

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A TRIBUTE TO SHARON MARTINEZ

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Sharon Martinez, of Monterey Park, CA. Each year in March, in recognition of Women's History Month, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our Nation's women.

Sharon was born, raised, and educated in Monterey Park. She received her bachelor's degree in public administration from the University of Southern California, and her master's degree in public administration in management from the University of Southern California.

Inspired to help residents find jobs in the community, Ms. Martinez founded SMART Staffing Services, a woman and minority owned employment agency that specializes in clerical, bilingual and promotional staffing, originally opened in Monterey Park and now located in Alhambra. SMART Staffing Services, of which Sharon is president, now serves the greater Los Angeles area including Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura.

Sharon's list of community involvement is impressive. A current councilmember and former mayor of Monterey Park, her past activities include serving as a board member of the Latin Business Association, West San Gabriel Valley YMCA, Monterey Park Art & Culture Commission, Library Board, national vice president of Young Adults of the League of the United Latin American Citizens, and former secretary of Hispanas Organized for Political Equality.

An appointed member of the Los Angeles County Commission on Local Government, Sharon is currently involved in the Monterey Park/Rosemead Soroptimist International, Monterey Park Rotary, San Gabriel Valley Council of Government, Monterey Park Library Foundation, the San Gabriel Valley Animal Control Authority, Boy Scouts of America—Mission Amigos District Board, Monterey Park Chamber of Commerce, and the Monterey Park Hospital Board. Sharon's goal is to have a direct voice in improving the quality of life for our community and especially to see improvements in the employment industry.

Ms. Martinez has received several awards including Assembly Member Judy Chu's 2003 Latina Business Women of the Year, Business and Professional Women's 2003 Business Woman of the Year Award, "Woman of Promise" Award, and "Latina Entrepreneur of the Year" Award. She was featured in the Los Angeles Business Journal as one of the "20 Up & Coming Latino Women."

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring an extraordinary woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Sharon Martinez.

WAIVING PASSPORT FEES FOR RELATIVES OF DECEASED MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2006

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 1184, a bill that would waive the passport fees for a relative of a deceased member of the Armed Forces who is proceeding abroad to visit the grave of such member or to attend a funeral or memorial service for such member.

The current United States passport fee is \$97.00 for adults and \$82.00 for children under 16. Present law allows waivers for a widow, child, parent, brother or sister to visit a grave. The proposed bill would expand the waiver to include grandparents, and it would add funerals and memorial services as well as grave site visits.

At a time of such grieving for a lost service member, the family of the fallen hero should not have to worry about paying passport fees, which can add up quickly for a family. Waiving the fee in such cases is the least that we can do.

I urge you to vote for this bill.

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF ROBERT T. WOODWORTH

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of my friend, Robert T. Woodworth, devoted father, grandfather, friend, United States veteran and long-time community activist, for his civic activism that continues to uplift our entire Westside Cleveland community.

Mr. Woodworth was born in Cleveland to loving parents. His father drove streetcars in the city and his mother was a loving housewife. With extended family nearby, he learned early on the significance of family and community. Mr. Woodworth has infused those vital lessons of childhood within his own family, as he continues to be a foundation of strength and support for his daughter, Rhonda, and his granddaughters, Stephanie and Samantha.

As a young adult, Mr. Woodworth enlisted in the United States Air Force, giving him the opportunity to travel the world. The languages he learned and friends that he made have never left him, transcending time and distance. He speaks fluent German, Spanish and French and remains closely connected to friends living in faraway lands. His passion for travel, community issues and global concerns parallels his passion for music. He is an avid guitarist and pianist and is an avid patron of classical music.

Mr. Woodworth's warm demeanor and quick smile easily draws others to him. His unwavering belief in community service and volunteerism is illuminated throughout Cleveland's Westside, especially within our democratic process, where his grassroots involvement continues to positively impact our neighborhoods. His leadership and diligence has been key in several political races, including his role as campaign manager for then council candidate Nelson Cintron. Councilman Cintron became the first Hispanic councilman in Cleveland's history.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor, recognition and gratitude to Mr. Robert T. Woodworth. His joyous life, centering on devotion to family, friendship and community, continues to reflect warmth, energy and song—enriching and inspiring family and friends throughout our Cleveland community and far beyond.

IN MEMORY OF SHERIFF SIDNEY WARREN SHIPPY

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I inform the House of the death of Sheriff Sidney "Sid" Warren Shippy of Butler, Missouri. He died at the age of 57 of complications from a heart and kidney transplant.

Shippy was born in Kansas City, Missouri, the oldest of three children. After graduating from Raytown High School in 1967, he enlisted in the United States Army and served in Vietnam. He was awarded the Bronze Star, Army Commendation and Air Medal during his service.

Shippy attended Longview Community College before beginning a 33-year career in law enforcement. Shippy served with the Missouri Highway Patrol as an undercover narcotics officer, road patrolman, zone commander, and worked in the department's gaming commission. He served as an instructor to other officers and attained the highest investigation qualification, an Accident Reconstructionist. After retiring from the Patrol in 2003, he entered politics and was elected Bates County Sheriff in 2004.

Mr. Speaker, I am certain that the Members of the House of Representatives will join me in paying tribute to the outstanding public service of Sheriff Sidney Warren Shippy. He will be missed by all who knew him and I offer my heartfelt condolences to his family: his wife of 30 years, Markita; daughter, Anissa Fischer; mother, Deva Shippy; brother, Russell Shippy; and sister, Barbara Shippy.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

IN MEMORY OF LT ALMAR LARON
FITZGERALD

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on March 4, 2006, I attended the funeral of Almar LaRon Fitzgerald, an American soldier from Lexington, South Carolina, who gave his life while serving his country in Iraq. This hero of Lexington County who graduated from The Citadel was lovingly eulogized at the Lexington Baptist Church by Pastor Ken Jumper of The Harvest Church of Lexington. Pastor Jumper, with a family of military service, provided an inspiring lesson of hope.

THE FUNERAL SERVICE OF LT ALMAR LARON
FITZGERALD LEXINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH

And Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?"

As we were singing this last song, I was reminded of this scripture where we are given the promise of eternal life. And yes, we believe this.

I would like to thank the family for allowing me the opportunity to share in these moments with them, and my thoughts and prayers are certainly with you.

If I were to say today how I really felt inside, I would have to say, "It just ain't right". But my part today is to bring, and I have been asked to bring, "words of comfort".

With that said, we must understand today that our comfort will not be found in the context of human understanding. As a pastor, I am often called upon to explain the unexplainable, but the unexplainable remains unexplained even after I have said my piece. There are no real explanations as to why a quality young man should leave life so early in the day.

However, our comfort today will be found in the context of our faith. You see that is why we came to the church, sang some hymns, called a preacher and read some scripture. We understand that in moments like these we call upon our faith—a faith that transcends our human understanding and grief.

We look to the God unseen and an eternity yet unrealized to anchor our hope. The faith I speak of today is more than just a general faith in God. It is a specific faith that finds its foundation in the person of Jesus Christ.

As I pondered my thoughts for today, I was reminded of the first family created by God. Adam and Eve, the first family, lost a son. Their son was also lost through an act of seemingly meaningless violence. And at that time, they had to deal with the emotions you and I are dealing with today—the questions of why, feelings of loss and grief, and wondering where do we go from here. They had to make some sense and reconcile these thoughts of pain, loss and grief with God and eternal things.

Today as we think of Almar LaRon Fitzgerald and the life he lived—a life that served, a life that was savored and well lived, and ultimately a life that was sacrificed—I would like for us to turn our attention to "another Son" that was sacrificed.

Adam and Eve had a son that was lost, and God gave them another son. They named him Seth, and it was in and through this son they were to find hope. It was through "another son," Seth, that Jesus Christ was to be born. If you follow the genealogy of Christ back-

wards you will find this to be true. And today, it is through this Son, God's Son Jesus Christ, that you and I will find our comfort and consolation from today.

I wish I could explain the unexplainable today. Let me tell you what I do know. Let me tell you what I do know to be True, Reliable and Eternal. I know that God is Love. He is, He has been and He always will be. God created a world of peace and harmony with no violence, sickness or pain.

Unfortunately, mankind fell and chose to live their lives their own way. Therefore, we live in a fallen world today—one that has sickness, pain and death. We must be careful that we do not allow our pain and hurt to turn to bitterness against others or against the God who does love us and care for us.

For you see, it was right in the middle of this fallen world that God dropped a cross, planted it in the ground and hung His Only Son upon it. A cross that stands between heaven and earth. A cross that helps us reconcile life and eternity. A cross that helps us bear up under the burden of pain and grief. A cross where Jesus died, sacrificially giving His life for another. I remember as well, as I think of Almar's sacrifice, there is no greater love than this, that a man would lay down his life for another. So you and I can look to this cross and find the comfort and hope we need in order to navigate this life.

We find in this cross two arenas of hope. First of all, the hope of eternal life. For all those who have accepted Christ and believe in Him, there is the promise of life after death. You see, we who believe will see Almar again. There is life beyond this life. This is the hope and comfort we can have today.

Now we have the promise of eternal life, but we also have the promise of a Comforter. Jesus promised that He would be with us. He would comfort us. He would never leave us or forsake us. So during the days and weeks ahead and during the dark nights when no one is there, He will be there. He will be with me and comfort me in my darkness and most difficult moment! Can I get a witness in the place today?

This is the hope we have: Jesus and His presence will be with me and strengthen me, day by day until 'that day'. So we look to the cross and the Son. This is where we find our hope and peace.

We also find the grace to forgive at the cross. So we must today forgive those who have hurt us.

The Bible tells us that the power of the cross removes the sting of death. Death has no hold on us. As death went to catch Almar in its grip, poof, he was gone. Death looked around and could not find him. Jesus said those who believe in me will never taste, experience, death.

And as we forgive, we find peace. Interestingly, Almar gave his life for peace. So we must forgive others, even as Jesus hung on the cross and said, "Father forgive them, they don't understand." May we become peacemakers today.

Finally out of this comfort, may we find courage. The courage to get up and go on with our lives, learning to live life to its fullest. The courage to forgive others and be peacemakers. And the courage to accept Jesus Christ and forge a path through life that others can recognize and follow.

Now may the peace and grace of Jesus Christ be with us all. Amen and Amen!

A TRIBUTE TO SETA SIMONIAN

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Seta Simonian, of Glendale, California. Each year in March, in recognition of Women's History Month, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women.

Ms. Simonian's community involvement demonstrates her devotion to education and art, because she believes in promoting and preserving the treasures and the beauty of Armenian culture and heritage.

Seta was born in Aleppo, Syria, and at age 11 moved to Beirut, Lebanon. Upon graduating from the American University of Beirut at the age of 22, she married Hratch Simonian. The Simonians lived and worked in Saudi Arabia for 8 years, then moved to California in 1985. Since 1987, Seta, her husband, and their two children, Karin and Sebouh, have resided in Glendale, California.

Soon after moving to California, Ms. Simonian cofounded and chaired the Hamazkayin Educational and Cultural Society of Pasadena. She is a current member of Arvest and Artee Cultural Groups of Hamazkayin, and since 1994, has been the chair of the Hamazkayin Music Committee which collaborates with artists in Armenia and releases authentic CDs and classical Armenian music. She is currently an assistant for the Hamazkayin Student Forum held in Armenia every summer. Seta served as an Anchor for Horizon Armenian TV in Glendale for three years. A cofounder of the Committee of Armenian Students in the Public Schools, she is also a member of the Armenian Cultural Foundation, Armenian Educational Foundation, Armenian International Women's Association, the National Education Association, and the California and Glendale Teachers' Associations.

Seta received her bachelor's degree in mathematics from the American University of Beirut, and a master's in education administration from California State University Los Angeles. She has a teaching diploma, a bilingual teaching certificate, and has completed an Armenian Studies program.

A wonderful role model for her students, Seta has been a teacher for over 30 years and is currently teaching math at Wilson Middle School in Glendale.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring an outstanding woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Seta Simonian.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT OF CONGRESS REGARDING ACCESS OF MILITARY RECRUITERS TO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2006

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to raise and voice my concern on this

resolution to express support for conditioning an institution of higher education's receipt of certain Federal funds on its actions to provide military recruiters with the same access to its campus and students as it provides to any other employer.

I am very proud of our military and of the courage and bravery of our military personnel. I believe in the importance of outreach, and of the ability of employers to utilize the resources of our colleges and universities. I know that the talent found at our institutions of higher education across the country is important to the success of our defenses, and that every month many of our best and brightest make the decision to defend our homeland.

I would like to caution my colleagues, however, and remind them that this is not a military issue. We value a higher education because of the learned abilities to think critically, to comprehend complex problems and issues, to analyze research and information, to evaluate the choices at hand, and to gain enough wisdom to arrive at a solution. I am hesitant to condition Federal funding for these institutions on a situation which may be their way to express a point of view and to disagree with the status quo.

To be able to freely oppose the politics of any administration is a right given to us in our own Constitution. To be able to express these opinions is, again, a right given to us in our own Constitution. Likewise, the dignity of a military career is inherent and desirable. However, I have concerns about resolutions such as this that seem to limit the ability of one party without a perceived benefit for another.

I urge my colleagues to consider this matter carefully, and to join me in celebrating both our Armed Forces and our institutions of higher education.

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF
BRAD NORRIS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and memory of my close friend William B. "Brad" Norris—beloved husband, father, stepfather, grandfather, brother, and close friend to the entire community. His passing marks a tragic loss to his friends, family and the people that he served in the community.

From early on, he headed the call to public service. He graduated from Culver Academy in Indiana and enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served his country with honor and courage, after which he moved to Cleveland, where he eventually joined Cleveland law firm Hahn Loeser and Parks.

Mr. Norris was truly a civil rights activist. He visited President John F. Kennedy and also volunteered with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. By working with the Cleveland Regional Transit Authority during the late 1960's he helped organize opposition to a freeway plan that if enacted, it would have split eastern Cuyahoga County. He represented the city of Cleveland in a lengthy antitrust lawsuit against the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company, in which CEI attempted to put its rival Muny Light Company out of business. This would have made CEI Cleveland's only municipal electric sys-

tem. This was also a topic I fought passionately for when I was the mayor of Cleveland. He also played an instrumental role in the rebirth of Cleveland's first licensed educational, non-commercial public radio station, WCPN FM.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of Mr. William B. "Brad" Norris. We remember him and celebrate the life that he led. We have experienced a great loss in the Cleveland community, and he will be missed greatly. I extend my deepest condolences to his beloved wife, Elizabeth; his sons Jack, Todd, and Robert; his daughters, Carolyn, Pamela and Betsie; a brother; six grandchildren and his friends and colleagues. The life that he lived, and the legacy that he leaves will live on in the hearts of his family and all the lives that he touched.

IN MEMORY OF SSGT. JAY
COLLADO

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on March 3, 2006, I attended the funeral of SSGT. Jay Collado, an American soldier from Columbia, South Carolina, who gave his life while serving his country in Baghdad, Iraq. The inspiring service was conducted by Fr. Wilbrod Mwape, the Catholic Chaplain of Providence Hospital in Columbia. His message of heroism and hope was presented with great sincerity.

We have gathered here this morning to celebrate life for Jay, for we believe death is not the end of our life but in fact the beginning of a New, perfect and eternal life in God's Kingdom. Jay died honorably and I really feel honored to be part of this celebration of his life!

