HONORING PALMYRA MACEDON BOYS’ BASKETBALL CLASS B STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. JAMES T. WALSH
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute to the Palmyra Macedon Red Raiders, the varsity boys’ basketball team that won their first Class B State Title. The 57–47 victory was well earned after trailing to the Carle Place Frogs for the majority of the game. Junior shooting guard Anthony Hall scored a game-high 26 points, and helped the Red Raiders get back into the lead in the final quarter. Coach Chip Tatro and the rest of this outstanding team deserve congratulations after their third attempt, and consequent victory, in winning the championship.

Coach Chip Tatro, Christopher Milke, Jared Boisvert, Mike Beck, Anthony Hall, Todd Piccola, Dan Gorman, Tim Patchett, Jonathan Denniston, Adam Husk, Andy Weaver, Jason Clair, Sean McGinn, Chris Timbs are all equal contributors to the outstanding 2005 season. I commend the Palmyra Macedon Red Raiders for their enthusiasm and hard work in reaching their goal. Congratulations and good luck on future seasons.

HONORING THE VAN VANDALS

HON. JEB HENSARLING
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor the Van Vandals boys’ basketball team who won the Texas 3A championship on March 11, 2005. In their first trip to the state finals in sixty-three years, the Vandals beat Graham High School to return home with the state championship trophy. This is an accomplishment that the young men on the team will remember for the rest of their lives. As the congressional representative of the members, coaches, and supporters of the Van Vandals, it is my pleasure to recognize their outstanding accomplishment today on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

HON. BARNEY FRANK
OF MASSACHUSETTS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, since 1982, my congressional activities have been covered by the Sun Chronicle, which provides news for the Greater Attleboro, Massachusetts area. It is a newspaper which understands the importance of solid and thoughtful coverage of events that happen within its area. At the same time, it pays due attention to national issues, and it has also been an important advocate for fair treatment for that part of Massachusetts in which it circulates.

Its interest in all three of these elements came together on March 18 when the Sun Chronicle published a gracious and thoughtful editorial about the appointment of an Attleboro native, Joe Solmonese, to be the head of the Human Rights Campaign. The Human Rights Campaign is for fair treatment for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people, and I am among those who was very pleased that Mr. Solmonese was selected, given the combination of skill and talent that he brings to the job.

As the Sun Chronicle noted, “Attleboro is honored by the appointment of a city native to head the Human Rights Campaign” and it is also honored and fortunate to have a newspaper with the generosity of spirit to editorialize as well as it did on this subject. I ask that this editorial be printed here.

“Massachusetts is still there, with loving, caring families. Lay on with their lives and experiencing the same rights and responsibilities that all Americans do,” he said. “We want to shine a light on what happened in Massachusetts, and tell the American people who we truly are.”

He replaces another Massachusetts political activist, former state Sen. Cheryl Jacques, who stepped down as HRC president late last year, citing differences with its board.

Her departure coincided with speculation in the gay media, and elsewhere, about disagreements among the HRC’s executive committee and some of its major gay-rights groups. Solmonese said he had detected no serious rifts since his hiring was announced.

“Barney Frank is an incredibly heroic person, but also someone who is absolutely in touch with his constituency,” Solmonese said in a telephone interview. “He’s a man who values family more than anyone I know.”

Solmonese came out as gay in his early 20s; he recalls attending a Human Rights Campaign dinner where he was 22. Before joining EMILY’s List, he was an aide to former Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis and a fund-raiser for Frank.

He credits his parents, both schoolteachers, with instilling in him a career of political activism. Solmonese Elementary School in Norton is named after his father, Joseph.

“After a decade in the reproductive rights movement, I see myself having been in the fight for a progressive America,” he said. “Groups like the HRC are very much at the forefront of that fight.”

Another common denominator for the abortion-rights and gay rights movements is their determined and politically well-connected constituency, who focus on those two issues have claimed credit for the Republicans’ strong showing in the 2004 election.

“The American people fear a whole range of things right now, from terrorism to their economic future,” Solmonese said. “Our opposition has been pretty crafty at capitalizing on that fear, using whatever means necessary to make political gains.”

Many conservative groups are now waging a two-pronged fight against gay marriage. They are lobbying Congress to approve a federal constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union of a man and a woman; they also hope many more states will join the 17 that already have amended their constitutions to define same-sex marriages.

The Human Rights Campaign was among numerous gay-rights organizations participating earlier this month in a strategy session aimed at competing effectively in upcoming state ballot campaigns regarding gay marriage.

Solmonese says he hopes Massachusetts will be an undecided state while a history of activism that began in the early 1980s.

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