this proposed law as hostile and unnecessary. China already has hundreds of missiles pointed at Taiwan. Passage of this law will only further already tense relations across the Strait.

The people of Taiwan live in a vibrant democracy and enjoy one of the highest standards of living in the world. Taiwan is a beacon of freedom and an engine of prosperity in eastern Asia.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support the right of the Taiwanese people to live in a free and democratic society. This proposed law threatens Taiwan's freedom, its security, and its prosperity. During President George W. Bush's address earlier this year, he said "when you stand for liberty, we will stand with you." I urge my colleagues to stand for freedom and liberty and to stand with the people of Taiwan in its opposition to the Chinese anti-secession law.

HONORING THE 44TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEACE CORPS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2005

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I am proud today to honor the 44th anniversary of the Peace Corps, as we concluded the celebration of National Peace Corps Week on Sunday. The Peace Corps has made great contributions over the past 44 years with 178,000 volunteers that have served in 138 countries.

I would like to thank all those who have served and recognize their service and contributions they have given to the world.

I would also like to honor those colleagues who have served in the Peace Corps. Among them are former Ohio Congressman Tony Hall, who is now U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Food and Agriculture agencies in Rome and who served in the Peace Corps in Thailand from 1966–67. Senator CHRISTOPHER DODD from Connecticut also served as a Peace Corps volunteer from 1966–68 in the Dominican Republic.

I hope all Americans will join me in recognizing the valuable service of those who have served in the Peace Corps and their hard work in helping to portray a positive image of the United States throughout the world.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF COMAL COUNTY COMMISSIONER JAY MILLIKIN

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Comal County Commissioner Jay Millikin.

His patriotism stems from a lifetime of service to both town and country. Jay Millikin served for 24 years in the United States Air Force before becoming a City Councilman, and the eventual Mayor, of the City of Garden Ridge.

Commissioner Jay Millikin's commitment to the community is exemplified through his membership and involvement with countless environmental, transportation, and development councils and committees. His diligent efforts have served the citizens of Comal County with distinction since 1999.

Commissioner Millikin is a man that understands community needs and the value of hard work and dedication. It is important to recognize the accomplishments of Comal County Commissioners such as Jay Millikin, because they are an inspiration to many others in the community. They are the backbone of positive action in our local counties and communities.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to recognize the accomplishments of Comal County Commissioner Jay Millikin.

TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 8, 2005

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, March 2 marks a historic day for my home state of Texas and specifically for the people of my district living in Washington and Austin Counties. Today, Mr. Speaker we celebrate the birth of Texas and the place where our great state was born because right along the banks of the Brazos River, Texas declared its independence.

Texas Independence day marks a time when Texans and Americans of today honor and celebrate the work and sacrifices of Texans generations ago, people who valiantly claimed their freedom from Mexico and sought out their own destiny governed by the laws of a true democracy, a constitution written by the people and the colors of their flag waving over what would become the free and independent nation of Texas. And I am proud to say this historic story of freedom, independence and democracy took place in two important places in the Tenth Congressional District of Texas, the district I am proud to say I represent.

It's a history that started long before that early March day in 1836.

Between 1820 and 1836 the Mexican Government offered Americans the opportunity to live and work in what was then the land of Texas under Mexican Rule. But these Americans, living under Mexico's government quickly found the spirit of freedom lacking. Mexican leaders, at that time, presumed they could dictate economic, social, even religious life for those living in Texas. They allowed the military to interfere in civil issues, trade even legal proceedings.

The inspiring story of how the battle against this, then, anti-democratic government began in what was then, the Stephen F. Austin Colony, the first colony of Texas, now known as Austin County, Texas. It was there that the first sparks of freedom flew from the spirits of men, tired of living under an intrusive and burdensome Mexican government. It was in the Austin Colony in 1835 that Texans first established a provisional government, with the intention of writing a declaration of independence soon after. With the Mexican Army intent on destroying any move towards Texas independence, the Consultation of 1835, as it was known, adjourned without the organization needed to continue the cause for freedom.

But the want for independence from Mexico did not die in that colony. Less than a year later, many of the same delegates present at the Consultation of 1835 arrived along the Brazos River, in the Village of Washington, just north of the Austin Colony.

By the spring of 1836 the encroachments on basic freedoms had reached a point of action for many living in Mexico controlled Texas.

They were simply fed up with such unnecessary and uncontrolled interference from a greedy government. The time for action was upon them.

On March 1, 1836, 59 delegates hailing from all corners of Texas arrived at the then relatively unknown village of Washington right alongside the Brazos River.

They met inside an unfinished frame building to decide the principals they would invoke in claiming their freedom from Mexico. And as these brave men began to construct the language which would declare their independence from Mexico, they were in fact constructing a document which very well may have served as their death warrants. For while their declaration of independence shouted freedom for the Texans, it also declared Mexico unfit to govern and the Mexican Army immediately began seeking retribution for this act of defiance.

But like so many brave heroes before and after them, these 59 delegates were willing to pay the ultimate price for freedom.

It was a bloody and dramatic time for Texas. While the men along the Brazos River fought for the right words and ideals with which to claim Texas' independence, their fellow statesmen and warriors fought for their lives and freedom. For as the delegates along the Brazos River put pen to paper in writing Texas' declaration of independence men like Davey Crockett, James Bowie and William Travis fought to their deaths in fighting for Texas freedom at the Alamo.

Despite the defeat at the Alamo, the revolution continued. In 1842 Texas president, Sam Houston moved the nation's capital from Austin to the birthplace of Texas, Washington on the Brazos River.

Three years later, by an act of Congress, the United States made Texas part of the American Union, and Texas became the 28th state of the United States of America.

There can be no argument about the Lone Star State's contribution to American history, nor can there be any debate about that history's importance.

We must always remember where that history began for Texas. Just like so many Americans travel to Philadelphia to witness the buildings and symbols involved in America's Declaration of Independence, thousands of people every year make the journey to Washington on the Brazos to understand the depth of history and events involved in Texas' Independence.

For many Americans, this place has become a phrase acknowledging an event in Texas history long forgotten. But tonight we must remember Washington on the Brazos and Austin County as the places where the proud nation of Texas found life with a want for freedom and spirit for democracy.

Texas will always have a long and storied history, which we can never forget. We must continue to remember the commitment of those men who started a new book in Texas history as they wrote the nation of Texas into independence.