Death indeed is a very painful experience for all of us regardless of whatever age a beloved person died. We moan and grieve for our beloved people knowing that we will never see them again as human beings the way we are now! However, we will moan and grieve not as unbelievers but as believers in the life after death. And this is why we are here to celebrate life and not death of SSGT Jay Collado!

To the family of Jay, this is a terrible loss mostly that Jay has gone at a very young age, he was only 31! You will really moan and grieve as a family for this great loss of your beloved one. However, as we have heard from the scripture readings, death is not the end of life but a beginning of a perfect and eternal life. Jay has only passed by from our mother earth and enters into a new life where we all look forward to be. As we heard, Jesus Christ says, He is the life and the Resurrection who ever believes in him will have eternal life. This is what Jay would like each one of us to know that he is now resting eternally in God's Kingdom. Jay will always be a gift to you as a family and you will remember him in all the wonderful time you shared with him.

SSgt Jay died for a noble cause in the country of Iraq fighting for a better life of humanity! He indeed died a hero's death, he is a hero not only for the U.S., but the whole humanity. Jay will remain a great inspiration not only to the family, U.S. Marine Corps, or his country but to humanity as whole. Jay chose to go to Iraq and fight for freedom, peace and liberty for the Iraqi peo-

ple and the whole of Middle East, he would have chosen not to go if he had no love for humanity. Jay will be remembered for his spirit of sacrifice not only for the freedom, peace and liberty of U.S. but the whole humanity. He chose to risk and sacrifice his life for the love of people. This indeed is a wonderful inspiration for all of us. Let us remember Jay by imitating him, to be ready to risk and sacrifice our lives for the freedom, peace and liberty of all human beings on earth. All of us here we are enjoying the freedom, peace and liberty because of people like Jay who sacrificed their lives for us, many of whom we never knew or met!

This indeed is SSGT Jay Collado's legacy, a young man who risked and sacrificed his life for love of humanity. He is a hero; let us honor him by learning from his exemplary life!

TRIBUTE TO DR. WILLIAM BAKER

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to recognize the many achievements of Dr. William Allen Baker (Pg.D, Ph.D, D.Litt, Th.D, Kt.OBE), from Odessa, Missouri, who is an accomplished actor, educator, author, and philanthropist.

Dr. Baker conducted his graduate studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and at the University College, Wales, United Kingdom. A Rotary Foundation International Graduate Fellow, he has earned a Doctorate in Theatre History (Ph.D), a Doctor of Letters (D.Litt), a Doctorate in Theology (Th.D), and an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity (HonDD).

Previously an Associate Professor and Department Chairman at Avila University, Dr. Baker has published several books. His stage and film credits include performances in England, France, and Wales. Dr. Baker is a member of the Royal Star and Garter, the Royal British Legion, the British Society of Ethical Theory, the British Theological Institute, the American Biographical Institute, the International Society of Philosophers, Franciscans International, the Council for Parliament of the World's Religions, the Screen Actors Guild, and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

Dr. Baker has been bestowed several awards and honors including the International Peace Prize, the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, the Magistracy Medal of Honor, and the International Professor of the Year 2005. He has been nominated for the American Medal of Honor for contributions to literature, the International Medal of Freedom, and International Writer of the Year. Dr. Baker has also been named to the BBC Hall of Fame, Top 100 Writers 2005, and Outstanding Intellectuals of the 21st Century.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my congratulations to Dr. Baker for his many achievements and wish him luck in all his future endeavors.

A TRIBUTE TO PAT MAGUIRE
FREEMAN

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Ms. Pat Maguire Freeman, of San Gabriel, California. Each year in March, in recognition of Women's History Month, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women.

Pat was born in San Francisco in 1940. Since her father was a career army officer, she was raised throughout the world, including the Philippines and Germany, where she attended high school. After attending the University of California Berkeley, she married Lee Freeman in 1961 and they moved to San Gabriel in 1965, where they currently reside. The Freemans have 3 children, Noel, Amber, Roger, and Dawn Myers, their foster daughter and seven grandchildren.

Ms. Freeman has been active in many different community organizations. Some past activities include being an Adult Leader for Methodist Youth Fellowship, a Camp Commissioner for Methodist Camp Sturtevant, and a Brownie and Girl Scout Leader. Formerly active in several Parent Teacher Associations, PTAs, for the San Gabriel Unified School District, SGUSD, she has received SGUSD's Golden Apple Award and 3 PTA awards over the years. Pat was a Leader and Steering Committee Member of 4 separate successful School Bond Measures for SGUSD in 1993, 1994, 1998 and 2002.

A member since 1996, Ms. Freeman is currently President of the San Gabriel Educational Foundation, and serves on the School Site Council for Del Mar High School. She is a San Gabriel Valley Medical Center volunteer, a member of the center's Foundation Board and Coordinator of the center's Helping Hands volunteer group. In addition, Pat serves on the San Gabriel Community Coordinating Council, leads their Holiday Basket Committee, and has held various officer positions over the years. She is a member of the San Gabriel Rotary Club, and the Women's Division of the San Gabriel Chamber of Commerce, where she received the Women's Division of the San Gabriel Chamber of Commerce's Woman of the Year Award in 1989.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring a remarkable woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Pat Maguire Freeman.

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF
RICHARD L. DECHANT, SR.

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of Richard L. Dechant, Sr., devoted family man, community activist, business leader, World War II veteran, and friend and mentor to many.

Mr. Dechant grew up in Avon, Ohio. His father was a steelworker and his mother ran the family farm business. He learned early on the

significance of family, hard work and community. By the time he was eight years old, Mr. Dechant's mother gave him a job selling home-grown produce door-to-door. He attended St. Ignatius High School and later earned a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Detroit. He married Marie in 1943 and together they raised five sons. They remained committed to each other until her death in 2004.

For his entire adult life, Mr. Dechant worked as a tireless promoter on behalf of Cleveland and Northeast Ohio. While working with the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company in the 1940's, Dechant began a life-long vocation of promoting the Cleveland community. As executive director of the Greater Cleveland Growth Board, now known as the Greater Cleveland Growth Association, for nearly twenty-five years, Dechant's focused service and advocacy on behalf of his beloved community drew millions of dollars of new industry into our region. He also participated in numerous trade missions throughout Europe and Asia. Although deeply committed to his work, his family was always foremost and central in his life.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of Richard L. Dechant. I offer my heartfelt condolences to his sons, Thomas (Paul), James (Lyn), Richard Jr. (Sharon), David (Terri) and the memory of Doug (Bonnie); his grandchildren, Richard III, Brett, Jimmy, Dawn, Nicole, Matt and Carli; his brothers, Robert and Donald; and his extended family and many friends. Although Mr. Dechant will be greatly missed, the joyous legacy of his life, framed by kindness, energy and an unwavering focus on family and on making a difference, will forever resound within the hearts and memories of his family and friends, and within the spirit of our entire community.

A TRIBUTE TO NANCY DONAHUE

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Nancy Donahue, of Temple City, California. Each year in March, in recognition of Women's History Month, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our Nation's women.

Nancy is a native Californian, born in Alhambra. She moved to Temple City with her parents when she was just 6 months old. Nancy graduated from Temple City High School where she was a majorette, song girl, Girls League President, and winner of the Daughters of the American Revolution Award for Outstanding Senior. After attending Brigham Young University, she returned to Temple City where she and her husband, Terry, have lived for over 40 years. They have one daughter, Tracy, and two grandchildren, Kody and Haylee.

Ms. Donahue had a successful 22-year career in banking, working at First Western Bank & Lloyds Bank, California. After health concerns determined that she take a different path, she became a "full-time volunteer" at Methodist Hospital of Southern California in 1986.

Nancy has been incredibly active with her volunteer work at Methodist Hospital, where

she has given over 10,000 hours in service over a 20-year period. She has served on the Auxiliary Board for over 10 years, four times as the Board President, and as an ex-officio member of the Foundation Board. She acts as coordinator of the Methodist Hospital archives, correlating artifacts collected for over 100 years and works in the hospital gift shop twice a week. Nancy has been involved in the annual Holiday Homes Tour at Methodist Hospital, chairing many committees and continuing to help with fundraising efforts.

In addition to her commitments at the hospital, Ms. Donahue is an active member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Huntington Ward, Pasadena Stake and is currently serving as Ward Librarian. Other volunteer activities include the March of Dimes, American Heart Association, Diabetes Association and the American Red Cross. Nancy is past President of Arcadia-Monrovia and Temple City Soroptimist International and a charter member of Arcadia P.E.O. Chapter XL.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring an outstanding woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Nancy Donahue.

SENSE OF THE HOUSE THAT
AMERICANS SHOULD PARTICI-
PATE IN MOMENT OF SILENCE
REGARDING ARMED FORCES

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2006

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution to express the sense of the House that all Americans should participate in a moment of silence to reflect upon the service and sacrifice of members of the United States Armed Forces both at home and abroad.

Words fly in this Chamber, in the city, on a rainbow of subjects and issues, with any number of ideas and opinions. Sometimes the rhetoric can seem overpowering, even confusing, particularly when action and change is so desperately needed.

The moment of silence, however, is an arresting and poignant pause. It is a beautiful way to express respect, and pride, and honor, without the discoloration of politics.

Around the world, moments of silence are often called to mourn a national tragedy, or honor a historical benchmark. We are familiar with the visual gesture of lowering the American flag to half mast. I support the complementary gesture of pausing for a moment to reflect, to think, and to appreciate everything that our armed forces do for us around the world.

Thank you to them, our soldiers who are our children, our fathers and mothers, our brothers and sisters, our friends and protectors. I know all of my colleagues in Congress will join me in supporting this resolution.

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF
GOOD SAMARITAN NORBERT
MAGALSKI

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Norbert Magalski of Parma, Ohio, a noble Good Samaritan and Gulf War veteran who has lent a hand to many.

Mr. Magalski, as a trained emergency medical technician and tow truck operator has helped countless people on the roadside. Even in an age when people are too overwhelmed with their own priorities to lend a helping hand to strangers, he has made it a common practice in his life to help those who are in need of assistance on the road.

Mr. Magalski was injured last Thursday by a suspected drunk driver while helping a young woman who had veered off I-76 and into a guardrail. He suffered broken bones in his left leg, left shoulder and face. It will be several months before he fully recovers.

This man is truly one to be honored and emulated as he remains committed to lending a helping hand when needed. He is a modest and kind-hearted citizen who in spite of injury will continue to help strangers in need. His kindness and generosity is something that is not often seen in today's society. My thoughts and prayers are with him and his family for his quick recovery.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of Norbert Magalski, whose dedication and courage in lending a hand to his fellow citizens has helped save the lives of many.

A TRIBUTE TO HELEN HANCOCK

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Helen Hancock, of Alhambra, California. Each year in March, in recognition of Women's History Month, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women.

Helen Hancock was born in Indiana in 1922. She attended Nursing School at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio as well as Redlands University in California. After completing her schooling, she served 2 years in the Army Nurse Corps during World War II. Ms. Hancock moved to California in 1953 and began working at Huntington Memorial Hospital in Pasadena. In 1959, she moved to Alhambra, California.

Less than a year after her retirement in 1988 from a 35-year career in nursing administration at Huntington Hospital, and 8 years as a Member of the State Board of Registered Nursing, Helen Hancock plunged into community volunteer work. Since then she has used her extensive nursing and administrative knowledge and skills to make a significant difference in the health and well being of countless seniors and their families.

As a senior herself, Ms. Hancock desired to help other senior citizens enjoy their retire-

ment years and began volunteering at Huntington Senior Care Network (HSCN); a Huntington Hospital community-based program that helps seniors maintain their independence. Her interview skills have added to the success of a National Council on Aging project of HSCN to enhance the health of frail seniors through increased physical activity. Helen has been a tireless advocate for seniors as a long-term care ombudsman for the Department of Aging for nearly 15 years. For nearly 25 years, she has been a resource for caregivers of Alzheimer's patients at a weekly support group, and she continues to promote Alzheimer's disease education, as well as senior services and elder abuse education, through membership in several community coalitions.

Helen is a faith community nurse coordinator for All Souls Catholic Church, as part of a program sponsored by Methodist Hospital of Southern California and All Souls Catholic Church, to improve the health of the community. She and her team conduct events that include blood pressure screenings, blood donor drives and health education presentations to reach members of their parish.

Last year, Helen was among 26 older adults honored as Outstanding California Senior Volunteer leaders by the University of California Berkeley School of Public Health.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring a remarkable woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Helen Hancock.

HONORING RONALD HUDSON

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of a remarkable citizen from my congressional district. Ronald Hudson, a longtime resident of Leitchfield, Kentucky, passed away February 20th at age 65. Mr. Hudson was a colorful and widely respected figure in Grayson County, having served on the Leitchfield Fire Department for 46 years, 31 of those as Chief.

In a recent feature story in the Grayson County News-Gazette, Chief Hudson described himself as "not a poster boy firefighter" when he first joined the department in 1959. With typical self deprecating humor, he described himself as "too short and too skinny, with trouble taking anything serious for any length of time." He credited the late Murrell Conklin, then Chief Emeritus of the Leitchfield Department for coaching him through his first few years, helping to mold him into a serious firefighter and public servant.

Ronald Hudson was named Chief after only 12 years of service on the department. As Chief, he was responsible for training and managing a diverse crew of firefighters, purchasing and maintaining fire apparatus, and perpetually pursuing sources of funding to keep the department running. Chief Hudson was personally responsible for countless acts of heroism throughout his four decades as a firefighter. Yet he always humbled himself with the tough reality of all emergency personnel: You can go from hero to zero and back again in a matter of seconds.

Chief Hudson's contributions to his community, staring down danger time and time again

to save lives and protect the safety and comfort of his neighbors, has made Leitchfield a fine place to live for many years. Ronald Hudson's life, career, and especially his final years fighting against his own declining health, was the true epitome of courage and generosity of spirit.

In addition to his position on the Fire Department, Chief Hudson also served as Grayson County Coroner and was a member of the American Legion Post 81, the Leitchfield Masonic Lodge, and the Fraternal Order of Police. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army and owned and operated a small business from 1983 to 2002.

Ronald Hudson's distinguished life of service to his community and his country, along with his unwavering dedication to his family and fellow firefighters, is a portrait of outstanding citizenship worthy of our collective respect and appreciation. It is my great privilege to honor his memory today before the entire United States House of Representatives.

THE FEDERAL JUDGESHIP AND
ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY
ACT OF 2005

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, article III of the Constitution states that "the judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish." At times in our Nation's history, Congress has found it necessary to realign the United States Courts of Appeals into more efficient and manageable circuits. Once again, it's time for Congress to exercise its article III powers by realigning the Ninth Circuit and creating a new Twelfth Circuit.

I am pleased to be an original co-sponsor of Judiciary Chairman SENSENBRENNER's H.R. 4093, the Federal Judgeship and Administrative Efficiency Act of 2005. In addition to creating additional federal judgeships, this legislation would divide the Ninth into two circuits. These would consist of a new Ninth made up of California, Hawaii, Guam and the Northern Marianas, and a new Twelfth with Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, Nevada, and Arizona.

