

Mr. John Gabusi is an outstanding member of our community. His life-long commitment to serving his community is commendable. It is the drive of Mr. Gabusi that has kept him hard at work for others and although Mr. Gabusi has been battling cancer, he wishes he could continue his work at Pima Community College. Mr. Gabusi has served his community well, and his efforts have not gone unnoticed.

I would like to personally commend Mr. John Gabusi for his tireless commitment to our community. His life and work is an inspiration to us all.

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NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS  
MONTH

**HON. JIM McDERMOTT**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 1, 2005*

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, November is National Family Caregivers Month. This month we celebrate those who care for America's vulnerable populations. As a physician, child psychiatrist, and the Ranking Member of the Human Resources subcommittee of the House Committee on Ways and Means, I have a particular interest in the way the Federal Government addresses the needs of abused and neglected children. There are abused and neglected children throughout our country. Sometimes we know who they are, but too often we don't. They live in big cities, small towns, rural areas and every suburb in between. There will always be too many abused children, and there will never be enough family caregivers who provide vulnerable children with the safety and stability they need to thrive.

Family caregivers open their hearts and homes to our most vulnerable populations, and they often do so knowing they will not be recognized for their efforts, nor provided Federal support. If the Congress is as committed to promoting family values as Members of Congress often say, then we should fulfill that commitment by really valuing families and providing Federal support to every foster child in family care. When a child is removed from a home because of neglect or abuse, the Federal Government should have an interest in ensuring the safety and well being of those children. But today the Federal Government is primarily interested in vulnerable children who live in the homes of strangers. We should strive to do better, Mr. Speaker.

In the meantime let us acknowledge and celebrate family caregivers around the Nation by using this month to draw attention to the many challenges that face them. Let us celebrate the hard work and commitment of those who care every day for vulnerable populations, our Nation's family caregivers.

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TRIBUTE TO THE SPINA BIFIDA  
COMMUNITY

**HON. BART STUPAK**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 1, 2005*

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the more than 250,000 Ameri-

cans in the Spina Bifida Community. An estimated 70,000 people in the United States currently live with Spina Bifida, the most common permanently disabling birth defect. Each October we recognize these Americans during National Spina Bifida Awareness Month, but we must work year round to advance research and policies to meet the needs of this community.

As co-chair of the Congressional Spina Bifida Caucus, I've had the honor to work with the Spina Bifida Association of America, SBAA, to advance Spina Bifida awareness, research and public health efforts in Congress. For over 30 years, the SBAA has helped those living with and affected by this debilitating disease. Founded in 1973, the SBAA is the Nation's only organization solely dedicated to advocating on behalf of the Spina Bifida community. Through their almost 60 chapters in more than 125 communities, the SBAA brings expectant parents together with those who have a child with Spina Bifida. This interaction helps to answer questions and concerns, but most importantly it lends support and gives people essential information.

Together the SBAA, the West Michigan SBA, the SBA of the Upper Peninsula Michigan, and the SW Michigan SB & Hydrocephalus Association work tirelessly to help the families of those living with Spina Bifida meet the challenges and enjoy the rewards of raising their children. I would like to thank the local chapters of SBAA in my State for their work in Michigan and other areas of the country. Michigan's chapters are partners in the SB Hurricane Emergency Life Support Program to help bring vitally needed supplies to hurricane victims in the Gulf Region and to put families affected by Spina Bifida in touch with others who can help them.

Mr. Speaker, Spina Bifida is a birth defect that can happen to anyone. We do not know the exact cause of Spina Bifida; but research shows that if a woman takes 400 mcg of folic acid every day before she becomes pregnant, she reduces her risk of having a baby with Spina Bifida or another neural tube defect by as much as 70 percent. The exact cause of the rest of the cases is unknown, but it is believed that genetics and environment may play a role. Spina Bifida is a neural tube defect that happens in the first month of pregnancy when the spinal column doesn't close completely. There are 60 million women at risk of having a baby born with Spina Bifida. Every day, an average of eight babies are affected by Spina Bifida or a similar birth defect of the brain and spine. Each year, about 3,000 pregnancies are affected by these birth defects. Spina Bifida is not one condition; it is a multitude of problems that affect the mind, the body and the spirit. No two cases of Spina Bifida are ever the same.

