

In addition to the praise of local school officials benefiting from the recent graduates, the accelerated teacher certification program has been selected as a national model of "best practices" for colleges throughout the country by the National Council for Continuing Education and Training.

For their commitment to quality programs and responsiveness to the needs of the community, Indian River Community College and its President, Ed Massey, deserve the congratulations of Congress.

TRIBUTE TO THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF BAUSCH AND LOMB

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 2003

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 150th anniversary of Bausch & Lomb—a community institution, an outstanding corporation, and a global innovator.

In 1853, a German immigrant named John Jacob Bausch started a modest business selling optical goods. He got off to an uneven start, and borrowed \$60 in capital from a close friend, Henry Lomb. Bausch promised to make Lomb a full partner if the business prospered. Indeed, the business grew beyond its founders' wildest dreams. Today, Bausch & Lomb is the premiere name, recognized around the world, for excellence in eye health products.

Headquartered in my district of Rochester, New York, Bausch & Lomb employs over 11,000 people and generates annual revenues of almost \$2 billion. B&L, as it is affectionately known, is also deeply committed to our community and its future. More than 5,000 schools nationwide participate in the Bausch & Lomb Science Award, which is bestowed on selected high school sophomores for excellence in science. Along with a medal, winners are eligible for a Bausch & Lomb scholarship for study at the University of Rochester, and associated paid summer internships in B&L labs. The B&L science awards and scholarships promote science scholarship and foster the next generation of scientists and researchers.

At its facilities in Rochester, B&L has created some of the most innovative optical equipment and goods in the world. During World War I, B&L produced the special sunglasses for military men. B&L researchers invented the first optical-quality glass. And in 1971, Bausch & Lomb introduced the first soft contact lenses, a product that has improved the quality of life for millions of people around the globe. Today, tens of millions depend upon high quality B&L products to improve and maintain one of their most precious assets: their vision.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply proud of the fine work done by my constituents at Bausch & Lomb every day. One's sight is a precious thing, and it speaks volumes that more people entrust their vision to Bausch & Lomb than to any other company in the world. I salute Bausch & Lomb—company CEO Ronald Zarrella, his leadership team, and every one of his outstanding employees—on their 150th anniversary. We all look forward with great anticipation to seeing what the coming years bring to and from Bausch & Lomb.

EULOGY FOR CORINNE MICHEL

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 2003

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, it's with great regret that I come to the floor today to note the untimely passing on October 22 of Corinne Michel, a friend of so many of us privileged to serve in this House, and the wife of former House Minority Leader Bob Michel of Illinois.

As Mike Johnson, a former Chief of Staff for Bob Michel, told Copley News Service: "[Corinne] was never affected by all the lime-light. Bob used to say people in politics have their feet planted in midair. Hers were always planted firmly on the ground."

And as Millie Arends, the city treasurer in the Michel's home city of Peoria, Illinois, noted: "She was well-read on everything. Her husband said she was one his best assets."

Corinne Michel was born in Onida, South Dakota, and was raised in St. Paul, Minnesota, Pittsburgh and Peoria, Illinois, where her father managed the Livestock Market News. In 1943, she graduated from Peoria High School, and then met Bob when the two sang in the a cappella choir at Bradley University.

Corinne was an accomplished classical pianist who graduated with two music degrees and then taught music in the Peoria public schools. In 1948, the Michels were married and eight years later Bob was elected to the House, where he served with distinction for 38 years—including 14 as the Republican leader—before retiring in 1995.

While Bob served his constituents and nation in Washington, Corinne raised the couple's four children back in Peoria. She was active in Peoria Players and Central Illinois Youth Symphony and helped bring opera and ballet to Peoria. She also represented Bob at events in his home District.

In Washington, she was active in Congressional spouse organizations and chaired the Republican Women's Federal Forum.

The Michels' son Scott told the Chicago Tribune: "Music played a huge role in her [his mother's] life and she passed it on [to her children]. I would come home from school and there would be classical music on the stereo and she would be playing the piano."

And said our colleague RAY LAHOOD, a former Chief of Staff for Leader Michel and the successor in his seat, said: "She was one of the loveliest persons I have ever met." A sentiment that all who knew her shared.

He continued: "She never sought the lime-light . . . but her husband sought her advice and she gave it to him in her own quiet way."

Mr. Speaker, I want to extend my sincerest condolences to my friend, the former Republican Leader, who not only is a great credit to this institution but also an American of unquestioned patriotism and courage.