Mr. Speaker, this division makes sense. Putting aside any political, historical or emotional arguments, the numbers speak for themselves. A split of the Ninth Circuit is necessary because it has become disproportionately large and unwieldy in relation to the other eleven regional circuits.

The Honorable John M. Roll, U.S. District Judge for Arizona, has recently provided me with updated statistics regarding the Ninth Circuit. This is where the Ninth Circuit stands today:

The population of the Ninth Circuit is 58 million people. This is one-fifth of the population of the United States. It is also 27 million more people than reside in the next largest circuit.

The Ninth Circuit consists of 9 states (including the most populous state), a territory, and a commonwealth. The other circuits average less than four states. No other circuit decides the law for 9 states.

As of December 31, 2005, the Ninth Circuit had nearly 17,000 pending cases, which represents 28 percent of all pending federal appeals.

According to recent statistics from the Administrative Office of U.S. Courts, the Ninth Circuit is now the slowest circuit in the country, by more than 2 months, for each of its nearly 17,000 cases, from filing of notice of appeal to disposition.

The Ninth Circuit has 28 authorized active circuit judgeships. The other 11 geographical circuits average less than 13.

It is clear from these facts that the extraordinary growth of the nine western states comprising the Ninth has resulted in an overpopulated circuit that has become a giant among the twelve circuits.

Ninth Circuit Judges O'Scannlain and Tallman hit it on the head when they wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* that "... size adversely affects not only the speed with which justice is administered, but also the quality of judicial decision making. Consistent interpretation of the law by an appellate court requires a reasonably small body of judges who have the opportunity to sit and to confer together frequently, and who can read, critique and, when necessary, correct each others' decisions. That kind of collegiality is no longer possible in a circuit of this size." This statement describes precisely why we need to split the Ninth Circuit.

With a fifth of the U.S. population living in the Ninth Circuit today, I would expect that this could easily become a fourth of the population. Today's 28 active Ninth Circuit judges will eventually become 35, then 40, 50 and so on.

The Ninth Circuit has a history to be proud of, but how long will it be before those who seek to hold onto the past glory of the Ninth come to realize that it should not be recognized for its unique solutions for coping with staggering caseloads and an inability to readily sit all judges? Under this legislation, the new Ninth and Twelfth Circuits will be recognized as individual circuits that have been given a fresh start, fresh life, and fresh collegiality with efficiencies that allow judges in the new circuits to focus on case law and not case management.

Opponents of a split have ascribed political motivations to my efforts—that I, being the author and proponent of realignment legislation, don't like the decisions of the Ninth Circuit. Well, the Ninth does make bad decisions that I don't agree with. For that matter judges appointed by Nixon, Reagan and both presidents Bush make bad decisions that I don't always agree with. Every circuit in the United States makes bad decisions that I don't always agree with. The practical effect of a court ruling is that one party will be pleased and the other disappointed.

Should a circuit be realigned, or manipulated in a manner such as "court packing" solely for political reasons? Absolutely not. However, the fact that my colleagues and I may disagree with certain rulings of the Ninth Circuit should not automatically disqualify us from seeking to realign the circuit. Ascribing political motivations to my colleagues and me is nothing more than a disingenuous smokescreen. If judges, scholars, politicians and others have spoken to me they know that my motivations are not political. My motivation is a desire for my constituents to have an efficient,

expedient and manageable court that is able to apply a consistent interpretation of the law. In the meantime, my faith in the Supreme Court and its demonstrated readiness to overturn rulings of the Ninth Circuit, alleviates any fears that I have that an egregious ruling of the Ninth will not be corrected.

Of course split opponents must throw up the smokescreen that my fellow colleagues and I are politically motivated. What else can they do? It's impossible to argue against the facts. Having one-fifth of our nation's citizens in one circuit while the remaining four-fifths are in eleven circuits does not make sense. I have yet to hear split opponents or scholars state why it is good for a single circuit to have one-fifth of the nation's citizens in one circuit when the remaining four-fifths are in eleven other circuits. I do not know why having 28 percent of all pending appeals in one circuit is a sign of an effectively working court. I have not heard why it is good for a circuit to have 28 active judgeships, which is eleven more judges than the next largest circuit and more than double the circuit average of 13. I don't know why it is good for Idahoans to have their appeals heard en banc by a partial number of our court of appeals' judges when citizens in the other eleven circuits will get a hearing before all the judges of their circuit. Is this fair to citizens of the Ninth? I don't believe it is.

I look forward to reading the first article, or speech from a federal judge, politician or scholar that sets aside any reference to politics or the political motivations of others and explains why it is a good thing to have a single circuit with one-fifth of the nation's population, 28 active judgeships and a procedure for a partial number of judges to hear cases. I would also take the liberty of asking a theoretical question to that judge, politician or scholar and it goes like this—if you were to start from scratch and create 12 new circuits for our nation, would you place one-fifth of the population in just one of the twelve circuits? Please send a copy of that to my office here in Washington.

Something else I have heard is that our efforts to split the Ninth Circuit are "a threat to judicial independence". I would like to hear from any federal judge, appointed for life, whether their decisions are being influenced based on a threat that their circuit might be realigned? I find it hard to believe that judges, who at times must put their lives on the line for our country in the face of threats and intimidation by criminal defendants, are scared of politicians in Washington, D.C. Once again, please feel free to contact my office here in Washington if that is the case, I promise confidentiality.

Another thing I hear thrown about is an idea I like to call "judicial veto authority". What I'm hearing is that since a majority of the Ninth Circuit judges might not favor a split then it shouldn't go forward. I would ask the proponents of this idea, the proposition that sitting circuit judges need approve of a split before it goes forward, where this is found in Article III?

I do not believe that the composition of a circuit should be determined solely out of concern for its judges, lawyers, bar associations or even politicians. It should be determined by how best the people are served within the states it encompasses. Realigning the Ninth Circuit is about better serving the people who live and work in the nine states and two territories within its boundaries. It's about pro-

viding them with better efficiencies, a more consistent interpretation of the law based on rulings made by judges who spend more time conferring directly with one another and reading each other's decisions.

In addition, although the costs of dividing a circuit are important in these days of budgetary constraint, they should not be the reason for disregarding the benefits that would befall the citizens of nine states and two territories. Opponents of a Ninth Circuit split have made note that a new Twelfth Circuit would be costly, with some estimating as high as \$21 million in additional court costs annually.

As a member of the Budget Committee it's a wonder that we are not today seeking the savings that would come from creating five larger circuits consisting of say: the Fourth and Sixth plus Georgia; the Fifth and Tenth plus Alabama and Florida; the First, Second and Third; the Eighth and Seventh; and the Ninth alone. Combining those circuits could save us upwards of \$150 million a year in operating costs alone.

The reason we are not debating whether to create larger circuit courts of equal size to the Ninth is because it does not make sense to have large circuits. We already have one large court—the United States Supreme Court. I am told that there is a saying that goes "there is the Supreme Court, the Ninth Circuit, and the rest of the federal circuits." What we need now are 13 circuits of roughly equal proportion—not Snow Ninth and the 11 dwarfs.

Two other things I would mention. I have yet to hear calls for returning the Fifth and Eleventh Circuits into their original circuit. From what I know, the division that was undertaken in 1981 has settled out well. Finally, for those who are committed to the "old" Ninth—they can rest easier knowing that even after shedding seven states, the "new" Ninth will remain the largest circuit in the United States.

As we move forward with our legislation to realign the Ninth Circuit, I look forward to split opponents coming out from behind their political smokescreens and discussing the facts at hand which are indisputable—the Ninth Circuit is too large and unwieldy. No amount of technology and innovation is going to provide my constituents with the efficiency and expediency that they deserve as well. The current judges of the Ninth deserve a collegial atmosphere where they can spend time on case law and not case management.

I appreciate the leadership Chairman SEN-SENRENNER has provided in our efforts and look forward to working with him in the coming year as H.R. 4093 and the Ninth Circuit realignment become a reality.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. SANDRA E.
THOMAS

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Sandra E. Thomas, of Altadena, California. Each year in March, in recognition of Women's History Month, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our Nation's women.

Dr. Sandra E. Thomas is a powerful and fearless leader whose personal service motto

is "Brighter Hope, With a New Vision." Highly visible in the community as a civil rights advocate, she has a way of saying what must be said without offending those around her—she always has a smile and a kind word for all who pass her way.

Born in Kansas City, Kansas, Dr. Thomas received her Bachelor of Arts and a Masters Degree from the University of Kansas and her Ph.D from Columbia University. After retiring as an engineer at Pacific Bell-SBC, she began a pilot program geared to attracting at-risk high school students to the field of engineering.

For 28 years, Sandra served as a youth counselor at the Lincoln Avenue Baptist Church, where her husband, Reverend A.D. Thomas, is Pastor Emeritus. She is currently an instructor and consultant for young adults. A foster mom for over 2 decades, Sandra was named "Outstanding Mother of the Year" at Altadena Elementary School in 1977 and Pasadena High School's "Mother of the Year" in 1979.

Dr. Thomas, a Life Member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), has been affiliated with the organization for 55 years, and serves simultaneously at all levels of the NAACP organization. She is currently an NAACP National Trainer, a Regional Officer, a California State Director and the President of the Altadena Branch of the NAACP, where she has been successful in implementing many positive changes in the Altadena-Pasadena community.

In addition to her NAACP activities, Sandra is an Altadena Town Council member, the founder and CEO of the "Quality of Life Community Center," Chairperson of the Pasadena/Altadena African-American Leaders Community Coalition, a member of the Pasadena Junior League, the Pasadena Tournament of Roses, Leadership Pasadena, the Pasadena Unified School District Non-Violence Team, and the Altadena Community Center Board of Directors.

Dr. Thomas and her husband, long-time Altadena residents, have 3 children, Michael, Vincent, Rosalyn and 6 grandchildren.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring an extraordinary woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Dr. Sandra E. Thomas.

PERMITTING USE OF ROTUNDA
FOR HOLOCAUST DAYS OF RE-
MEMBRANCE CEREMONY

SPEECH OF

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2006

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the efforts to allow the United States Capitol rotunda to be used for the annual ceremony commemoration of the days of remembrance of victims of the Holocaust.

This period of genocide against the Jewish race remains one of the darkest stains on the history of humanity. It is vitally important that we take time each year to remember the victims of this horrific event. The people of the United States must never forget the tragic ac-

tions spurred by hatred, bigotry and extremism.

Having this ceremony at our Capitol rotunda is both important and symbolic. We are the beacon of democracy and freedom for the world and have been defenders of the oppressed throughout history. Our brave young men heroically crossed the Atlantic to fend off and defeat the Nazis who were bent on racial imperialism. It is fitting at this center of our Federal Government that we express our deepest gratitude to the veterans of World War II and pay our respects to all the innocent victims of the Holocaust we were not able to save.

My heart and prayers go out to all the victims of the Holocaust—those who did not survive, those who did and the families of all. Each went through an unimaginable experience, one that no one should ever have to undergo.

As both a Member of Congress and as a private citizen possessing a strong faith, I vow to always remember and respect those who suffered such a tragic fate and I support this body's efforts to do the same.

May we as a people never forget those who have suffered nor ever let such an occurrence happen again.

HONORING ITALIAN PRIME
MINISTER SILVIO BERLUSCONI

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi on his recent speech before the joint session of the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate. I am proud to be joined in this effort by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

When terrorists hijacked airplanes, smashing them into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, it was the worst disaster ever perpetrated on American soil. A large part of the world reached out in sympathy to our wounded nation. Silvio Berlusconi, the Italian Premier, called for a giant rally for the Italian people to express their grief and shed their tears for the families of the victims, and to show their compassion for a nation that had been gravely wounded. It was a heartfelt expression of the pain they felt for America by hundreds of thousands of Italians who crowded into Rome's Piazza del Popolo, the place of the people.

Berlusconi's call to action was so successfully answered by the Italian people, that certain political parties of the left called for a counter rally—an anti-American rally. These parties were two Communist parties, and a third party which had been the original Communist party but had changed its name to the Democratic Party of the Left. They paraded through the streets of Rome, a small phalanx holding red flags with the iconic Communist hammer and sickle and placards denouncing America for having entered Afghanistan in pursuit of Osama bin Laden and to destroy the Al Qaeda terrorists. They shouted anti-American slogans, said blood dripped from our hands and that we were assassins. They threw the American flag on the ground, trampled it,

poured gas on it, and set it afire. Nowhere in their speeches or placards was there mention of the American tragedy, nowhere mention of grief for the dead or compassion for the families. Italy is a democratic country where everyone is guaranteed the freedom of speech. They expressed their opinions, feelings, and anti-American bias.

When Silvio Berlusconi appeared, several weeks ago, before the joint session of the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate, which is a signal honor paid to a world leader, he was not invited by President Bush, as many Italian newspapers stated. He was invited by the House of Representatives and the Senate, led by DENNIS HASTERT, Speaker of the House, and Vice President CHENEY, as Presiding Officer of the Senate. The Constitution imposes a separation of powers between the legislature and the executive branch and we, the legislative branch of the U.S. Government, are proud of the independence this grants us. We invited him.

When the Italian Prime Minister stood before us and spoke, it was not to Democrats and Republicans but to all of the representatives of all of the districts of all of the states and for all of the American people. This legislative body represents the broad expanse of America and all of her people. And when we rose in a standing salute and gave thunderous applause to Prime Minister Berlusconi, it was the American people who were speaking. The American people who were exercising their right to the freedom of speech, a constitutional right in our country too. The American people gave their opinion. In standing in ovation to Berlusconi's impassioned words of friendship, we rejected the elements in Italy who had turned their back to our suffering, deploring their conduct and their opinions. We instead showed the warm feeling of affection in our hearts for the people of Italy.

TRIBUTE TO DR. BETH MARCUS

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Beth Marcus, of Burbank, California. Each year in March, in recognition of Women's History Month, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women.

Dr. Marcus is a family physician in La Canada Flintridge, where she has practiced for over 10 years on the medical staffs of both Verdugo Hills Hospital and Glendale Adventist Medical Center. After completing her Family Medicine residency, she went on to complete a Fellowship in Adolescent Medicine, where she worked with adolescents struggling with poverty, family estrangement, drug abuse, homelessness and other issues.

Her patients cross the lifespan from infants to geriatric patients. Knowing that excellent medical care means going far beyond a diagnosis and a prescription, she has a remarkable capacity to bring compassion and empathy into the care she provides. She is an active advocate for patients, educating them and assisting them in obtaining social services and other sources of support to help them navigate the challenges of illness.

Beth is a member of the California Academy of Family Medicine, was the Secretary/Treasurer of the Los Angeles Chapter from 1995–2000 and a delegate to the house of delegates during those years. She is a member of the American Medical Women's Association and the Society of Adolescent Medicine. For several years she was a volunteer at the University of Southern California teaching a course titled Introduction to Clinical Medicine.

As Burbank Temple Emanu El's social action chair, Dr. Marcus has coordinated various campaigns for helping others in the Burbank, Glendale, North Hollywood area. She has arranged blood drives, collected shoes and clothing for impoverished children, gathered donations for tsunami victims and hurricane victims, filled backpacks with school supplies, assembled items for homeless women, and made sandwiches for the hungry. In addition, she volunteers in fundraising efforts for the Parent Teacher Association at Emerson Elementary School in Burbank, and is planning to implement a nutrition program at the school called Food is Elementary.