Today, approximately 90 percent of all babies diagnosed with Spina Bifida live into adulthood, approximately 80 percent have normal IQ's, and approximately 75 percent participate in sports and other recreational activities. With proper medical care attention and family care these people can live productive full lives with the help of braces and/or a wheelchair. There are breakthroughs every year that benefit the quality of life for those living with Spina Bifida. One of the keys to a better life for the 70,000 Americans who live with Spina Bifida is research. Our goals are to develop better treatment, better understanding of causes and new ways to prevent Spina Bifida.

I am proud to be the co-chair of the Congressional Spina Bifida Caucus with Congressman CHRIS SMITH and hope that all of my colleagues will join me to spread awareness about this disease. Together we can improve the quality of life of those living with Spina Bifida. I encourage my colleagues to join the caucus, which now has 52 members from both sides of the aisle.

I again wish to thank the SBAA and its chapters for all of their hard work to prevent and reduce suffering for those 70,000 individuals living with Spina Bifida throughout this Nation. We all owe a great debt to the SBAA for what they have accomplished.

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HONORING THE 50TH WEDDING AN-  
NIVERSARY OF ED AND HARRIET  
NIEMIEC

**HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 1, 2005*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ed and Harriet Niemiec on their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

Ed and Harriet both grew up in the Back of the Yards neighborhood in Chicago. They knew each other as kids, even though they attended different schools. Eventually Ed and Harriet became engaged and then married on November 6, 1955. They had their only child, Ed, Jr. in August of 1956.

Following in his parent's footsteps, Ed, Jr. and his wife Maria have been married for 27 years. They have two children, Mark and Christina.

Besides an active involvement with their family, Ed and Harriet have many hobbies. Ed spends a lot of time taking care of his yard and tending to his flowers. According to his son, one would be hard pressed to find a blade of grass out of place or a visible weed. Harriet is a consummate volunteer and organizer. Her philanthropies started while she was working at Dry Storage where running the football pools spilled over into organizing senior trips, church functions and working at Christ Hospital as a "Pink Lady."

Ed and Harriet are fine examples as parents and are wonderful role models as grandparents. I would like to extend my best wishes to Ed and Harriet as they and their family celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. XAVIER BECERRA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 1, 2005*

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, October 28, 2005, I was unable to cast my floor votes on rollcall Nos. 555 and 556.

The votes I missed included agreeing to the Conference Report on the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Appropriations Act of 2006 and agreeing to the resolution condemning Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's threats against Israel.

Had I been present for these votes, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 555 and "yea" on rollcall No. 556.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALTICOR  
INCORPORATED

**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 1, 2005*

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Alticor Incorporated, on being honored with the 2005 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. This is an honor bestowed to employers who have gone above and beyond in supporting their National Guard and Reserve employees.

Alticor's communication with its military employees when in action, covering pay differential during deployments and their Military Leave Program are just a few of the many ways the company has demonstrated support for the Guard and Reserves. Alticor has also donated numerous products which have been distributed to deployed units worldwide.

I commend Alticor's contribution to military families. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I respectfully ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Alticor Incorporated, for being honored with the 2005 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award.

THANKS TO THOMAS DILENCE

**HON. PETER T. KING**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 1, 2005*

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give thanks to Thomas DiLence, Chief Counsel DiLence, Chief Counsel and Policy Director of the Committee on Homeland Security.

Tom has been a dedicated and accomplished public servant throughout his 9 years on Capitol Hill—2 years in his current position, and 7 years before that on the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Tom has had a truly impressive career of government service. Most recently, he managed the successful House passage of major legislation to reform our system of homeland security grants—the Faster and Smarter Funding for First Responders Act of 2005—and the first-ever Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006. He also was actively involved in drafting and negotiating the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act last year, the bill that codified into law many of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.

Perhaps most important, however, Tom worked to establish a permanent Homeland Security Committee in the House of Representatives. He joined the fledgling Select Committee on Homeland Security 2 years ago, and worked tirelessly to ensure the transition of the Select Committee to the now permanent Committee on Homeland Security in the 109th Congress. During his tour with the Select Committee, Tom's keen mind, legislative expertise, and dogged determination helped to firmly establish the Committee as a force on Capitol Hill, and contributed greatly to the establishment of the permanent Committee on Homeland Security. Tom was always the first to arrive and the last to leave. As the Select Committee's primary interface

with other Congressional committees and the House Leadership, and in the face of significant resistance, he helped craft the jurisdiction of the new Committee to ensure that it could provide meaningful authorization and guidance to, and oversight of, the critical new Department of Homeland Security. As the largest reorganization of the Congressional branch in over 50 years, and as the first creation of a permanent congressional committee in over 30 years, this is an accomplishment of major significance—with real and lasting impact on the future of this House and the citizens of this great Nation.

