

two party monopoly over the political system by effectively disenfranchising supporters of third parties and independent candidates. While the campaign against Mr. Nader is an extreme case, supporters of the two party monopoly regularly use ballot access laws to keep third party and independent candidates off ballots. Even candidates able to comply with onerous ballot access rules must devote so many resources to simply getting on the ballot that their ability to communicate their ideas to the general public is severely limited. Perhaps the ballot access laws are one reason why voter turnout has been declining over the past few decades. After all, almost 42% of eligible voters have either not registered to vote or have registered as something other than Democrat or Republican.

The United States Constitution gives Congress the authority to regulate the time, place, and manner of federal elections. Thus, ballot access is one of the few areas where Congress has explicit Constitutional authority to establish national standards. In order to open up the political process, I have introduced the Voter Freedom Act (HR 1941). HR 1941 established uniform standards for ballot access so third party and independent candidates can at last compete on a level playing field.

The blatant attempt by a major party to keep Ralph Nader off state ballots demonstrates how restrictive ballot access laws are used to preserve a political monopoly, limit voters' choices, and deny the rights of millions of Americans who support third parties and independent candidates an opportunity to effectively participate in the political process. I call upon my colleagues to remedy this situation by supporting my Voter Freedom Act.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 14, 2004*

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent for votes in this chamber on July 12, 2004. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 359, 361 and 362 and "no" on rollcall vote 360.

HONORING PORT OF OAKLAND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TAY YOSHITANI

### HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 14, 2004*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the exceptional achievements of retiring Port of Oakland Executive Director Tay Yoshitani.

Since his graduation from the United States Military Academy and the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, Mr. Yoshitani's distinguished career has included the direction of the ports of several major cities. After serving as the Deputy Director of the Port of Los Angeles for six years, he became the Director of the Port of Maryland Administration in 1995. There he served with distinction until joining the Port of Oakland in 1998

as Deputy Executive Director, and later becoming Executive Director in October 2001.

As the Executive Director of the Port of Oakland, Mr. Yoshitani directed a staff of over six hundred employees and oversaw the management of the Oakland International Airport, the Oakland Seaport, and the historic Jack London Square. He has done an outstanding job managing not only the functions of the Port itself, but has also consistently demonstrated his commitment to sustainable development as a business goal through his pursuit of social equity and environmental responsibility in addition to economic vitality. In keeping with these principles, he established a new division at the Port, the Social Responsibility Division, which ensures greater access to jobs and business opportunities for the local community. Furthermore, Mr. Yoshitani is responsible for the establishment of a variety of other ground-breaking initiatives, such as the Public Art Program and Policy, the Port's sustainability Task Force, and the Annual Good Neighbor Awards, which recognize individuals and organizations delivering outstanding community service.

During his tenure as Executive Director, Mr. Yoshitani has also presided over the completion of a number of infrastructural improvements to all three Port divisions. In addition to supporting the Estuary Plan by initiating real estate and waterfront development in underutilized areas, he also presided over the completion of enlarged marine terminals, as well as the initiation of the construction of the Oakland International Airport's Terminal Improvement Program, the largest aviation project in the airport's 77-year history. Furthermore, under Mr. Yoshitani's direction, the Port has received over one hundred million dollars in Federal funding for various infrastructural improvements.

On July 14, 2004, Mr. Yoshitani will be honored in Oakland, California on the occasion of his retirement. I would like to take this opportunity to commend his exceptional achievements not only in the areas of Port economic growth and development, but also for his role as a leader in the areas of social responsibility and sustainable business practices. Mr. Yoshitani has distinguished himself as an exceptional business and civic leader, whose contributions have greatly enriched our community.

IN MEMORY OF EDILITH ECKART

### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 14, 2004*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Edlith Eckart, who died June 16, 2004 in Humboldt County, California at the age of eighty-four.

Edlith Eckart was born in Brooklyn, the daughter of Norwegian immigrants. She was a teacher prior to World War II then served her country in the U.S. Navy as a WAVE Lieutenant Junior Grade during that war. After the war she moved to New Orleans with her family where she began her lifelong vocation as an activist for peace and civil rights. She was an ardent and effective environmentalist who was often called as an expert witness in court cases.

Her belief in the concept of a peaceful world was absolute. She was an activist extraordinaire, a Veteran for Peace, a columnist, a citizen diplomat, a member of Women in Black, a biologist, a devoted parent, grandparent and world traveler. She led fifteen trips to the Soviet Union, visited Israel and Palestine several times and in 1995 she went to Japan for ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Characteristically, she engaged in civil disobedience and joined international organizations to help deliver \$4 million worth of medicines to Iraqi hospitals following the first Gulf War. She was the co-chair of the Veterans for Peace "Iraq Water Project," which resulted in the building of a number of water treatment plants in rural Iraq.

She believed in the power of individuals to forcefully speak out for peace and justice, connect with the people of other countries in the pursuit of those ideals and she worked valiantly to relieve suffering wherever she found it.

Referring to herself as a contemplative activist, her garden was listed with the Sanctuary Garden Project, a nation wide network of backyard sanctuaries.

Edlith Eckart received many national awards for her friendship building in the Soviet Union, Palestine, Iraq, as well as the Veterans for Peace Presidents Award. She was also awarded the Physician's for Social Responsibility "Broad Street Pump Award." The American Association of University Women honored her during Women's History Month in 1998.

She was an inspiration; a humanitarian and she left a distinguished legacy to us all.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we recognize Edlith Eckart for her unwavering commitment to the ideals and values that sustain our great country.

IN HONOR OF THE BRAVERY OF THE NIAGARA FALLS FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE NEW YORK STATE PARK POLICE

### HON. LOUISE MCINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 14, 2004*

Mr. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the heroes of the Niagara Falls Fire Department and the New York State Park Police. Last Sunday evening, these brave first responders rescued a woman on the verge of ending her own life at the edge of the vast Niagara Falls. Without hesitation, these men put their own lives in danger to save another.

Niagara Falls is one of the greatest natural treasures on earth. One of the largest waterfalls in the world, Niagara Falls plunges a dramatic 180 feet, or 16 stories. It is a wondrous site that attracts millions of tourists every year. But with its immense beauty comes immense dangers. Over the years, police and fire personnel in Niagara Falls have performed daring rescues to save people who have gotten too close to the edge.

On Sunday evening, a suicidal woman ventured out to a ledge just a few feet from the edge of the mighty falls. Responding first to the scene, New York State Park Police officers Scott Durham and Timothy Coulombe