In addition to her professional and civic involvement, Beth is busy as a wife and mother, raising 2 twin boys, Adin and Jonah. She and her husband of 11 years, Dr. Jeff Ring, reside in Burbank.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring an outstanding woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Dr. Beth Marcus.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR BETTY FLORES

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Betty Flores, an accomplished mayor from my hometown of Laredo, Texas.

Mr. Speaker, Mayor Flores was elected mayor of Laredo in 1998. Since then, she has worked tirelessly to bring Laredo into the 21st century with success and pride. Whether it be through economic development or the rich culture Laredo is known for, Mayor Flores has been there finding ways to advance the city's agenda.

Last year, Laredo received its highest financial rating in its 227-year history. This is the consequence of Laredo being one of the Nation's largest land ports, with 74 of the Fortune 100 companies and 52 countries conducting international trade via the Port of Laredo.

Mayor Flores has earned many awards including Laredo Times Laredoan of the Year and Texas Women of the Century from the Woman's Chamber of Commerce of Texas. This is Mayor Flores's last year in office, and she will be missed.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have the opportunity to honor a citizen like Mayor Betty Flores.

HONORING THE LIFE OF NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLYWOMAN SANDRA LEE WIRTH

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to mark a very sad occasion: the passing of my former colleague in the New York State Assembly, Assemblywoman Sandra Lee Wirth.

Last Saturday, Sandra Lee lost her courageous battle with lung cancer. She undertook this fight—like all others she took on, and there were many—with the grace, poise and dignity that we all came to expect from her.

Born Sandra Lee Liberatore in West Seneca, Sandra Lee was a realtor by profession, and was President of the Greater Buffalo Association of Realtors in the early 1990s. At that time, during a county fiscal crisis, the Erie County Legislature instituted a county Real Estate Transfer Tax to fund the operation of mass transit services in Erie County. As one might imagine, Sandra Lee was appalled and swore to do something about it. She did.

Sandra Lee took on and defeated an entrenched incumbent in the Erie County Legislature. During Sandra Lee's 3 years in the County Legislature, she was a fighter for senior citizens and property taxpayers. She was also a great opponent of government waste: she refused various "perks" of the job and funded the operation of her legislative district office personally.

In 1994, the incumbent in the then-148th district seat of the New York State Assembly was retiring, and Sandra Lee jumped into the race with the same vigor that she took to the race for the County Legislature. In another heated and expensive campaign, Sandra Lee again defeated the same person she defeated for the County Legislature in this race for the Assembly.

It was in the Assembly that I got to know—and deeply respect—Sandra Lee Wirth. Although we came from different political parties and were of different generations, few people were as kind to me upon my election to the Assembly in 1998 as Sandra Lee was. We represented adjacent districts, and in addition to sharing a border, our respective communities shared many important characteristics and on local issues affecting our communities, Sandra Lee and I worked together very well.

In 2002, the legislative redistricting process was underway—and lo and behold—Sandra Lee Wirth and I were redistricted into the same Assembly district when her hometown of West Seneca was added to my Assembly district. In initial news reports, Sandra Lee was quoted as saying, "I'm running where I live, Period."

Mr. Speaker, I'm glad Sandra Lee changed her mind. Rather than contest an election against me, Sandra Lee instead chose to run in a newly created district east and south of West Seneca. She continued to serve in the Assembly until her death last week.

In 2004, Sandra Lee was forced to deal with another challenge—the illness and subsequent death of her husband Bill. When I saw Sandra Lee at Bill's wake, she spoke lovingly of "her Billy," and as she struggled through Bill's illness and her own, Sandra Lee's love of her family and her community never waned.

Every fight that Sandra Lee Wirth fought was waged with dignity and aplomb. Her commitment to public service was as strong as any I have ever witnessed. I am proud to have called her a colleague, but Mr. Speaker, I am prouder still to have called her my friend. May God ensure that she rests in peace.

A TRIBUTE TO BETTY WANG

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Betty Wang, of South Pasadena, California. Each year in March, in recognition of Women's History Month, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our Nation's women.

Betty Wang was born in China in 1947 and moved to Taiwan with her family in 1948. She came to the United States in 1969 in order to pursue higher education at the University of Illinois. Upon graduation she and her husband, Eddie Wang, worked in Chicago for a few years, and then moved to South Pasadena in 1978.

After working briefly for a major insurance brokerage firm handling risk management for corporate clients, Betty retired in 1978 to take care of her son, Timothy. This also marked the beginning of her career as a "professional volunteer."

Betty has been involved in various community activities over the years. She began by assisting teachers in the South Pasadena Unified School District classrooms; then became involved in the Marengo Elementary School Parent Teacher Association where she volunteered in sports activities such as soccer, baseball, basketball, swimming and water polo. She was also involved with the parent organizations at Polytechnic School and was a Den Mother for the Boy Scouts of America. In addition, Ms. Wang is a long-term member of Mandarin Baptist Church in Alhambra.

Ms. Wang has been active in the South Pasadena Chinese American Club for many years, as a board member since 1989 and President in 1992. Much of the South Pasadena Chinese American Club's efforts go toward helping the South Pasadena Unified School District. She served on the Board of the Friends of South Pasadena Public Library for the past 6 years and was the President during her last year. She has continued her volunteer service to the library by serving on the Community Facilities Task Force. Betty was involved in South Pasadena's City Streetscape Committee during the Gold Line Station construction. Her latest volunteer effort is to serve on the President's Council for the Chinese Garden at the Huntington Library, Art Collections & Botanical Gardens, where she is helping to raise funds for the construction of one of the most beautiful and unique botanical projects at the Huntington Library.

WILLIE GRACE CAMPBELL—IN
MEMORIAM

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, America recently lost one of her most influential daughters, Willie Grace Campbell. Born and raised as women's suffrage took root, Willie's unwavering commitment and passion for women's rights and civil liberties gave opportunity and inspiration to those like me who knew and loved her.

In an era where career-driven women were uncommon, Willie successfully balanced the challenge of being a mother while pursuing her commitment to education and community service. After moving to Indianapolis with her husband and three children in 1945, Willie established the city's first League of Women's Voters branch and membership quickly grew. She went on to serve as the League's State President and, in 1959, ascended to the national board as a member of the Indiana Advisory Committee of the U.S. Conference on Civil Rights.

A cornerstone of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, Willie launched voter education projects in American inner cities and trained thousands of urban and suburban female voters. She participated in the first White House Conference on Civil Rights in 1965, and emerged from the conference with landmark recommendations and strategies for using litigation, in addition to legislation, to confront restrictive voting rights.

Willie expanded her advocacy in the 1970s, involving herself with the National Women's Political Caucus and the National Women's Education Fund while acting as President and Board Chairwoman of the Overseas Education Fund International. From Latin America and Africa to Washington, DC, Willie's campaign for women's equality and social justice successfully challenged the global status quo. Not surprisingly, she went on to serve on the board of Women, Law and Development International, an organization devoted to the defense and promotion of women's rights.

Even in her last days, Willie proudly served as Vice Chairwoman of the Board of Directors of the African Development Foundation, a position assigned to her by President Clinton.

Willie was a mentor, not only to me, but to many women in politics and the advocacy community. At age 90, she remained the youngest one in the group, with a ready smile, enormous energy, zest and wisdom. All who encountered her marveled at her passion and purpose.

Willie, you have raised the bar for each of us. I am honored to pay you tribute.

HONORING COACH THOMAS
BILLUPS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Coach Thomas Billups, head coach of the State Champion,

Lanier High School Boys Basketball Team. I submit the following article by Bill Spencer of the Clarion Ledger Newspaper of Jackson, Mississippi.

Fiery Coach Thomas Billups has created a dynasty. Thomas Billups doesn't want to come off as boastful, even though his success may be unmatched in the history of Mississippi high school boys basketball.

He's a staunch believer in his methods, however, and who can argue with the veteran Lanier coach's incredible run?

"I'm not saying I'm the greatest coach ever," said Billups, whose Bulldogs (34-3) won their final 19 games and finished No. 1 in The Clarion-Ledger Super 10 rankings for the second consecutive year. "There are a lot of good coaches out there. I'm not saying everything I do is right. But what I'm doing . . . there's been some good in it. Because look at what we've done."

In 15 seasons, Billups has coached in 12 state finals, including eight in a row. Last Thursday, he guided the Bulldogs to a second straight Class 4A state championship, tying him with Gulfport's legendary Bert Jenkins for the most Mississippi High School Activities Association boys state titles with seven.

Lanier won again despite the graduation of McDonald's All-American Monta Ellis, who jumped to the NBA.

Billups, 53, has built a hoops machine on Maple Street in Jackson. Not even Jenkins—who won 866 games in 28 seasons—coached in eight consecutive state finals.

With a 463-73 record shouting orders from Lanier's bench, the demonstrative Billups has averaged more than 30 victories per year and won an astounding 86 percent of the time.

Billups' latest gold ball may be his most satisfying. Although senior point guard Al Graham, junior guard R.L. Horton and senior forward Kalauso Williams entered this season with some experience, most of the Bulldogs were new faces.

"We were young, but these kids wanted to be just like these Lanier teams that came through here," Billups said. "They do everything I ask them to do to win a ballgame."

Lavel Johnson, the Mississippi correspondent for the recruiting magazine Hoop Scoop, believes Billups will cherish this state crown the most.

"This was his top coaching job," said Johnson, who has watched Jackson basketball for 20 years. "This title is very satisfying for him because for so many years, people have said he wins because of his talent and not because he's a good coach. If anything dispels that belief, this does."

Billups' in-your-face style is relentless. During games, he alternates between chewing on referees and yelling at his players. Rarely does he sit. He paces the sidelines, roaring like an angry, nattily attired bear. Sometimes, he'll stop, arms folded, and scowl, staring at a striped shirt—or player—who has done him wrong.

He plays no favorites, either, and will berate a player for a mistake in a flash, whether the Bulldogs are leading by two points or 20.

"Whatever goes for one player goes for all of them," Billups said. "You've got to let kids know that there's only one way, the coach's way. In my case, it's Billups' way. My style of coaching is not going to change. Kids need to know that I'm going to be in their face every practice, every game, screaming and hollering."

Horton has come to appreciate Billups' tactics.

"He puts you through a lot," said Horton, who averaged about 25 points per game, scoring a career-high 50 twice. "He makes you feel like you almost want to quit. Players

ahead of me like Monta used to tell me to stick with it because it's going to make me better. He sees a player's potential before they ever see it. He brought a lot of stuff out of me that I didn't ever think I could do. He makes players work their hardest."

For all of his bluntness, there's also a gentler side to Billups, whether he's attending church with his team or hosting a Super Bowl party.

Many have noticed, including Lee Vance, a Jackson Police Department veteran of nearly 19 years and Lanier alumnus, Class of 1976.

"The greatest tribute I've ever seen or read is what his players and former players said about him publicly, the father-figure and nurturing comments that have been made," said Vance, JPD's Precinct 2 commander.

Former Lanier coach N.Z. Bryant, who won one of the Bulldogs' 15 state titles in 1969, said Billups enjoys a special bond with his players.

"Coach Billups has control of his players and they respect him," said Bryant, now deputy director of the MHSAA. "Young players nowadays have a tendency to have their own mind. Those kids are going to run exactly what he says."

Coach Thomas Billups has built a winning tradition and legacy in Jackson's inner-city. The high-level, high-profile programs that Billups has put together have ignited the competitive fancies of the other inner city teams making for some of the most competitively rivaled basketball in the State. I take pride in recognizing Coach Thomas Billups and the dynasty that he has built with some of our most talented inner-city young men.

TRIBUTE TO ANGELITA "ANGIE"
MONT O'BRIEN

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Angelita "Angie" Mont O'Brien, of Pasadena, CA. Each year in March, in recognition of Women's History Month, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our Nation's women.

Born in Los Angeles, where her parents had emigrated from Spain, Angie attended Los Angeles and Pasadena public schools. She received a bachelor of arts from the University of California Los Angeles in 1953, a master's degree from California State University Los Angeles in 1963, and a California Elementary Teaching Credential.

Angie taught in the Pasadena Unified School District, PUSD, for over 40 years. During her long career, she was an elementary school teacher, a guidance counselor, a Curriculum Resource teacher and an Opportunity Room counselor. A founding member of PUSD's Adopt-A-School District Advisory Committee, she initiated and implemented the Tutoring and Homework Assistance Program for PUSD and served on many PUSD committees.

When Ms. O'Brien volunteers for an organization, she jumps in wholeheartedly, whether it's chairing a fundraising dinner, designing invitations, developing long-term plans, or helping to oversee a school bond measure. Her list of community involvement is impressive. Past activities include serving as president of the Pasadena Parent Teacher Association,

PTA, Council Board of Directors, vice president of Glenn's Hope, a Pasadena Foothill Valley YWCA board member and Altadena Christian Children's Center board member. She was a Pasadena city commissioner on the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Services Commission. Some of the current organizations she serves include as a board member of Child Care Information Services, Pasadena City College Measure "P" Bond Oversight Committee, Women at Work, Pasadena Beautiful, Friends of the Commission on the Status of Women, Pasadena Planned Parenthood, and Delta Kappa Gamma. Angie is the vice president of the San Rafael Library Associates and the president of the Rose Bowl Bruins Board of Directors.

Angie has received many awards over the years for her service to the community, including four from the Pasadena PTA, the 1985 Pasadena Council of Women's Clubs Volunteer of the Year Award and the Pasadena YWCA Second Century Award in 1985.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring an extraordinary woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Angelita "Angie" Mont O'Brien.

HONORING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNAL HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Signal Hill Fire Department located near Belleville, IL.

In 1946, the city of East St. Louis advised Signal Hill residents their fire department would no longer respond outside of the city limits. At the same time, the city of Belleville said their fire department would only respond to the Country Club Place subdivision if that neighborhood was annexed into the city.

Given the choice of annexation or lack of fire protection, a group of civic-minded citizens gathered to form the Signal Hill Fire Department. In July of 1946, the voters of the proposed fire protection district approved the formation of a taxing district that would provide funding for the fire department.

Sixty years later, the courage and dedication of the firefighters, as well as the consistent support of the community are still the hallmark of this volunteer fire department.

From its earliest days, the Signal Hill Fire Department has been guided and staffed by individuals who have been highly motivated, enjoy a challenge, and are sincerely interested helping others. The call to duty has been answered by several hundred community members who have given freely of their time to protect others from the perils of fire.

Significant progress has been made though the years as the Signal Hill Fire Department has not only kept pace with new procedures and equipment but has often been at the forefront of evolving technological advances. Signal Hill became the first fire department in all of Southern Illinois to acquire a thermal imaging camera. Two years later, they were profiled by the Federal Emergency Manage-

ment Agency, National Volunteer Fire Council, and the U.S. Fire Administration as an extraordinary example of recruiting and retaining volunteer firefighters. More recently, Signal Hill became the first volunteer fire department in all of St. Clair County and Southwestern Illinois to earn the distinguished ISO Class 3 rating.

The Signal Hill Fire Department has been a shining example of dedication and professionalism, made possible by the sacrifices that their volunteer firefighters and their families have made since 1946. Their compassion, valor, and unselfish acts of courage make each of them an everyday hero.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 60th anniversary of the Signal Hill Fire Department and to wish the best to them for continued service in the future.