It is appropriate that Tom should end this phase of his Hill career on such a high note with the youngest committee in the House of Representatives, but I would be remiss if I did not note some of Tom's other major accomplishments over the years. As the Deputy Chief Counsel for Oversight and Investigations, and a principal national security policy advisor, for the oldest standing committee in the House, the Energy and Commerce Committee, Tom led numerous successful investigations and helped pass important consumer protection and homeland security legislation, including the Homeland Security Act of 2002, which created the Department of Homeland Security.

Tom was an invaluable and talented member of the Energy and Commerce Committee's oversight and investigations staff, and played a key role in landmark Congressional investigations. In 2000, Bridgestone/Firestone announced a voluntary recall of 14.4 million tires following an investigation by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), spurred on by reports and complaints of tread separation of certain tire models, mostly on Ford Explorers. Approximately 271 fatalities and more than 800 injuries were linked to tread separation and rollover incidents involving under-inflated Firestone tires and Ford vehicles. Tom's tireless work during this Congressional investigation, and the nationally-recognized hearings he organized on this topic, uncovered the extent to which Firestone and Ford knew of these safety problems and kept them hidden from the public and from Federal regulators. This investigation also highlighted serious deficiencies in NHTSA's ability to adequately detect and investigate safety-related defects in motor vehicles and related equipment.

The Ford-Firestone investigation led to swift Congressional legislative action to protect American motorists. The Transportation Recall Enhancement, Accountability, and Documentation (TREAD) Act became law in the Fall of 2000. The legislation required that auto and tire makers promptly report serious safety concerns with their products, and gave NHTSA new authority to require improvements in auto and tire safety, including the tire pressure monitoring systems that many new vehicles now have. Tom's work on this investigation that resulted in the TREAD Act undoubtedly improved public safety on our roads and highways.

Tom also played a lead part in the Committee's vital investigation of the Enron and Arthur Andersen corporate fraud and accounting scandal, including the controversy surrounding the accounting firm's shredding of relevant documents just as government investigations got underway. Through a comprehensive investigation and series of public hearings, the

Committee revealed a web of corporate fraud aided and abetted by auditors too willing to look the other way. The astonishing discoveries contributed to Andersen's indictment on federal felony charges, and led to Congressional passage of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act—the single most important piece of legislation affecting corporate governance, financial disclosure, and the practice of public accounting since the U.S. securities laws of the early 1930s. The Act helps to protect average investors and shareholders, and ensure the independence of auditors on which they rely.

Even before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Tom took a keen interest in homeland security issues. In 1999, he led an investigation into the lack of security controls on the possession and use of deadly biological agents such as anthrax by private and academic laboratories and research facilities all across the country. After the anthrax mail attacks of October 2001, Tom's knowledge of the issue led to his involvement as a key drafter of the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002—which, among other things, imposed registration and security requirements on those obtaining and using deadly biological agents in legitimate research.

Shortly thereafter, Tom was called upon again to lead the effort to draft and enact President Bush's signature initiative to combat bioterrorism, the Project BioShield Act. This Act, which passed in 2004, aims to spur the development and availability of next generation countermeasures against biological, chemical, nuclear, and radiological weapons. As the President noted at the bill's Rose Garden signing ceremony, "America is stronger and better as a result of the BioShield law."

No man stands alone, and Tom would be the first to acknowledge that his amazing success is the result of the teamwork of many people. Ask anyone on the Hill about Tom, however, and you will hear a unanimous opinion attesting to Tom's intellect, photographic memory, leadership, and ability to build strong teams and find consensus.

On behalf of the Committee, I want to thank Tom's wife of 12 years, Linda, and his three children, Madison (7), Maguire (5), and Donovan (2), for all the hours Tom spent away from them. Clearly, they are Tom's inspiration, and his success is their success. Finally, I want to thank Tom for his hard work, tireless service, and steadfast determination. We will miss Tom. He helped to build the Committee on Homeland Security. He now leaves it a stronger and better place than when he arrived. And his efforts have helped make America a more safe and secure place for us all.

IN MEMORY OF DAN JOSEPH  
PICKARD

**HON. PETE SESSIONS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 1, 2005*

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Dr. Dan Joseph Pickard who passed away on Thursday the 20th of October. I was greatly saddened to hear the news that Dr. Pickard had passed, and I will be keeping his wife, Patty, and surviving family members in my prayers during this very difficult time for the Pickard family.