Bob Michel, who was wounded as an infantryman in World War II and received two Bronze Stars, the Purple Heart and four battle stars, laid his life on the line so that succeeding generations could experience the freedoms that we enjoy—and too often take for granted—today.

Let's recognize today that while Bob Michel soared to great heights throughout his career, he always had a steady, able partner on that

journey—his beloved wife, Corinne, whose loss we mourn today.

I also want to express my condolences to the Michels' sons, Scott, Bruce and Robin; daughter, Laurie; and three grandsons. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

VETERANS HEALTH CARE FACILITIES CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 2003

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1720, the Veterans Health Care Facilities Capital Improvement Act. I would like to recognize the very necessary and hard work of my colleagues on the House Veterans Affairs Committee, from both sides of the aisle, and our Chairman Congressman ROB SIMMONS of Connecticut, on this critical issue.

H.R. 1720, as amended, authorizes a new approach to funding VA construction after the Department addresses a number of compelling needs identified throughout the system. Through this measure we have outlined Congressional priorities for the types of projects VA should fund, but would allow VA to identify the locations where there is the most need.

I am particularly interested in VA's plan to address the needs of veterans in far south Texas. Parts of my district have the worst access to hospital care in the country. I am especially pleased that the amended version of H.R. 1720 contains a section that authorizes the development of a strategy by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to address the great need for hospital care for veterans who reside in far south Texas. Under H.R. 1720, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs would be required to submit findings to the Senate and House of Representatives no later than January 31, 2004.

Mr. Speaker, it is shameful that veterans in McAllen, Texas, just east of my district, must travel up to 6 hours one-way to reach the San Antonio VA Medical Center. Data collected for VA's Capital Assets Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) process showed that veterans in one of the area's markets—the Valley Coastal Bend—have the worst access to acute inpatient hospital care of veterans in any other VA market in the United States.

The time has passed for us to address this crisis in access. This bill will put VA on a sure path for doing that, and I will eagerly await the opportunity to respond to VA's recommendations for increasing access for South Texas veterans. This bill is an important step to ensure that VA keeps its promise to veterans.

80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, this week the Turkish Republic, an original participating State of the Organization for Security

and Cooperation in Europe, will mark its 80th anniversary. The Turkish Government, led by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, is working hard toward membership in the European Union. The accession of Turkey to the Union would recognize the important reforms that have already been adopted and accelerate the reform process.

The various constitutional reform packages in recent years have addressed, or begun to address, many longstanding human rights concerns. As Chairman of the Helsinki Commission I am pleased to note that much needed change is beginning to take place. For example, the crucial issue of torture is finally receiving the attention necessary to prevent such abuse and address the legacy of this endemic scourge. Perpetrators of torture are facing punishment by a new generation of state prosecutors. For the first time, police who have committed acts of torture are being brought to justice. However the ongoing use of torture in southeast Turkey in the guise of anti-terrorism is an outrage that Turkey must bring to a halt. It is not enough to pass these reforms or to hold a few show trials. No, all transgressors must be arrested and tried. There must be a zero tolerance policy in place on torture.

Other issues of concern have also benefited from the reform package process. For example, religious communities with "foundation" status may now acquire real property, as well as construct new churches and mosques and other structures for religious use. However, there is a considerable gap between the law and its application.

Also, while the problem of allowing the return of internally displaced persons who fled the internal conflict with the PKK terrorist organization remains. Renewed efforts to address this problem are promising, such as inviting the UN Rapporteur on IDPs to visit and the possibility that Turkey may host an international conference on internally displaced persons. While Turkey still has a long way to go to successfully eradicate human trafficking in its borders, the government has taken some positive steps. While I am pleased Turkey has expanded its cooperation with source countries to improve its victim protection efforts, I want to encourage continued improvement to wipe out this modern day slavery.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, other serious concerns remain.

While Turkey works to bring its laws and regulations into conformity with the Copenhagen criteria for EU accession and works toward fulfilling human rights commitments as an OSCE participating State, actions taken by police and other government authorities raise doubts as to the sincerity of these reforms.

The imprisonment this month of Nurcihan and Nurulhak Saatcioglu for attending demonstrations four years ago protesting the prohibition against head scarves in public institutions, is deeply troubling. The fact that the government denies women who choose this religious expression the ability to attend state-run universities and work in public buildings, including schools and hospitals, is counterproductive and an encroachment of their right to freedom of expression. Similarly, authorities severely curb the public sharing of religious belief by either Muslims or Christians with the intent to persuade the listener to another point of view. These limitations on religious clothing and speech stifle freedom of religion and ex-

pression and are contrary to Turkey's OSCE commitments.