PATRIOT ACT ADDITIONAL REAUTHORIZATION AMENDMENTS

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose this bill that seeks to make much needed changes to the House approved PATRIOT Act Conference Report. What we are voting on today are "Additional Reauthorizing amendments" for the PATRIOT Act. Unfortunately, these proposed changes do not go far enough and they fail to strike the proper balance between freedom and security.

When the PATRIOT Act came before the House last year, I made clear that, as written, it failed to protect the civil liberties of the American people from the overzealous police powers of the state. That is why some United States Senators who shared my concern worked for months to draft new safeguards to prevent the abridgment of our constitutionally granted civil rights. While good-intentioned, the small concessions they were able to win do not address the vast majority of objectionable provisions in the bill and some even make it worse.

The sponsors of this legislation will say that it makes needed improvements to the PATRIOT Act. However, when read closely some of these so-called "improvements" actually make the PATRIOT Act worse. For example, one of these amendments actually creates a previously non-existent one year gag order on recipients of national security letters. Under this change, the records of library patrons are still subject to secret searches and investigators do not have to promptly inform the patron of the searches. And these changes make the PATRIOT Act worse by actually preventing librarians from challenging these searches in court for at least a full year. Currently, no period of time exists to delay judicial review of national security letters.

Robert Kennedy speaking in Georgia, a state at the center of the civil rights movement, said, "we know that if one man's rights are denied, the rights of all are endangered." What Bobby Kennedy understood, but what too many of my colleagues forget, is that we are all bound together in our collective human existence. This means that the denial of our neighbor's rights puts our own rights in jeopardy. Yet, this bill does not sufficiently change

the PATRIOT Act to ensure that the liberties and freedoms of all American's are protected.

For example, even with these amendments, it would still be legal under the PATRIOT Act for police or investigators to conduct so called "sneak and peak" searches of our homes or property without being notified until long after they are gone. One might expect to hear about this type of practice in state controlled or oppressive regimes around the globe. Yet, America was founded on the principle of individual liberty and freedom.

The PATRIOT Act legalizes what previously has been considered the violation of Americans civil rights. It is flawed and we can do better.

I urge my colleague to heed the words of one of our nation's founding fathers James Madison whom I quoted the first time this bill came to the House floor. Speaking in 1788 before the Virginia Convention (not all that far from where we are today) he explained what I believe is the unanswered problem with the Patriot Act. He said, "I believe there are more instances of the abridgement of the freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments of those in power than by violent and sudden usurpations." As Madison said over 200 years ago, the liberty and freedoms we as Americans cherish are being eroded today not at the barricade, but in our library and at our local doctor's office. Sadly, these so-called "improvements" are not enough, and the PATRIOT Act remains fatally flawed. It is for this reason that I urge my colleagues to vote no on this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I am extremely concerned regarding the proliferation of nuclear weapons around the world in general and the threat that Iran poses in particular. I agree that we must make it a priority to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear technologies and materials for development of nuclear weapons. That is why we must not impede any and all diplomatic means to achieve this. I voted present on H. Con. Res 345 (rollcall No. 12) because this resolution seems to foreclose some important diplomatic options towards achieving that goal.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TEXAS STATE CHAMPION ARGYLE GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the superior performance of the Argyle Girls Basketball Team on their Texas State Championship in the 2A division on March 4th, 2006.

The Eagles won the final game 51-33 to become the Texas UIL Class 2A state champions at the University of Texas' Frank Erwin Center. The championship game was their

19th consecutive win. The championship victory marked the first state championship in a team sport for Argyle High School.

This victory was a combined effort by many extremely talented athletes, and would not have been possible if it was not for the incredible sense of teamwork put forth by all athletes.

I extend my sincere congratulations to Steve Schmidt, head coach as well as Miss Chelsea Cook, Ms. Brooke Shepherd, Ms. Ally Clardy, Ms. Yvonne Glass, Ms. Kristie Krueger, Ms. Kinzie Ellis, Ms. Emma Forrer, Ms. Bailey Slough, Ms. Meagan Gonzales, Ms. Teacup Gorman and Ms. Alex Marshall, the members of the State Champion Argyle Girls Basketball Team.

TRIBUTE TO RED CROSS
VOLUNTEERS

HON. BOB BEAUPREZ

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the thousands of Americans who proudly call themselves Red Cross volunteers. I stand to show my support for their service to this country, their sacrifice in leaving their homes and loved ones to rush to the aid of fellow Americans in their own community, or another community hundreds, even thousands of miles away.

When you talk about the American Red Cross, you must never forget that you are talking about volunteers. More than 95% of Red Cross workers are volunteers. They are on no government payroll. They have no secret motives or hidden agendas. They are citizens in voluntary service of their fellow citizens.

March is Red Cross Month. We take the time to honor the compassion of the volunteer spirit.

In my own district, these good people are at work daily, teaching CPR, helping to collect lifesaving blood, teaching someone how to swim, and responding in the middle of the night to comfort one of their neighbors whose house has burned down. It is simply impossible to imagine our community without the Red Cross.

There is a reason why every president since Franklin Roosevelt has declared March to be Red Cross Month. This is an organization that mimics American's tendencies to help a neighbor in need, and provides an essential safety net affecting millions of lives. It has earned the right to be called a national treasure.

No one is more interested in building the best possible Red Cross than the people of the Red Cross themselves. Their only desire is to fulfill their mission of compassion and humanity—a mission they have upheld with honor for 125 years. Let us take care to guard this well-earned reputation, aiding and supporting them as they have aided and supported America.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CSRS RETIREMENT REPAYMENT TECHNICAL CORRECTION ACT OF 2006

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the CSRS Retirement Repayment Technical Correction Act of 2006. This bill would correct an unintended consequence that followed the enactment of the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-508) on November 5, 1990, and provide relief for federal employees who were adversely affected by that enactment.

The Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1990 made retroactive changes to the rules related to separating federal employees. While the rules were made retroactive to October 1, 1990, the implementing regulations were not promulgated until February 1991. This four month period between the enactment of the law and the promulgation of the implementing regulations has adversely affected any federal employee who withdrew their retirement contributions during this period.

This matter was brought to my attention by Sandra Schatz Landis, my constituent who was on maternity leave from the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), a former bureau of the Department of Justice at the time in question. On November 5, 1990, Ms. Landis withdrew \$24,439.00 in retirement contributions and was advised that if she later re-entered federal service, she could re-deposit the withdrawal without paying interest and not suffer any adverse consequences.

Unbeknownst to Ms. Landis and the personnel specialists at INS who were advising her, because of the enactment of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 that occurred on that very same day, November 5, 1990, employees who withdrew their retirement contributions as far back as October 1, 1990 were suddenly required to repay their withdrawn contributions with interest in order to have the prior service included in their annuity calculation. What is unfair about this is that employees had no warning that the rules under which they were making major financial decisions were changing. If Ms. Landis were to make this repayment today, she would have to refund over \$58,000 of which \$34,000 is interest. This is just one example of an unintended injustice that must be corrected.

The CSRS Retirement Repayment Technical Correction Act of 2006 will provide relief to those who withdrew their retirement contributions between Oct 1, 1990, when the Omnibus Reconciliation Act was enacted, and February 1991, when implementing regulations were promulgated. It is fair and reasonable legislation that needs to be enacted into law.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION SHOULD FULLY PROTECT THE FREEDOMS OF ALL RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES WITHOUT DISTINCTION

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 2006

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 190, expressing the sense of the Congress that the Russian Federation should fully protect the freedoms of all religious communities without distinction, whether registered and unregistered, as stipulated by the Russian Constitution and international standards.

This resolution is an essential demonstration of our continued commitment to protecting religious freedom for all human beings throughout the world.

Mr. Speaker, this nation was built by those who escaped persecution in their own homelands. Today we continue to see people throughout the world who still can not freely practice their faith.

It is vital in order to protect the principles of freedom that this nation was founded on, that we protect the ability of each person in the United States to freely observe their religious practices. This also means that we as a nation must push other countries throughout the world to meet this same ideal standard on religious freedom.

Religious freedom is a fundamental human right as affirmed by numerous international declarations and covenants, as well as by the United Nations General Assembly. I remain hopeful that we will continue with further efforts to fight religious intolerance.

I applaud today's measure with enthusiasm and reverence.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF
KUR KUR AND SIMON GARANG

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the achievements of two young men for whom I have the utmost respect and admiration. Mr. Kur Kur and Mr. Simon Garang, currently of Boulder, Colorado, will graduate with degrees from the University of Colorado at Boulder in May, 2006, closing one remarkable chapter in their lives and beginning another. For these two men, obtaining their degrees was more than a matter of attending classes and passing tests; it was a stunning journey from the impoverished and war-torn deserts of East Africa to the mountains of Colorado and the classrooms of CU-Boulder.

Mr. Kur and Mr. Garang were born in different parts of southern Sudan and were forced to flee to Ethiopia at the age of eight to evade Islamic militants that were driving men, women, and children from their homes. Separated from their families, the boys walked the long journey to Ethiopia seeking refuge.

They remained there until war broke out in 1991, and made another improbable and difficult journey to a refugee camp in Kenya, where they would complete their high school educations in spite of severe hunger and poverty. There Mr. Kur and Mr. Garang became aware of the possibility that they could come to the United States and work toward better lives via a special refugee program. They had lived the full experience of a group of young people that are now called "The Lost Boys of Sudan," and would now open a new and hopeful chapter in their already difficult lives.

After arriving in Colorado, Mr. Kur and Mr. Garang would meet Professor Bruce Bassoff, who saw that they were extraordinarily bright and offered to help them enroll at the University of Colorado. In the fall of 2002 they did just that, studying and working hard to obtain their degrees while enjoying a rich college experience. Their upcoming graduation is the culmination not only of those efforts, but of years of a type of struggle unimaginable to most Americans.

I have every confidence that Mr. Kur and Mr. Garang will put their degrees and worldviews to great use, and I look forward to seeing what they—as well as the other five Sudanese students enrolled at CU—accomplish in the years to come. There is a story of inspiration as well as a reminder of our good fortune and the struggles of those in Sudan and other parts of the underdeveloped world. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Kur Kur and Mr. Simon Garang on their upcoming graduations and to wish them well in their future endeavors.

IN OPPOSITION TO TARGETED
MARKETING OF REFUND-ANTICIPATION
LOANS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concern at reports of the apparent harmful impact of the marketing of high-cost refund-anticipation loans, RALs, to underserved communities.

While RALs are advertised as giving consumers quicker access to their hard-earned tax refund, it has been brought to my attention that tax refunds can be obtained almost as fast by the taxpayer to whom the refund is due as if taxpayers file online. It appears that not only are refunds not delivered with any greater expediency, but with interest rates between 40 to 700 percent and additional fees, these loans are so excessively priced that they deny the taxpayer full use of their money.

This issue is of particular interest to me as some of my constituents seem to be feeling the brunt of these loans, I have recently been informed that one of the highest concentration of refund loans in 2003 was made within the 15th Congressional District in my home community, central Harlem. Also as the Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Committee, I am concerned because according to a recent study undertaken by the Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project, one quarter of New Yorkers who claimed the Earned Income Tax Credit in 2003 paid large amounts of their wages in fees related to RALs.

Low-income families need not be exploited for the gains of corporate entities. According to the IRS, 79 percent of RAL recipients in 2003 had incomes of \$35,000 or less. In contrast, as the nation's largest tax-preparation chain, H&R Block experienced an 8.5 percent increase in RAL revenue for Fiscal Year 2003. While RALs are one of H&R Block's products, I expect the company to practice due diligence not only in promoting these products equally among your many locations but also in informing clients of their rights and product terms.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you during this tax season to lend your support in holding H&R Block and other tax-preparing companies responsible to equitable targeting of these high-cost loans and full disclosure of their terms.

TRIBUTE TO HARRY BROWNE

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, America lost a great champion of liberty when Harry Browne passed away on March 1, at the age of 72. Harry had a passion for liberty and knowledge of a wide variety of subjects. His communication style, as he himself so marvelously put it, focused on converting his opponents rather than winning the argument. These attributes helped make him one of the most effective proponents of the freedom philosophy I have had the privilege of knowing. Harry's numerous books and columns, his radio and Internet broadcasts, and his speeches educated millions in sound economics and the benefits of a free society. Harry motivated many people to become activists in the movement to restore American liberties.

Harry first came to public attention in the 1970 when he penned a best-selling investment book, *How You Can Profit From the Coming Devaluation*, which foresaw President Richard Nixon's abandonment of the gold standard and the ways the American economy would be damaged by the inevitable resulting inflation. Harry's book helped many Americans survive, and even profit, during the economic troubles of the seventies. It also introduced millions of people to the insights developed by followers of the Austrian school of economics regarding the dangers fiat currency poses to both prosperity and liberty posed by fiat. *How You Can Profit From the Coming Devaluation* is generally recognized as the founding document of the hard money movement, which combined the insights of the Austrian economists with a practical investment strategy.

Harry's third book, *You Can Profit from a Monetary Crisis*, reached number one on the New York Times bestseller list. Other popular books by Harry include *How I Found Freedom in an Unfree World*, *The Great Libertarian Offer*, and *Why Government Doesn't Work*. I was pleased to write the foreword for one of Harry's books, *Liberty A-Z: Libertarian Soundbites You Can Use Right Now*, a collection of direct, thought-provoking, and often humorous responses to the questions advocates of the freedom philosophy face.

During the nineties, Harry worked to advance liberty as a presidential candidate, columnist, radio talk-show host, and columnist. He also hosted an internet-based talk show

and founded DownsizeDC, a grassroots advocacy group whose goals are accurately summed up in its title. Even while struggling with Lou Gehrig's disease, Harry maintained a full schedule of writing, hosting his radio show, and speaking around the country.

Harry's efforts were not limited to the economic realm. He understood the threat to liberty and prosperity posed by global crusades for democracy, as well as the importance of opposing restrictions on civil liberties. Harry's outspoken defense of civil liberties and the Framers' foreign policy of nonintervention took on added importance in the last years of his life when too many self-styled advocates of liberty attempted to curry favor with the political establishment by focusing solely on issues of economic liberty or combined advocacy of low taxes and regulations with active support for militarism and restrictions on personal liberty.

In all his educational, financial, and political work Harry served as a model for everyone who works for the free society. Harry was principled and uncompromising in message, while temperate and respectful of differing opinions in delivery. He avoided the histrionics too common in our today's talk show culture, and he never personalized his arguments. Even when an opponent resorted to ad hominem attacks, Harry always kept his presentation on the high ground of ideas and principles. In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I extend my sympathy to Harry Browne's wife, Pamela, and daughter Auburn, as well as the many he befriended in his years in the freedom movement, and I pay tribute to Harry Browne for his lifelong efforts on behalf of individual liberty.

TRIBUTE TO THE AMERICAN BURN
ASSOCIATION

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to the attention of my colleagues the immense contributions by the American Burn Association, ABA, to the fields of burn treatment, education and prevention.

Whether caused by accidents, natural disasters or potential terrorist attacks, the ABA has been integral in shaping the discussion on how this nation's burn centers should manage burn injuries. In all cases, the American Burn Association stands ready as the critical initial line of first responders. They need our support.

