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Dorothy "Dot" B. Thomas a Community Developer for Central Savannah River Area Economic Opportunity Authority (EOA) in Augusta, Georgia. Ms. Thomas is the recipient of Experience Works' 2002 Older Worker of the Year award for my home state of Georgia.

Dot Thomas began her career at the EOA in 1971. Beginning first as a Community Developer, she studied and worked her way up to the Coordinator of the Energy Assistance Program. In 1996 she retired, but soon found herself back at EOA volunteering, mentoring new staff, and offering friendly advice based on her many years of experience. She was so valuable to the EOA that when a part-time position became available in 2000, Dot was convinced to come back to work saying . . . "I so enjoy working, learning new things, and interacting with others that I sometimes wonder why I retired."

In her current position as Community Developer, Dot works with families in need—assisting them with energy assistance, food, rent, clothing, etc. She says her most important contribution at EOA is giving people hope. "I want them to feel better about themselves when they leave my office. Many times people come in looking so bad. But when I can say something to make them feel better about themselves and their circumstances, it just makes my day special!" Lola Johnson, director of the EOA, contributes Ms. Thomas' professional success to the heart and soul she puts into her work. "Of all the accomplishments Dot has made over her years of service to our agency and the Central Savannah River Area community, probably the most important and long-lasting ones involve the impact she has had on the clients we serve as well as on her co-workers."

Dot's dedication to improving the quality of people's lives doesn't end with her job. She loves and lends support to her husband of 50+ years, Ernest, and to the rest of her family; she makes a "joyful noise" in her church choir; and she volunteers at the local soup kitchen. She has also been an active member of the Georgia Community Action Association for more than 30 years. Ms. Johnson sums it up best, being a human services worker is not what Dot does for a living, "it's who Dot Thomas is."

Mr. Speaker, please join me and all Georgians in congratulating Dot Thomas.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ST. ANTHONY
HOSPITALS' FLIGHT FOR LIFE

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding organization that continuously renders emergency medical aid at a moments notice. The St. Anthony Hos-

pitals' Flight for Life program based in Denver, Colorado has saved thousands of lives since its inception. It is with great pleasure I stand and honor these courageous men and women who are so willingly dedicate their lives to help those in crisis.

Founded in 1972, Flight for Life was the first civilian emergency air ambulance in the nation. Some 200 air ambulance programs all over the world have since patterned their emergency response units after Flight for Life's excellence. This commendable program serves the people of Colorado and eight surrounding states, and its members have registered over 65,000 missions in the first 30 years of service. Over its history, Flight for Life's crews responded to the 1976 gondola accident in Vail, Colorado; the 1985 Keystone Teller Lift collapse; and the Columbine High School shootings in 2000, among the thousands of missions flown. Medical missions have taken them to 40 states as well as Canada, Mexico, and Costa Rica.

In order to meet each challenge, Flight for Life maintains an elite core of medical professionals and pilots; each one with specialized experience and that allows them to react professionally to any life-threatening experience in a variety of environments. To help in that mission, the program also maintains a mountain base outside the Denver Metro area, the highest medical helicopter base in the country, at the Summit Medical Center in Frisco, Colorado. From there, they operate a specialized avalanche rescue team and often help transport search teams to the scene. With so many professions ready to respond to any emergency situation, Flight for Life continues to stand out as a leader in emergency response excellence.

Mr. Speaker, I stand today to pay tribute to the men and women of this organization before this body of Congress and this nation. The Flight for Life program has raised the bar for emergency response throughout the world. These courageous professionals have served the people of this nation with distinction for 30 years and deserve our praise.

IN MEMORY OF SEPTEMBER 11
AND ITS FORGOTTEN VICTIMS

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 17, 2002

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, we are commemorating the terrible attack on America this past September 11. This was a terrible event in which about 3,000 people lost their lives. A year later, they are in our prayers.

Also in our prayers are the other victims—those who were subjected to violent, unfair attacks in the aftermath of September 11. One of these was Balbir Singh Sodhi, a gasoline station owner from Arizona. He was murdered at his gas station by someone who apparently mistook him for a follower of Osama bin Laden. His brother, Sukhpal Singh Sodhi, a cab driver in the San Francisco Bay area, was recently killed in his taxicab. I am sure that we would all like to extend our sympathies to the Sodhi family.

No one should be killed because of his religion. Even if Mr. Sodhi had been a Muslim

and a follower of bin Laden that would not justify murdering him. But what makes this crime even more disturbing is that this perception was a mistake. Mr. Sodhi was a Sikh, not Muslim.

Sikhism is an independent, monotheistic, revealed religion that believes in the equality of all people, including gender equality. It is not part of either Hinduism or Islam, yet because of the turbans they wear, which are required by their religion, Sikhs are sometimes mistaken for Muslim followers of bin Laden.

The violence has mostly ended, but there are still some unrelated violent incidents. Unfortunately, Balbir Singh Sodhi's brother was also killed just a couple of months ago in his taxicab outside San Francisco. I call for an end to all these attacks and for full and prompt prosecution of all the people responsible.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place the Council of Khalistan's recent press release on the anniversary of September 11 into the RECORD at this time.

IN MEMORY OF THOSE KILLED IN LAST YEAR'S
ATTACK ON UNITED STATES

Sikhs Suffered the Most After the Attacks

Council of Khalistan Condemns Attacks,
Calls for End to Violence Against Minorities

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 11, 2002.—Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, today remembered the attacks on America a year ago that killed almost 3,000 Americans. He also condemned the violence against Sikh Americans and other minorities that broke out in the wake of the September 11 attacks.

"On behalf of the 21-million strong Sikh Nation and especially on behalf of more than 500,000 Sikh Americans, we remember with sadness and outrage the attacks on America a year ago and offer our prayers and sympathies on this sad anniversary to the people of the United States for the terrible attack on the United States and for the loss of life it entails," Dr. Aulakh said. "We especially pray for the families of those who have departed."

"America must do what it can to eradicate terrorism from the world," Dr. Aulakh said. "We support all the efforts to do so and we must do our part as American citizens," he said. "This sad anniversary reminds us that we stand together as a nation. We must show unity on this occasion."

"We also condemn the violence against Sikhs and other minorities that took place last year after the September 11 attacks," Dr. Aulakh said. "Sikhs suffered the most in the post-September 11 violence," he said. "The very first victim of this violence was Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh gasoline station owner from the Phoenix area," he noted. Recently, his brother was killed in his taxicab. All this violence must stop," Dr. Aulakh said.

"Nobody should be killed for his or her religion, whether Sikh, Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, or whatever religion one may follow," Dr. Aulakh said. "But it is important to note that Sikhs are not Muslims nor followers of bin Laden. We condemn bin Laden," he said. "Unfortunately, because of the turbans we are required to wear, many people mistake Sikhs for bin Laden followers," he said. "The Sikh religion is an independent, monotheistic, sovereign religion that believes in the equality of the whole human race, including gender equality," he said. "Daily we pray for the well being of the whole human race."

In the wake of the September 11 attacks, a couple of young Sikhs were attacked in