Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Mr. James McDowell.

Mr. McDowell was a World War II B–17 pilot who flew 31 missions over Germany. On January 13, 1945, on his second mission over Mannheim, Germany, Mr. McDowell’s aircraft was hit by enemy fire. The heavy flak hit the cockpit floor and sent a piece of shrapnel through his clothing into his right calf. The severely damaged plane was unable to return to the base, and was forced to land at Manston England Air Base. Mr. McDowell was taken by the medics to the hospital, treated and released with a cane. The B–17 was so damaged that it never returned to action.

Last year, Mr. McDowell and his family approached me about getting his long overdue Purple Heart. Unfortunately, before I was able to present the Purple Heart to him, Mr. McDowell passed away. Mr. Speaker, while it is unfortunate that Mr. McDowell is not alive to receive his Purple Heart, I know that his family will cherish the medal and his memory for the rest of their lives. Mr. McDowell’s story is emblematic of many who served in World War II and surely places him as a member of the “greatest generation.”

HONORING UNDERSHERIFF CURTIS L. WATSON

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Stark and I rise today to honor the extraordinary contributions of Undersheriff Curtis L. Watson to the Alameda County Sheriff’s Department over the past 34 years. Curtis joined the department in 1970 and steadily climbed its ranks to become the undersheriff in 1993, providing excellent service throughout his tenure.

In 1970, Curtis had just completed a tour in the United States Air Force. On the advice of his brother, he applied for the Alameda County Sheriff's Department, where he was hired as a sheriff’s deputy and assigned to work at Santa Rita Jail.

Curtis had worked his way up to the position of lieutenant at Santa Rita when he first made the acquaintance of Charles Plummer, the Alameda County Sheriff, in 1987. Curtis’s competence and confidence made a positive impression on the sheriff, who would remember him when their paths crossed again a few years later.

After advancing to captain and becoming the commanding officer of the North County Jail in Oakland, Curtis took the commander’s examination in April 1992, finishing with the highest score of any candidate and again catching the attention of Sheriff Plummer. By that time, Curtis had made such an impression that when the undersheriff position came open in 1993, Sheriff Plummer tapped him to fill it.

With his promotion to undersheriff, Curtis became not only the highest-ranking African American in the Alameda County Sheriff Department’s 152-year history but also the highest-ranking black sheriff’s official in the state of California.

Curtis served as undersheriff from 1993 until his retirement on March 24, 2005. Only one other undersheriff in the entire history of the Alameda County Sheriff’s Department served longer than Curtis’s 12 years in the position. On the occasion of Curtis Watson’s retirement, we would like to honor his contributions to law and order in Alameda County over the past 34 years. He has served with distinction and dedication, breaking down barriers and forging new paths. We salute him for his commitment to the citizens of the Alameda County Sheriff's Department.

For the relief of the parents of Theresa Marie Schiavo

SPEECH OF

HON. GIL GUTKNECHT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, March 20, 2005

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, as an original cosponsor of the first legislation introduced to protect the life of Terri Schiavo, I am pleased to join Members of Congress from both bodies and from both sides of the aisle to come together to pass legislation that gives Terri Schiavo a chance at life. S. 868 will allow members of Terri’s family to file a claim in the U.S. District Court in Florida for an alleged violation of her Constitutional rights. Our Constitution states that no state shall “deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.” Yet Terri has never had her own attorney exclusively representing her interests in court. This action will finally give her that opportunity. Convicted criminals on death row are granted this right; should not an individual who has never been convicted of a crime?

I understand issues involving long-term family illness are areas in which Congress should tread softly, if at all. This is an extremely sensitive area. But the facts of this case show that Terri’s parents and siblings are willing to care for her and bear her medical expenses. This is not someone in a coma or with a terminal illness. Terri is awake and is able to see and hear and is often alert and interacts with her environment. We have a responsibility to protect the most vulnerable among us. Though sometimes are led astray, every man, woman and child is precious in God’s eyes. Terri’s family must be given the opportunity to give her the treatment and care she deserves. It was vitally important that Congress pass this legislation; not just to protect Terri’s life, but also to avoid setting the disturbing precedent of denying human life against the wishes of someone’s family and those willing to give her care. What kind of statement would we have been making to other incapacitated or disabled individuals who aren’t able to survive without the assistance of medical technology or the care of others? As many have stated, when it comes to life and death decisions we must always err on the side of life.

I regret I was not available to vote for S. 868. Had my vote been needed for passage, I would have returned immediately.

THE INVESTMENT TAX SIMPLIFICATION ACT OF 2005

HON. DAVID DREIER

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, our position as the world’s leading economy is founded on the principle of entrepreneurship. This spirit inspires us to seek new and innovative products and services which enhance Americans’ lives by exploiting bold business ventures.

After two failed attempts to start an automobile manufacturing company, in 1903, Henry Ford and 11 business associates raised