The ABA has more than 3,500 members in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia and Latin America. All of the members of the association are burn care specialists. They include physicians, surgeons, nurses, occupation and physical therapists, researchers, social workers, firefighters, emergency response personnel, and the underpinning of burn research and care—hospitals with highly specialized burn centers.

As an organization, the ABA sets the industry standards for quality care for both civilian and military treatment of burn injuries. Its research into advanced treatment for burn injuries is the foundation for the high quality of care available to our wounded soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq. Furthermore, many of the

professionals with the medical teams currently deployed overseas are ABA members, and many more work stateside, treating the severe burn injuries that result from military conflicts.

In addition to research and treatment, the American Burn Association continually promotes educational campaigns to prevent burn injuries. Past campaigns include home safety, senior burn safety, prevention of gasoline burns, scald prevention and electrical burn prevention. They have also highlighted the value of home sprinkler systems, which are no more expensive per foot than home carpeting, and serve as a valuable preventative measure.

The ABA represents a vital national resource in the select medical community of burn care. These professionals are in every State of the Union and almost every congressional district. I have met with representatives from my region of Pennsylvania. I hope that you will meet with yours and take an opportunity to learn more about the ABA and the outstanding work they do in your own State and district.

CHILDREN'S SAFETY AND VIOLENT CRIME REDUCTION ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF
HON. JEFF FLAKE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2006

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on section 302 of the Children's Safety and Violent Crime Reduction Act of 2006. This section is based on an amendment that I offered, and that was accepted by voice vote, to H.R. 3132, a predecessor version of the Children's Safety and Violent Crime Reduction Act, on September 14 of last year.

Section 302 is named after Kenneth Wrede, a young man who served as a police officer in West Covina, California. On August 31, 1983, Officer Wrede responded to a call about a man behaving strangely in a residential neighborhood. Wrede confronted the man, who became abusive and tried to hit Wrede with an 8-foot tree spike. Wrede could have shot the man, but instead attempted to defuse the situation. The man then reached into Wrede's patrol car and ripped the shotgun and rack from the dashboard. Wrede drew his gun and tried to persuade the man to lay down the shotgun. The man did so, but when Wrede lowered his revolver, the man picked up the shotgun again and shot Wrede in the head. Officer Wrede was killed instantly. He was 26 years old.

Officer Wrede's killer was sentenced to death in 1984, and that conviction was affirmed by the California Supreme Court in 1989. Then in 2000—17 years after Ken Wrede's murder—a divided panel of the Federal Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit reversed the killer's death sentence. The Ninth Circuit found that the killer's lawyer provided ineffective assistance of counsel at the sentencing phase of the trial because he did not present additional evidence of the killer's abusive childhood and chronic use of PCP.

When the Ninth Circuit handed down its ruling, Officer Wrede's mother simply noted that, "We thought we finally were close to getting this behind us. And now this." (Gordon Dillow,

Long Wait for Justice Gets Worse, The Orange County Reg., May 11, 2000, at B01.) A California Deputy Attorney General denounced the court's action, commenting that "it can always be suggested a jury should have heard something else in the penalty phase of a death penalty case." (Richard Winton, Reversal of Death Penalty in Officer's Killing Decried Courts, L.A. Times, May 10, 2000, at B3.) West Covina Corporal Robert Tibbets, the original investigator at the scene of Wrede's murder, described the Ninth Circuit's decision as a "miscarriage of justice." (Id.) He had promised Officer Wrede's parents that he would accompany them to every court hearing for their son's killer. He made good on his promise. Nineteen years later, in 2002, Corporal Tibbets was there with the Wredes when their son's killer was given a second sentencing trial and was again sentenced to death.

But the Wredes now face yet another round of state-court appeals for their son's killer, and that litigation will be followed by a new battery of federal habeas appeals. At the 2002 retrial, Ken's father noted that "my family and I had endured 19 years of trial, appeals, delays, causing us to relive the trauma of Ken's death over and over again." The trial judge noted the absurdity of this system. He stated, "It is an obscenity to put anyone through this needlessly for 19 years. It is inexcusable for us in the system that we need to look at this case for 19 years to get it resolved. The system at some point in the line has become clogged and broken." (Larry Welborn, 19 Years and No Resolution For Parents, The Orange County Reg., Sept. 21, 2002.)

My amendment will prevent injustices such as the one inflicted on the Wredes. It will guarantee that federal jurisdiction will not be used to reverse criminal sentences and force a repeat of the litigation years after the crime has occurred, the trial has been completed, and state appeals have been exhausted—all because of an error that was already judged harmless in state proceedings, or that was never presented at all on earlier review.

It is simply ridiculous that, 17 years after a police officer was murdered, federal courts would prolong the litigation of the case of the officer's killer for this kind of reason. The error identified by the Ninth Circuit in the Wrede case had nothing to do with the reliability or fairness of the jury's conclusion that the defendant had murdered Officer Wrede. Instead, the Ninth Circuit invalidated the sentence because it thought that the trial attorney could have introduced additional evidence of the killer's use of phencyclidine. (Trial counsel already had introduced considerable evidence of such drug use during the guilt phase of the trial.) Frankly, I do not see how the fact that a defendant regularly used a dangerous drug could mitigate his criminal conduct at all. The jury in the Wrede case did not think so, nor did the state appeals courts think that additional evidence of the defendant's PCP use could reasonably have affected the jury's decision to sentence the defendant to death. The Ninth Circuit's conclusion that such an error could have made a difference in the sentencing decision obviously is a highly subjective judgment. It is not really a judgment of law, so much as a question of personal opinion and popular psychology. Such unstable judgments, at least with respect to sentencing

errors that are properly subject to harmless review, should not be a basis for overriding duly entered state criminal sentences many years after the fact.

My amendment to this bill builds on an amendment that I filed earlier in this Congress and which has been enacted as section 507 of the USA Patriot Improvement and Reauthorization Act. That amendment guarantees that states such as Arizona and California will be given an objective evaluation of their eligibility for the streamlined and expedited habeas corpus procedures in chapter 154 of title 28. That chapter sets strict time deadlines for federal judicial action on capital habeas-corpus petitions in qualifying states, restricts amendments, and eliminates ping-pong litigation between state and federal courts over unexhausted claims. By unlocking states' access to chapter 154, my previous amendment will ensure that cases such as that of Kenneth Wrede's killer—or the infamous Christy Ann Fornoff case in Arizona—will be resolved much more quickly. My current amendment to the Children's Safety and Violent Crime Reduction Act will ensure that these types of cases are not reversed on account of claims of minor and highly subjective sentencing errors. Allegations of such errors do not relate to the defendant's culpability for the underlying offense, and they do not merit the use of federal judicial resources at this late stage of the criminal-litigation process.

My amendment is based on a legislative proposal that is part of the habeas corpus reform bill introduced by Senator KYL and Congressman LUNGREN. That broader bill has been the subject of four hearings in this Congress: two before the House Judiciary Committee's Crime Subcommittee on June 30 and November 10, and two before the Senate Judiciary Committee on July 13 and November 16.

Between its evolution from the Kyl/Lungren bill to my amendment, and again from my original amendment to the provision in the current Children's Safety and Violent Crime Reduction Act, section 302 has been modified somewhat. First, it has been expanded to also apply to those sentencing claims that the habeas applicant procedurally defaulted in the state courts. It would make no sense to limit federal review for a habeas petitioner who presented his sentencing claim in state court in a timely manner, where the error had been found harmless, but to afford unrestricted habeas review to a petitioner who did not timely and properly present his claim in state proceedings. The purpose of the procedural-default doctrine is to encourage state prisoners to abide by state procedural rules. That purpose would be undercut if the applicant presenting a defaulted sentencing claim were afforded more liberal access to federal court than the applicant who had properly presented his claim during state review.

Also, allowing defaulted sentencing claims to be heard for the first time in a federal application inevitably disrupts the federal proceedings. A defaulted claim generally will not have been considered on the merits in state court, and therefore there is no evidentiary record on which to evaluate the claim in federal court. And allowing the applicant to obtain relief on a defaulted claim in federal habeas inevitably prejudices the state. As the Supreme Court has noted, forcing prisoners to

timely present their claims in state court “affords the state courts the opportunity to resolve the issue shortly after trial, while evidence is still available both to assess the defendant’s claim and to retry the defendant effectively if he prevails in his appeal.” *Murray v. Carrier*, 477 U.S. 478 (1986). But when a federal habeas court orders a sentencing retrial on the basis of a claim that was never presented to the state courts, it often will have been many years since the original trial and the crime occurred. (In the *Wrede* case, the Ninth Circuit’s reversal of the killer’s sentence came 17 years after the crime had been committed.) During this time, witnesses often will die or disappear or their memories will fade and other evidence will become unavailable. If defaulted claims were exempted from my amendment, not only would habeas petitioners presenting such claims have better access to the federal courts than would those who followed state rules; the relief that the defaulting petitioner obtains would be more likely to mean not just a second chance to try the sentencing case, but rather would amount to a permanent bar on the state’s imposition of a capital or other sentence.

Finally, I would like to respond briefly to those critics who argue that any tailoring or limits on federal habeas-corpus review constitute an unconstitutional “suspension” of the Great Writ. I would note that federal courts rejected this argument when it was made by critics of the 1996 reforms. The courts noted that Congress has the power both to expand and to retract the scope of federal collateral review of state criminal convictions. In *Felker v. Turpin*, 518 U.S. 651 (1996), the U.S. Supreme Court highlighted the utter lack of basis for the view that Congress is required to grant lower federal courts unrestricted power over state criminal convictions:

“The first Congress made the writ of habeas corpus available only to prisoners confined under the authority of the United States, not under state authority. It was not until 1867 that Congress made the writ generally available in ‘all cases where any person may be restrained of his or her liberty in violation of [federal law].’ And it was not until well into this century that this Court interpreted that provision to allow a final judgment of conviction to be collaterally attacked on habeas.”

The Supreme Court concluded: “We have long recognized that the power to award the writ by any of the courts of the United States, must be given by written law, and we have likewise recognized that judgments about the proper scope of the writ are normally for Congress to make.”

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit elaborated on this point in *Lindh v. Murphy*, 96 F.3d 856 (rev’d on other grounds, 521 U.S. 320), and explained the nature of the constitutional habeas right:

“The writ known in 1789 was the pre-trial contest to the executive’s power to hold a person captive, the device that prevents arbitrary detention without trial. The power thus enshrined did not include the ability to reexamine judgments rendered by courts possessing jurisdiction. Under the original practice, ‘a judgment of conviction rendered by a court of general criminal jurisdiction was conclusive proof that confinement was legal * * * [and] prevented issuance of a writ.’” The founding-era historical evidence suggests a prevailing view that state courts were adequate fora for protecting federal rights.

Based on this assumption, there was (and is) no constitutionally enshrined right to mount a collateral attack on a state court’s judgment in the inferior Article III courts and, a fortiori, no mandate that state court judgments embracing questionable (or even erroneous) interpretations of the federal Constitution be reviewed by the inferior Article III courts.”

The Seventh Circuit concluded: “Any suggestion that the [Constitution] forbids every contraction of the [federal habeas] power bestowed by Congress in 1885, and expanded by the 1948 and 1966 amendments, is untenable.”

My amendment is a necessary and appropriate adjustment to the federal jurisdiction over state criminal convictions. I am pleased to see that it is part of the Children’s Safety and Violent Crime Reduction Act.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT OF CONGRESS REGARDING ACCESS OF MILITARY RECRUITERS TO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2006

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today the House will be voting on legislation to affirm the ability of military recruiters to access college campuses. As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I support our military’s efforts to recruit some of our most promising young men and women and believe that service in our nation’s armed forces is an honorable career choice. However, I question why we are considering this measure, especially as the Supreme Court unanimously upheld Congress’s position a short while ago. If Congress’s authority has not been challenged, why are we reiterating it?

As we have heard, a lawsuit arose when a group of colleges challenged the Congressional requirement that military recruiters be granted access to schools that receive federal funding. The schools argued that the U.S. military’s policy of excluding gays and lesbians from serving openly violated their non-discrimination requirement for prospective employers on campus, and that the recruiters’ presence would be interpreted as the schools’ official endorsement of the military’s position. The Supreme Court rejected this argument, noting that colleges and universities still maintained their right to express their opposition to the military’s policies as they saw fit. The resolution of today reaffirms the very Congressional power that the Court just upheld.

Unfortunately, Congress is debating the wrong issue. Instead of celebrating a minor legal victory, we should be discussing how to end the discriminatory “Don’t Ask/Don’t Tell” policy that inspired the opposition from the colleges and which threatens our military readiness to this day. Since the policy’s enactment in 1993, Don’t Ask/Don’t Tell has resulted in the discharge of nearly 10,000 service members, many of whom had language proficiency or other skills essential to the Global War on Terror. Over the past ten years, Don’t Ask/Don’t Tell has cost the U.S. military hundreds of millions of dollars—funds that could have

gone toward obtaining additional armored vehicles and investing in other vital force protection initiatives.

Don’t Ask/Don’t Tell, originally conceived as a compromise, has outlived its utility and now actually harms our military readiness and its ability to perform certain essential functions. Qualified and dedicated servicemembers should not be discharged based on their sexual orientation, especially at a time when our National Guard and Reserves are serving repeated deployments. For these reasons, I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 1059, the Military Readiness Enhancement Act, which would replace Don’t Ask/Don’t Tell with a policy that would not allow discrimination or discharges based on sexual orientation.

Those who oppose repeal of Don’t Ask/Don’t Tell conveniently ignore that gay men and women already serve in the military—many with great distinction—despite the fact that they must hide their identities from those whose lives they have sworn to defend. They also ignore the fact that some of our closest allies in the Global War on Terrorism permit open service by gay men and women, and our forces regularly serve alongside theirs without incident. They also ignore numerous polls indicating that a strong majority of Americans support repeal. Our military’s purpose is to protect the United States, and it must recruit the most qualified people in order to succeed. Repeal of Don’t Ask/Don’t Tell is consistent with that goal.

I will support H. Con. Res. 354 today because I believe we should be encouraging our nation’s finest young men and women—no matter who they are or where they go to school—to join the strongest, smartest and most capable military in the world. However, such an effort is incomplete without also repealing Don’t Ask/Don’t Tell. I encourage all of my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 1059 to ensure that all who are willing and able to serve may do so.

IN HONOR OF THE PREMIERE OF
“WALKOUT”

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, facing unfortunate injustices, relegated to second class citizenship, and anxious to see change come to their classrooms, a group of students banded together in 1968 to protest the conditions of their high schools in East Los Angeles. The civil and non-violent protest took the form of a staged and systematic “walkout,” which was not only the single largest protest by high school students ever in the history of the United States, but is also recognized as the event that gave birth to the Chicano civil rights movement.

Today, I rise and pay tribute to the efforts of these students who embody change and whose memory reminds us all that peaceful, intelligent activism can right egregious wrongs. That reminder is now ever more visible as this seminal moment in civil rights history has been put to film, premiering tonight here in Washington, D.C., and on Saturday, March 18, on HBO.

Called “Walkout,” the film provides a sincere and candid look at these student protests

exploring the reasons and justifications that led to such a dramatic and historic move. Executive Producer Mocesuma Esparza and director Edward James Olmos have captured the tensions and regretful reality of life for Mexican American students in the public high school system of East Los Angeles. The movie honors the memory of the struggles and obstacles to empowerment that those before us fought so hard to eradicate. Today, we pay tribute to Esparza, Olmos, HBO Films and all those who played a part in bringing this snapshot of history to life.