At a fundamental level, the inability of religious groups to maintain property holdings is problematic, as the Office of Foundations has closed and seized properties of non-Muslim religious groups for contrived and spurious reasons. Groups most affected by this policy are the Syrian Orthodox, Armenian Apostolic and Greek Orthodox churches, which have also experienced problems when seeking to repair and maintain existing buildings or purchase new ones. I hope the application of the aforementioned reforms will rectify this problem.

The most notable property issue concerns the continued closure of the Orthodox Theological School of Halki on the island of Heybeli in the Sea of Marmara. Considering the reportedly promising conversations between the church and government, I urge Turkey to return full control to the Ecumenical Patriarchate and allow religious training to resume, in keeping with relevant OSCE commitments.

Furthermore, religious groups not envisioned by the Lausanne Treaty have no legal route for purchasing property and building facilities, since the new legal provisions affect only communities with the official status of a "foundation." As no process exists for these other groups to obtain foundation status, they are forced to meet in private apartments. This lack of official status has real consequences, since provincial governorships and the Ministry of Interior have initiated efforts to close these meeting places, leaving the smaller Protestant groups and Jehovah's Witnesses without any options. Churches and their leaders in Diyarbakir, Mersin, Iskenderun and other towns all face troubling government prosecutions and threats of closure. I urge Turkey to create a transparent and straightforward process to grant religious groups so desiring official recognition, so that they too can enjoy the right to establish and freely maintain accessible places of worship of assembly.

The continued incarceration of four Kurdish former parliamentarians: Leyla Zana, Hatip Dicle, Orhan Dogan and Selim Sadak is particularly disturbing. Convicted in 1994, they have won their appeal to the European Court of Human Rights and were granted a retrial under recent Government of Turkey legal reforms. The retrial began March 28, and at each of the eight sessions, most recently October 17, the court has refused to release the defendants. Their continued imprisonment is an outrage.

Mr. Speaker, on the 80th anniversary of the Turkish Republic, the initial legal reforms put in place by the government display Turkey's—or at least the legislators in Ankara's—apparent willingness to address much needed reforms in human rights practices. But actions speak louder than words. We need to see implementation of these reforms seriously carried out before we can rest assured that Turkey has met minimal OSCE human rights commitments. As Turkey strives to enter the European Union, I applaud the efforts that have been made to date and urge Ankara to intensify the reform process.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOE SKUFCA

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the contributions of a fine citizen from my district, Joe Skufca of Pueblo, Colorado. Joe is a man who has dedicated his life to the betterment of his country and community. As a decorated war veteran, and the devoted owner of what has been called "Pueblo's friendliest grocery store," Joe is certainly a shining example for all of us.

Upon graduating from high school, Joe answered his country's call to duty and entered the United States Army during World War II. The day before Joe was to take part in the invasion of Ie Shima, he was injured aboard his ship by a Japanese missile attack. Despite being injured, Joe bravely took part in the invasion the next day. This was not Joe's only act of personal sacrifice during the war. After the fall of Okinawa, Joe contracted malaria. After three months in the hospital, the Army told Joe it was time for him to go home, but he refused and stayed with his company for the invasion of Japan. This extraordinary bravery and dedication to his country did not go unnoticed, and Joe was awarded two bronze stars for his service.

Upon his honorable discharge, Joe returned to his home in Pueblo to begin a new life. He went to work at the Star Grocery Mart and began a career which has served him well for many years. Fifty-six years ago, Joe became the owner of Star Mart, which he still owns to this day. Joe is widely known as Pueblo's "friendliest grocer."

Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to pay tribute to Joe Skufca before this body of Congress and this great nation. After bravely fighting and sacrificing for his country, Joe returned to my district where he has maintained a successful business, spreading joy to his customers, family, and friends. It is with great pride that I echo the praises Joe has received from his country and the Pueblo community. Thanks, Joe, for your service.

THE "DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION, EDUCATION AND AWARENESS ACT"

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 2003

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a piece of legislation I believe will help empower women who are victims of domestic violence to seek help in ending and recovering from its effects.

With the United States becoming increasingly multicultural, we need to ensure all women, regardless of language, culture or income are aware and are able to access the services they are entitled to. In order to carry this out, it is imperative we are culturally sensitive, attentive and pro-active to effectively reach out to all communities. There have been major gains by advocates, researchers and practitioners to end domestic violence, but