

in the Hispanic community; The Hispanic Women's League has ensured the future of the Hispanic community is a bright one and for that I would like to commend you.

The Latino Business Owners Association (LBOA) has become a sound and strong organization that serves existing and startup businesses in our community. It is the anchor of support in the business community with Leadership and Guidance. Aiding entrepreneurship in the Hispanic community, the LBOA is on the frontline of economical prosperity, providing credibility and an overall positive future for the community it has vowed to aid, and for this I commend you.

These three organizations play vital roles in the destiny of this community, and I know that their tireless efforts will continue to have a positive impact and play a major role in this city for years to come.

RECOGNIZING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month and to recognize the importance of democracy in the Americas.

Hispanic Heritage Month runs from September 15th to October 15th each year and is an occasion for all Americans to recognize the invaluable achievements and contributions that Hispanic Americans have made to our nation. The first day of Hispanic Heritage Month also marks the anniversary of independence for six Latin American countries—Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

Hispanic Americans are members of a rapidly expanding and increasingly influential community in this nation, and they have played a vital role in shaping our nation's culture. They have contributed to every aspect of enhancing our society including serving as leaders in business, government, law, science and the arts. Additionally, they have sacrificed in the defense of this nation's freedom by serving in every major American conflict. Currently more than 10 percent of our active duty force is of Latino descent.

During this month's celebration, it is important to take time to recognize the value of the role Hispanics have taken in the democratic process both here in the United States and abroad. Hispanics in this country have taken an active role in democracy by increasing voter participation and striving to be model citizens, truly meriting recognition. Hispanic Americans' dedication to democracy is an extension of their strong commitment to community, hard work, and family unity.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I call upon my colleagues to join me in recognizing and celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month.

STATEMENT ON HOW TO END THE WAR IN IRAQ

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, on September 15, 2005, I prepared the following statement during a hearing organized by Rep. LYNN WOOLSEY on how to end the war in Iraq:

Good morning. Thank you, Chairwoman WOOLSEY for your leadership in holding this important hearing. 1,896 of our brave young men and women have died in Iraq. By some counts, up to 100,000 innocent Iraqis have perished in a war that was based on false premises. It was wrong to go in from the start and it is wrong to stay. And it is counter-productive to U.S., Iraqi and regional interests, as Iraq heads closer to an all-out civil war.

The U.S. presence in Iraq is fueling the insurgency, and has turned Iraq into a training ground for the insurgents. The insurgency is growing stronger by the day and attack tactics are becoming more advanced. Iraqi rebels have refined their bomb-making skills. According to a CIA assessment from this past June, the Iraq war was likely to produce a dangerous legacy by dispersing to other countries Iraqi and foreign combatants more adept and better organized than they were before the conflict.

It is not only our soldiers who are falling victim to this insurgency. Just yesterday it was reported that almost 150 Iraqis died and 500 were wounded in coordinated attacks of at least a dozen suicide bombings in Baghdad. 114 of those people were Shiite day laborers in Baghdad, lured into a minibus by a suicide bomber with the promise of work. This was the second deadliest suicide bombing since the war began. Al-Zarqawi's Sunni militant group, Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, claimed responsibility in statements released over the group's website that said the bombings signified that "the battle to avenge the Sunni people of Tal Afar has started." Later, an audiotape released over the Internet that was said to be from Al-Zarqawi declared a "full-scale war on Shiites around Iraq, without mercy."

One year ago today, it was reported that a National Intelligence Estimate produced for President Bush in the summer of 2004 on the political, economic and security situation in Iraq determined that at best, stability in Iraq would be tenuous, and at worst, there were trend lines that pointed to a civil war.

Now today, as fears of civil war in Iraq are becoming realized, it is clear that the worst scenario predicted is coming true. The U.S. presence in Iraq is only making the conflict worse, as it is strengthening tensions between the Sunni militants and the Shiite majority, and serving to strengthen the insurgency.

The Iraqi constitution and the run-up to the October 15 referendum on the constitution has been a central point of concern for the Sunnis, who feel that the constitution will institutionalize their reduced role in Iraq. Tensions between Sunnis and Shiites have increased recently and the attacks yesterday in Baghdad only emphasize that point. Yet the constitution is widely perceived to have a large U.S. footprint. Adnan Pachachi described how U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad participated in

most meetings for the constitution and was not neutral. Despite the Sunnis wanting to continue negotiations on the constitution, according to Mr. Pachachi, Ambassador Khalilzad was interested in seeing the draft constitution done and sent to the National Assembly as soon as possible in order to prove that US policy has succeeded in Iraq.

Furthermore, the U.S. presence has served to attract and recruit terrorists into Iraq, to fight the U.S. and what they consider to be the U.S.-backed government of Iraq. The insurgents' attacks are becoming more advanced through their practice on U.S. soldiers and now they are applying these improved tactics on the Shiite majority.

The U.S. presence is strengthening tensions within Iraq. There is no better time to leave than now—before the situation worsens. Iraqis themselves have asked for it. On June 23, 83 members of Iraq's newly elected National Assembly signed a petition calling for a timetable for the withdrawal of foreign troops.

A member of the Assembly, Abdul-Rahman al-Neeimi, told the paper that American forces "have used all possible means in order to provoke sectarian strife in Iraq, but have failed thanks to God." He concluded by saying, "We tell the occupation forces: Hands off the Iraqi people and let us heal our wounds by our own means."

It is time for this Congress to put aside the partisan differences that have occurred over the war and to come together in a plan where we can unify to take steps to withdraw our troops from Iraq and to take steps to heal the breach that the war has created between America and the world community. NEIL ABERCROMBIE, WALTER JONES, RON PAUL and I introduced a bipartisan bill calling for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq, and an announcement of the withdrawal by December 31, 2005. I believe that while a number of factors must come into play for a successful withdrawal, which I hope will be highlighted here today, merely announcing the withdrawal will start to reverse the increasingly disastrous course in Iraq.

IN LASTING MEMORY OF RAY BRAXTON MARTIN

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life and legacy of Ray Braxton Martin. Ray died on August 21, 2005 in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Born on November 23, 1919 in the town of Rison, Arkansas, Ray graduated as co-valedictorian with his twin brother, Roy, from Rison High School in 1937.

Ray and his brother dedicated 31 years to Martin Brothers Gas Company. Ray is perhaps best remembered in Rison for his service to the Election Commission for nearly 35 years. It was imperative to Ray that local elections were carried out with the utmost integrity and honesty. Ray's impressive list of community activities include the Superintendent of Rison Baptist Church Sunday School where he was also a deacon, a 32nd degree Mason, past President of Arkansas Butane Association, and past Chairman of the Board of Trustees for Henderson State University. As you