Mr. Speaker, only by dedicating ourselves to remembering how we compromised the civil rights and educational achievement of Latinos in the past can we renew our resolve to face the current attacks that seek to derail the future of our community. In 1968, the Mexican American community sent an unequivocal message that transcended the education system that sought to suppress them: when equality and opportunity are denied, our community will fight back to defend what is right. Through "Walkout", we celebrate this resolve.

INTRODUCING LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING FUNDING FOR THE PRIVACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES BOARD

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation authorizing \$3 million annually over the next ten years for the Privacy and Civil Liberties Board. Additionally, my legislation requires the President to include a line item request in his budget proposal every year. I am pleased to be introducing this bill with the support of the Democratic Members of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

In December 2004, President Bush signed the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act into law. Included in this bill was language establishing the Privacy and Civil Liberties Board, a cornerstone recommendation of the 9-11 Commission. The Commission understood that in the emotional aftermath of September 11th, it was important to provide objective oversight of the protection of our cherished civil liberties.

This oversight is the main purpose of the Privacy and Civil Liberties Board. The Board has been established to review proposed regulations and Executive Branch policies' effects on civil liberties, particularly related to the War on Terrorism.

Many saw the creation of this board as a promising step in protecting us from terrorism while maintaining the civil rights of everyone. However, more than a year after the legislation was signed into law, the Board has yet to hold its first meeting. As a matter of fact, the first Board members were only approved a year ago. Even more, because the Board is housed within the Office of the President and operates at the behest of the Administration, Congress itself is not able to appropriate \$1 for its operation because we never authorized any spending. With no substantive work performed by the Board to date, it's as though the Board only exists in the spirit of the law—not

in its letter. If that was Congress's true intent, then the Board might as well only exist on paper, or as an illusion in our minds. But it wasn't, and that's why this legislation is absolutely necessary.

Realize, Mr. Speaker, the most disturbing lack of support for the Board has come from the Administration itself. In the President's budget request for fiscal years 2005 through 2007 and the requests for supplemental funding, there have been no funds requested specifically for Board operations. Zero! Without this funding, the Board cannot even buy a pencil much less develop a plan to accomplish its tasks.

The Administration's failure to fund the office, coupled with the inactivity of the Board, leads one to question the commitment of the Administration to ensuring the protection of privacy and civil liberties. Does the Administration welcome an objective review on civil rights issues regarding its terrorism policies or would it rather govern in a vacuum? Would the President rather operate behind closed doors without questions from, or accountability to, any oversight board? Unchecked policies shrouded in secrecy will do nothing to help this country maintain checks and balances between safety and civil rights.

The bill I am introducing authorizes \$3 million in annual funding for the Board so that Congress can do what the President has failed to do. This funding level will ensure that adequate resources are available for sufficient staff and resources to support critical statutorily mandated activities of the Board. This includes reviewing proposed regulations and policies related to countering terrorism, the implementation of laws, regulations and policies related to countering terrorism, and advising the President and department heads on matters impacting privacy and civil liberties.

It's time that we demand that the Administration stop dragging its feet on funding the Privacy and Civil Liberties Board. If civil liberties are of any concern to this body and the President then there is no reason to stall the progress of the Board by denying it the money it needs to get started. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to fully fund the Privacy and Civil Liberties Board so that it can get about the business of protecting the liberties and security of all Americans.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE BECKER

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker I rise today to honor George Becker, a great union leader, great American, and President Emeritus of the United Steelworkers (USW). Not only has George been a dear friend of mine, but to working men and women everywhere. They owe him a debt of gratitude for the years of service he has given not only to the labor movement, but to his country.

Retirement as the USW's International Union President in 2001 did not change his goals nor dim his vision and resolve. He continued his advocacy during his service on the U.S. Trade Deficit Review Commission. He is still fighting in his capacity as Commissioner on the U.S. China Economic and Security Re-

view Commission to give a voice to the concerns of workers in the industries affected by our exploding trade deficit with China.

I am sure my colleagues on the Congressional Steel Caucus will join me in expressing our good fortune to have worked in close association with a man who warned us years ahead of time that the American steel industry was on the brink of collapse after the Asian financial crisis in 1998. It was George Becker's persistence and foresight that created the joint union-industry alliance "Stand Up for Steel" that fought for fair steel trade policies before Congress and two Administrations to bring the relief necessary for the U.S. steel industry to restructure and consolidate.

I remember standing with USW President Becker among hundreds of steelworkers on Capitol Hill who helped win passage of H.R. 975 in the Spring of 1999, a bill I sponsored titled the 'Stop Illegal Steel Trade Act' to impose a freeze on steel imports. The U.S. House of Representatives passed it 289 to 141, but the measure was subsequently defeated in the Senate on a procedural vote.

But the determined President Becker didn't stop fighting to save American steelworkers' jobs and the industry. He supported H.R. 808, the Steel Revitalization Act of 2001, to require a five year rollback of steel imports to pre-crisis levels, while providing assistance for retiree health care costs and establishing a \$10 billion loan fund to finance steel industry modernization.

The Steelworkers Union president didn't stop at the legislative door of Congress, leading a national union-industry petition under the U.S. Foreign Trade Act to implement a Section 201 tariff on all steel imports that included a public hearing in my Congressional District of Northwest Indiana by the International Trade Commission. The ITC's investigation demonstrated the need for steel tariffs and President Bush implemented relief in 2002.

George Becker, a second-generation steelworker, rose through the ranks to become the sixth international president of the United Steelworkers (USW). He served seven years as the union's international president, elected in 1993 and 1997. He also was chair of the Labor Advisory Committee for Trade Negotiations and Trade Policy for the U.S. Department of Labor; during the Clinton Administration, he served on the President's Export Council and the U.S. Trade & Environmental Policy Advisory Committee.

He is a respected union organizer and strategist, and an internationally-known spokesman for industrial safety, workers' rights on the job and fair global trade.

Among his major accomplishments are:

Mergers with the United Rubber Workers (URW) in 1995, and the Aluminum, Brick and Glass Workers (ABG) in 1997, bringing 140,000 new members to the USW.

Launching the union's pioneering national Rapid Response Network to mobilize members and their local unions to personally contact their members of Congress and state legislatures with handwritten letters on bread & butter issues.

Establishing a USW Legislative Leadership Program in Washington, D.C., which provides member-activists with training in lobbying and political action.

On February 28, 2001, George Becker joined the ranks of one of the Labor Movement's more formidable legacies. He became

only the sixth past President of the United Steelworkers.

Born within a few yards of the Granite City Steel Mill in Illinois where he went to work at age 15, he lived and loved the life of a steelworker from his first day in an open hearth labor gang to the last day he served as International President.

His service to his country included a stint in the U.S. Marines toward the end of World War II and again during the Korean War, when he was drafted into the U.S. Army, owing to a critical shortage of light weapons infantry leaders.

USW President Becker is enjoying his 55th wedding anniversary this year with his wife Jane that began when he met her in the Ozarks of Missouri. They have three married sons and 14 grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in commending George Becker for his outstanding contributions to his union and his country. His commitment to improving the quality of life for working people everywhere is unparalleled, and he should be recognized and commended.

TRIBUTE TO ALLEN R. HUGHES

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a distinguished American, Allen R. Hughes, who will celebrate his 97th birthday on September 24, 2006.

Allen Hughes was born in Martinsburg, Missouri. His mother Ethel had a wonderful sense of humor and he loved her very deeply. His father William was a street car operator who purchased a 144 acre farm in Fulton, Missouri, which his boys affectionately named "Hughes' Rock Farm" because it appeared to be the main crop. Allen had three sisters and four brothers and the family was of modest means.

Allen Hughes married Florence Mertz in 1930. They were married for 59 years until Florence's death and they had one child Richard, born in 1937.

Allen Hughes is a 32nd degree Mason and has been a Scottish Rite member since 1936, over 69 years. He still goes to Lodge and actively participates in the Masonic Order. Mr. Hughes is a registered Democrat who has been known to occasionally stray from his party. The first time he voted was in the Presidential election of 1932. He cast his vote for FDR all four times and has never missed voting in a Presidential or off-year election since. Mr. Hughes has the highest regard for President Harry S. Truman and a profound respect for the Office of President regardless of who occupies it. His son Richard knows this first hand and has the scars to prove that if you can't say something respectful about the President, you shouldn't say anything at all. A true patriot, he takes the privilege of voting very seriously.

Allen Hughes began his career with the Endicott Johnson Shoe Company and worked as a night supervisor for Bi-State Transit in St. Louis, Missouri for 28 years. He retired in 1971 and now lives with his second wife, Sue Harness, on her farm close to Troy, Missouri.

Allen Hughes' son Richard speaks eloquently about his father; "What I love about my father is his humor, his work ethic (I think he missed less than three weeks of work due to sickness in 46 years), his honesty (his word is his bond), his generosity and his willingness to help others less fortunate than himself, his patriotism . . . he votes, informs himself and loves this country." Richard tells me, "If I could go to the 'Father Store' and pick any father, I would pick Allen R. Hughes."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a national treasure and an exemplary American. As Allen Hughes celebrates his 97th birthday, we extend to him our best wishes as well as our gratitude for all he's done for our country. He is a true patriot, a loving husband and the best father in the world to his great son Richard. Because of solid citizens like Allen Hughes, our democracy is strong and our country is decent.

INCLUDE APPROPRIATIONS FOR LIBERIA

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has opened a new chapter in Africa's history as its first female head-of-state. Her election marks a turning point for Liberia, a long-time ally of the United States, which has recently been debilitated by war, corruption, and civil strife. I met with President Sirleaf in Liberia three weeks ago and I know she has the skills and vision it will take to rebuild Liberia and bring hope to its people.

In her inaugural speech, President Sirleaf promised to give Liberian women "prominence in all affairs of our country." The 21st Century could well be the century of the woman, not only in Liberia, but around the world. In the past year, first female heads of state were elected in Liberia, Chile, and Germany, and Finland re-elected its first female president. A recent U.S. poll showed that 92 percent of Americans are ready to elect a female president. But for now, Liberia is a step ahead of the United States.

The U.S. and Liberia have long shared close ties, dating back to 1819, when Congress appropriated \$100,000 that helped lead to the founding of the country. The end of Liberia's civil war and President Sirleaf's election present a unique opportunity to maximize the close ties between our countries.

I support Congressman JESSE JACKSON and Chairman JIM CLYBURN's call to include appropriations for Liberia in the President's supplemental request. President Bush has committed to spreading democracy around the world. This is a unique opportunity to build a democracy in a nation that is starting anew. Rewarding Liberia for its democratic progress would send the right signal to other African nations.

President Sirleaf still faces many challenges and will need our support to succeed. Despite its small gross national income, Liberia has \$2.56 billion in outstanding international debt. HIV/AIDS is spreading at an increasing rate and 708,000 Liberians, just under a third of the population, receive food assistance each month. U.S. assistance to Liberia has decreased in recent years; it will have to in-

crease for President Sirleaf to meet these humanitarian needs.

President Sirleaf will also need help building democracy. Consolidating the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2003 and pursuing transitional justice against war criminals remain immediate priorities. The U.S. should offer its diplomatic backing to encourage other states in the region to help Liberia find resolution.

In her inaugural address, President Sirleaf committed to a new era of democracy, economic renewal, and good governance for Liberia. Upon her second state visit to the United States, we welcome President Sirleaf and offer our support for her mission to lead Liberia to better times.

CONGRATULATING GENEVIEVE AGUILAR

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to honor and congratulate an outstanding young woman in my district who has recently been recognized as one of the top youth volunteers in Colorado for 2006. Genevieve Aguilar of Boulder was recently honored as a Distinguished Finalist for the 11th Annual Prudential Spirit of Community Award, an honor bestowed on the most active and dedicated young volunteers in the state.

Genevieve was honored this year for her work as a tutor and mentor for young Hispanic students. At the age of seventeen, this young woman finds the time to teach other students organizational and study skills so that they can achieve success in high school and beyond. This selflessness is made all the more remarkable by the fact that Genevieve is making her way through Boulder High School herself and undoubtedly faces all of the same pressures that every other student faces. Despite these pressures, and through her steady devotion to her community and her fellow students, Genevieve is able to teach us all a lesson in humanity, service, and volunteerism.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards were designed to "emphasize the importance our nation places on service to others, and to encourage young Americans of all backgrounds to contribute to their communities." I can think of no better way to honor the work that Genevieve has done to help her fellow students learn and grow, and I am sure that her example serves to inspire those students to give back to their communities in kind. I look forward to seeing what Genevieve Aguilar accomplishes in the future, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and honoring her accomplishments.

A TRIBUTE TO HELEN JORDAN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Helen Jordan, a distinguished member of the Brooklyn community. It behooves us to pay tribute to this outstanding

leader and I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing her impressive accomplishments.

Helen Jordan has been a MSW caseworker that counseled substance-abusing mothers, an administrative supervisor and a Program Director at the New York Urban League's child welfare programs. For almost twenty years, she has worked with and for the families in East Flatbush, East New York and Brownsville communities of Brooklyn. The New York Urban League's mission ". . . to promote opportunities and to help African Americans, individuals, families and communities achieve their full potential . . ." is the mission that Helen has adopted for herself.

Born in New York City, 75 years ago, to Addie and Pearl Thomas of South Carolina, Helen is the oldest of three children. Her father and mother, janitors for various Harlem tenements, taught Helen that education was the key to liberation and she never let go of the vision of a college education. Helen earned a Bachelor's degree in Social Welfare and a Master's degree in Social Work at Adelphi University's School of Social Work after she had married Eugene Jordan and their four children Stephanie, Eugene III, Vance and Kevin, were adults. She has 10 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. A Licensed Clinical Social Worker, she thinks that no one should ever stop learning. Helen still attends conferences and workshops related to her work. God has worked many wonders in her life including the privilege of being the Program Director at Service to Families and the Chairperson of the Brownsville-East New York Child Welfare Neighborhood Network and she gives Him all the praise and honor. She is a member of the Greater Allen Cathedral in Jamaica, NY.

Helen has had memberships in several organizations that advocate for children and families to be the very best that they can be such as The Black Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, which educated communities and organizations about the results of child abuse and neglect; National Association of Social Workers; National Association of Black Social Workers; National Black Child Development Institute, an organization that educates educators about the importance of a child's education; Coalition of Brooklyn Program Directors; New York Foster Care Reform Initiative, an organization that seeks to transform the educational training of foster care parents; African American Task Force Against Violence Towards Women; Neighborhood Family Services Coalition; and the Institute for Community Living, Inc.'s Neighborhood Advisory Board. She is also a member of the 369th Kermit Drowery Ladies Auxiliary.

"Giving back" is very important to Helen. She has been a field instructor and a faculty advisor to many social work students at various graduate schools. She has also been an adjunct professor at Adelphi University's School of Social Work's Manhattan Center.

At 75 years of age, Helen says that although there is a lot of work being done to improve the lives of our children and their families, there is still so much more work to be done, that she has no idea when she will retire.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the accomplishments of Helen Jordan, as she offers her talents and community services for the good of our local communities.

Mr. Speaker, Helen Jordan's selfless service has continuously demonstrated a level of altruistic dedication that makes her most worthy of our recognition today.

