

times, and personal and average per capita bank deposits by 35 and 37 times. Compared to 2003, state expenditures on guaranteed free health care have risen 1.7 times. The most impressive part of the message is the massive social component of the Kazakh leader's program aimed at significant improvement of wellbeing of all levels of society, especially the poor, elderly, disabled and children.

The President's annual address also reflects the desire of a young nation to become a bulwark of democracy in a vitally important region. Since gaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Kazakhstan has become a leader in promoting political and democratic transformations in the post Soviet states. Most importantly, Kazakhstan is not going to stop half way to this goal, but is eager to deepen this process based on Western standards of democracy. I support President Nazarbayev's initiative to create a National Program of Political Reforms in which the key player will be the people. I strongly believe that the evolution of Kazakh society inevitably will lead to a triumph of democracy. It is dictated by the will and aspirations of the people. I also agree with President Nazarbayev when he said that today "Kazakhstan is regarded in the world as a regional power possessing a strong economy and a solid position in the international community".

I congratulate the people and the Government of Kazakhstan for their achievements and am sincerely happy for them.

I am very glad that the United States has been instrumental in aiding the development of Kazakhstan. Our bilateral relations have gained the status of a strategic partnership. I am absolutely convinced successful cooperation between the U.S. and Kazakhstan is the cornerstone of stability in a crucial region and it is in the interest of both our countries and the world as a whole.

Today, it is vital for America to demonstrate its gratitude to the people of Kazakhstan who stood side by side with us after 9/11 and is today living up to its commitment in helping to build a free Iraq. I urge my colleagues and the administration to render them assistance and support their endeavors to be among the truly democratic countries of the world.

CONGRATULATING MRS. MARIETTA MURRAY URQUHART ON RECEIPT OF THE MOBILE CITY COUNCIL OF BETA SIGMA PI INTERNATIONAL SORORITY'S 2004 "FIRST LADY OF THE YEAR" AWARD

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise to honor Mrs. Marietta Murray Urquhart on the occasion of her being honored by the Mobile City Council of Beta Sigma Pi International Sorority with the organization's 2004 "First Lady of the Year" Award.

Beta Sigma Pi International Sorority was founded in 1931 for the purpose of providing women with opportunities for community service and as an outlet for cultural and social ac-

tivities. Seven local chapters of the organization are currently active in Mobile, and since 1945 one woman has been selected each year for the "First Lady of the Year" Award. This honor is bestowed to an individual based on her contributions to the business, cultural, and civic life of the community.

Mrs. Urquhart has been a distinguished and active member of the Mobile, Alabama, community for over two decades. In 1982, she and her husband, Bill, chose to make Mobile their home upon Bill's completion of medical school and his residency. Almost immediately, she took a strong role in the life of her city, with special emphasis on issues involving children and education.

Over the next 22 years, she became extremely involved in several local organizations. She has served as president of the board of directors of Leadership Mobile and as a member of the board of Volunteer Mobile. Additionally, she was selected to serve as president for the St. Paul's Episcopal Church Women of the Church. Her strong interest in the development and growth of the Mobile community also led to her service on the board of directors for the Providence Hospital Foundation, the Providence Foundation Flower Show, and for the Maritime Museum and the Mobile Tricentennial Commission.

Mrs. Urquhart has also devoted a tremendous amount of time and effort to expanding opportunities for children in the Mobile community. She has served on the Mobile Advisory Board for the Department of Human Resources, and has been actively involved with the Salvation Army. As president for the Junior League of Mobile, she was committed to establishing wide-ranging community goals for children and worked extensively with the Mobile County School System, the United Way, and the Greater Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce. Finally, she served with distinction on the UMS-Wright Preparatory School Board of Trustees and was the first woman ever selected to chair that organization.

Finally, Mrs. Urquhart has served on the boards of the Medical Alliance of Mobile County, Mobile 2000, and the Alabama State Commission for Volunteer and National Service. Most recently, she was nominated to serve as a member of The University of Alabama Board of Trustees.

The nomination submitted by the Medical Society of Mobile County for this award included the following passage: "Our Nominee lives by the philosophy: 'Commitment is what transforms a promise into reality. Words speak boldly of intentions. Actions speak louder than words. It is making time when there is none. It is coming through time after time, year after year. Commitment is the stuff character is made of, the power to change the face of things. It is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism.'" Over the years, I have seen Marietta put this philosophy into action time and again and make one significant and meaningful contribution after another for her community. Our city and our state are richer because of her work, and I am proud and honored to call her my friend.

Mr. Speaker, there are few individuals more dedicated or more committed to helping their communities than Marietta Murray Urquhart, and I would like to offer my congratulations on both the "First Lady of the Year" Award and for her many personal and professional achievements. I know her husband, Bill, and

her many family and friends join with me in praising her accomplishments and extending thanks for her many efforts on behalf of Mobile and the state of Alabama.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN RAY COTA

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, my congressional district in Riverside, California is extremely fortunate to have a dynamic and dedicated group of community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give of their time and talents to ensure the well-being of our city and county. These individuals work tirelessly to develop voluntary community action to improve the community's economy, its education, its environment and its overall quality of life. One individual, who is a member of this group, is Captain Ray Cota.

On the 19th of March, Ray will be honored with the Ira. D. "Cal" Calvert Distinguished Service Award by the Corona-Norco Family YMCA. The award is given in memory of my father, "Cal" Calvert, and his enumerable philanthropic gifts to the community and his efforts to encourage others to serve their community in a similar fashion. The award recognizes Ray for his exceptional devotion to developing community volunteerism.

Ray has been a police officer with the Corona Police Department for over 25 years. Throughout his career, he has been involved in the community and specifically with youth service organizations. He has served as President of the Circle City Kiwanis, helped organize an annual golf tournament that raises money for at-risk youth, and participated in the Corona High Parent Teacher Student Association. Additionally, Ray has served with the Corona Police Activities League, which provides sports and recreational activities to neighborhood youth and seeks to reach out to other deserving youth in the community.

Ray and his wife Rebecca have been married for 21 years. They have a 13 year old son, Raymond, who attends Corona Fundamental Intermediate School.

Ray's tireless passion for community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Corona, California. Ray has been the heart and soul of many community organizations and events and I am proud to call Ray a fellow community member, American and friend.

IN RECOGNITION OF COACH FRANK TOLBERT

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Coach Frank Tolbert of Auburn High School in Auburn, Alabama. Coach Tolbert is a man of great accomplishment—a highly respected mentor for our youth who was recently inducted into the Alabama High School Sports Hall of Fame after leading the boys' basketball team to victory at the Class 6-A State Championship.