TRIBUTE TO NATIONAL KIDNEY MONTH

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, as Congress recognizes National Kidney Month, I join my colleagues in their efforts to increase awareness about the devastating effects of kidney disease. More than 400,000 Americans must receive life-saving dialysis three to four times each week because their kidneys have failed. In addition, more than 20 million citizens have chronic kidney disease, which is the precursor to kidney failure. Patients with kidney disease experience a gradual deterioration of kidney function that eventually progresses to kidney failure. Patients may live with the disease 10 or more years without outward symptoms before their kidneys fail. Once a patient develops kidney failure, his or her kidney function is so low that without dialysis or kidney transplantation death will occur from accumulation of fluids and waste products in the body.

Recognizing the need to educate my colleagues on kidney disease, I founded and co-chair the Congressional Kidney Caucus with my colleague Representative MARK STEVEN KIRK. Members of the Kidney Caucus are especially concerned about the growing prevalence of this disease.

Mr. Speaker, the leading causes of this disease is diabetes and high blood pressure, which as you are no doubt aware also disproportionately affect African Americans and Latino Americans. Given that early kidney disease has no symptoms, most people do not realize that their kidneys are about to fail. Therefore, it is critically important to increase awareness of the dangers of kidney disease, especially among the African American and Latino American communities. Individuals with high blood pressure and diabetes should ask their doctors to run simple blood and urine tests that can detect kidney disease.

If treated early, individuals with kidney disease will experience an improved quality of life and be able to maintain more daily life activities, including keeping their jobs. In addition, preventing kidney failure and improving care will result in substantial savings for the taxpayer.

I applaud the efforts of my colleagues to raise awareness about this important issue and to show support for Americans living with kidney disease. We must act now to help Americans learn more about this deadly disease and how to prevent its development and progression to kidney failure.

A TRIBUTE TO SHIRLEY ANN McRAE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Shirley Ann McRae, a distinguished member of the Brooklyn community. It behooves us to pay tribute to this outstanding leader and I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing her impressive accomplishments.

Shirley Ann McRae earned her Bachelor's degree in Organizational Management from Nyack College. She also earned Advanced Certificates in Labor Relations from Cornell University's New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Prior to retirement, Ms. McRae worked for MTA's New York City Transit. She was the Senior Director of Employee Programs and Registrations within the Employee Development Unit of the Office of Human Resources.

Shirley Ann McRae is passionate about community service. She has gone above and beyond the call of duty. Since 1996, Ms. McRae has been an active member of Brooklyn Community Board #2; serving as Chairperson of the Board for the last 4 years. Preceding her appointment to Chairperson of the Board, Ms. McRae was involved in many community board committees including a leadership position as Chairperson of the Open Space Subcommittee.

Ms. McRae currently serves on the board of directors for the Brooklyn Bridge Park Coalition and was also on the executive board of directors of the Atlantic Center Homeowner's Association since its creation and acted as the board's president for the last 6 years. Ms. McRae is a member of the Fort Greene Association, the Central Fulton Street Business Improvement District Steering Committee, the Community Action Board representing Region #10—Brooklyn Neighborhood Development Areas 1, 2, and 4.

A patron of the arts, Ms. McRae also serves on the board of directors for the Brooklyn Academy of Music Local Development Corporation and the Creative Outlet Dance Theatre of Brooklyn.

Shirley Ann McRae continues to give wholeheartedly to the Brooklyn community. Her dedication and time given to our community are a phenomenal achievement. She has truly made a strong positive impact and for that I ask that we recognize and give thanks to Shirley Ann McRae for her wonderful contribution to our community.

Mr. Speaker, please join our community in honoring Shirley Ann McRae for her dedication and outstanding service to our community.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION SHOULD FULLY PROTECT THE FREEDOMS OF ALL RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES WITHOUT DISTINCTION

SPEECH OF

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2006

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this important Resolution offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), urging the Russian Federation to fully protect the freedoms of all religious communities without distinction, whether registered or unregistered, as stipulated by the Russian Constitution and international standards.

It is undoubtedly true that the Russian Federation has made democratic progress since the breakup of the former Soviet Union. However, there is legitimate cause for concern that Russia is backsliding on some of the most basic democratic values, including the fundamental and inalienable human right to worship God according to the dictates of one's own conscience.

As this Resolution points out, registration is critical for religious groups to fully enjoy their religious freedoms. In fact, many of the rights and privileges afforded to religious communities are contingent upon registration.

Yet, some religious communities have been unjustly denied registration or had their registration improperly terminated. Other religious communities refuse to seek registration on theological or other grounds. In addition, there have been arson attacks on unregistered Protestant churches, with little or no effective response to bring the perpetrators to justice. And, in some areas of the Russian Federation, law enforcement authorities have carried out violent actions against believers from unregistered communities peacefully practicing their faith.

These actions are counter to values that democratic society's embrace and they are simply unacceptable.

As the former Chair and Ranking Democrat on the Commission on Security and Cooperation and Europe, I am well aware of the history of religious persecution and discrimination in Russia. In fact, when I served as Chairman of the Commission, I frequently met with religious dissidents and their families in the former Soviet Union. For example, during a Congressional delegation trip in 1988, Congressman SMITH and I met with Russian Baptists at the Hotel Pulkovo in Leningrad and with Father Gleb Yakunin at his apartment in Moscow. I also met with numerous Soviet Jewish refuseniks, some of whom were prosecuted for teaching Jewish traditions and history.

This Resolution, among other things, urges the Russian Federation to ensure full protection of freedoms for all religious communities without distinction, whether registered or unregistered, and to end the harassment of unregistered religious groups by the security apparatus and other government agencies. In addition, it urges the Russian Federation to vigorously investigate acts of violence against unregistered religious communities.

Mr. Speaker, I know there is sometimes a temptation to look upon Resolutions such as

this one as mere words on paper without significant meaning. However, we know from experience that we must never underestimate the power of our democratic ideals and values.

The truth is, the signing of the Helsinki Final Act in 1975—with its emphasis on respect for human rights—was instrumental in focusing attention on human rights abuses, including religious persecution, in the former Soviet Union. And, the attention on these abuses was such an embarrassment to the former Soviet government that it slowly, if grudgingly, began to address them.

Today, we must be no less vigilant in holding the Russian government to account for these on-going abuses.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this Resolution.

EXTENDING NORMAL TRADE RELATIONS TREATMENT TO UKRAINE

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2006

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, today we have the opportunity to recognize Ukraine's great strides since its emergence from the Iron Curtain. Indeed, the "Orange Revolution" ignited by the fraudulent elections of 2004 demonstrated the commitment of the Ukrainian people to a democratic future. By graduating Ukraine from Jackson-Vanik and extending Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR), we can help consolidate the Ukrainian government's adherence to this path.

The Jackson-Vanik amendment, enacted in 1974, originally focused on free emigration, but it became a symbol for all basic human rights including political freedom, freedom from religious discrimination, and freedom for the press. While its candidacy for Jackson-Vanik graduation demonstrates Ukraine's significant progress on these issues, there are still major areas where further improvement is necessary.

Specifically, the Ukrainian government and President Yushchenko must do more to live up to their pledge to fight anti-Semitism and condemn all ethnic and religious discrimination.

Over the past several years, Ukraine's largest private university, known in Ukraine as MAUP, has become a hotbed of anti-Semitic activity. In 2005, the school hosted an anti-Zionist conference featuring white supremacist David Duke and other Holocaust deniers from around the world and its President fervently supported the President of Iran's call for the destruction of Israel. The school has published and distributed "Mein Kampf" and "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion," and leading figures at the school have petitioned to bar Jewish organization in Ukraine and ban Jewish texts.

It is important that the Ukrainian government and President Yushchenko's "Our Ukraine" party have strongly condemned the university leaders. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have called the school's activities unlawful. The time has come for the government to reexamine the school's certification and prosecute those re-

sponsible for violating Ukraine's anti-incitement laws.

In addition, the government must take action to return communal religious property confiscated during the Soviet era through a standardized, timely, and transparent process.

Jackson-Vanik graduation is an important step forward in the strategic relationship between the United States and Ukraine. But it is by no means an end to the need for scrutiny of Ukraine's adherence to fundamental human rights values. As a member of the Congressional Ukraine Caucus and a co-chair of the Congressional Task Force Against Anti-Semitism, I support this legislation, but I believe it is vital that we continue pushing Ukraine in the right direction.

A TRIBUTE TO MERCEDES
DESORMEAUX NARCISSE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mercedes Desormeaux Narcisse, Esq., a distinguished member of the Brooklyn community. It behooves us to pay tribute to this outstanding leader and I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing her impressive accomplishments.

Mercedes Desormeaux Narcisse was born in Haiti and moved to Brooklyn as a teenager. From high school on, Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse was completely educated in New York. Growing up, she attended South Shore High, Tilden High, New York City Technical College and St. Joseph College.

Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse is currently the CEO and owner of Statewide Medical and Surgical Supplies Inc., located in the heart of Brooklyn. Preceding her exceptional accomplishments at Statewide, she was in charge of medical and surgical supplies for over 10 years. In addition, Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse is a registered Nurse and worked in the profession of home care, emergency room/trauma, neurology, and renal/oncology for over 15 years. In that time she was employed at several major hospitals in Queens and Brooklyn.

Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse holds extensive certificates for Orthotic fitting, ACLS, Chemotherapy, Peritoneal Dialysis, HIV Therapy, Wound Care, Infection Control and non-violent crisis intervention.

Mercedes Desormeaux Narcisse is an active participant in the community. She is currently president of the 41st Assembly District Democratic Club, which she has been a member of for the last five years. Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse is also President of Canarsie by Choice and has played a vital role in revitalizing the Avenue L Merchant Association. Additionally she sits on various boards and committees including Community Board 18, the Lions Club, Canarsie Bridges and the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce. Of particular importance to Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse is her local "Toys for Tots" chapter called "Brooklyn Toys for Tots." Working closely with New York City Councilman, Lew Fidler, and his Chief of Staff, Bryan Lee, at the 41st Assembly District Democratic Club, the Brooklyn Toys for Tots collected over 1,700 toys for the area's less fortunate children.

Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse's actions have not gone without recognition in the community. In 2005, the Friends of New York City Assemblyman, Nick Perry, honored Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse for her outstanding service to the community. Ms. Patricia Trim and her "Trim for Tots" organization also honored Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse for her continuing work in the community and continuing to "work in making life easier for underprivileged kids."

Mercedes Desormeaux Narcisse has played the role of loving mother, caring nurse, successful businesswoman and compassionate community member. Her vivacious and affectionate character has won the hearts of many. Today, we applaud Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse for her devoted and unselfish character. Her commitment and empathy for our community is above and beyond and for that I ask that we recognize this phenomenal woman today.

Mr. Speaker, please join our community in honoring Mercedes Desormeaux Narcisse for her dedication and outstanding service to our community.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION SHOULD FULLY PROTECT THE FREEDOMS OF ALL RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES WITHOUT DISTINCTION

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 14, 2006

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the House is considering H. Con. Res. 190 today, that urges the Russian Federation to protect fully the freedoms of all religious communities without distinction, whether registered and unregistered, as stipulated by the Russian Constitution and international standards. As stated in the resolution, the United States throughout its history has sought to protect the fundamental and inalienable human right to seek, know, and serve God according to the dictates of one's own conscience. I completely agree. The "first right" of religious freedom must be respected, and so this resolution is of critical importance.

The Russian Federation is an OSCE participating State and has freely committed to protect this right, so that all may freely profess and practice the religion or belief, either alone or in community with others. Russia has promised to do this through numerous OSCE documents, but also in its own constitution. Article 28 of the Russian constitution declares "everyone shall be guaranteed the right to freedom of conscience, to freedom of religious worship, including the right to profess, individually or jointly with others, any religion."

Unfortunately, this fundamental right is not always observed, especially for groups that are not registered with the government. For groups denied registration, who have had their registration stripped, or refuse registration on religious grounds, the lack of registration means they experience significant difficulties in enjoying their religious liberties. Registration is critical for religious groups to enjoy fully their religious freedoms, as many rights and privileges afforded to religious communities are contingent on obtaining registration.

In addition to discrimination by local authorities, in the last two years there have been more than ten arson attacks estimated on unregistered Protestant churches. At a Helsinki Commission hearing that I attended last year on problems facing unregistered religious groups in Russia, I was troubled to learn of the lack of effective action by law enforcement to bring the criminals to justice. The perpetrators of these hateful acts have gone unpunished, with police and other officials turning a blind eye. In the worst cases, law enforcement personnel have actually been the persecutors, carrying out violent actions against individuals from unregistered communities who are only wishing to practice peacefully their faith.

In closing, the Russian Federation is urged to do more, to ensure that all may fully enjoy their religious liberties. I therefore urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 190.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. MANANA PETROV

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dr. Manana Petrov, a distinguished member of the Brooklyn community. I am honored to pay tribute to this outstanding leader and I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing her impressive accomplishments.

Dr. Manana Petrov was born in the former Soviet Union during the height of the Cold War. Upon graduation from high school, Dr. Petrov enrolled in Rostov Medical Institute. When Dr. Petrov's family was forced to move to the Georgia Republic, she transferred and graduated from the Tbilisi Medical Institute. Dr. Petrov worked as a physician in the former Soviet Union until she, her husband and her daughter immigrated to the United States. Driven by the need to put food on the table, Dr. Petrov passed all of her medical exams within a year of immigrating to the U.S. Following the completion of her medical exams, Dr. Petrov began her residency at the Brooklyn Hospital working tirelessly to support her family.

In 1997, Dr. Petrov successfully passed her licensing exam and is currently Double-Board Certified in Internal Medicine and Hospice and Palliative Care. She has been serving as the attending physician at Brooklyn Hospital for the last 9 years. During her time at Brooklyn Hospital, Dr. Petrov has served as an outstanding role model for aspiring doctors and was nominated as the "Best Teaching Attending." Additionally, in 2000, she was appointed Medical Director of Hospice of New York and in 2003, she was named the Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine at the Brooklyn Hospice Center. Also in 2003, Dr. Petrov opened her own practice in Brooklyn, NY and is faithfully serving her patients to this day. Dr. Petrov has also worked for the last 5 years as an Associate Program Director in an Internal Medicine Program and boasts two publications in medical journals.

Dr. Manana Petrov is an inspiration to not only those in the medical profession, but to our entire community. She has overcome nu-

merous obstacles to realize her dream of becoming a doctor. Dr. Manana Petrov encompasses the true identity of a role model in today's society and for that I ask that we applaud her accomplishments and contribution to our community.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the accomplishments of Dr. Manana Petrov, as she offers her talents and community services for the good of our local communities.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Manana Petrov's selfless service has continuously demonstrated a level of altruistic dedication that makes her most worthy of our recognition today.

Mr. Speaker, please join our community in honoring Dr. Manana Petrov for her dedication and outstanding service to our community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BRIAN J. SCHOFF

HON. LINCOLN DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay my respects to Corporal Brian J. Schoff for his service to a grateful nation. Corporal Schoff may have given his life in defense of his country, but his soul and spirit will live on to the many who knew him. During a funeral procession in Manchester, Tennessee hundreds of people stood outside their homes and along the road to honor their fallen soldier.

Corporal Schoff, a member of 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, was awarded a posthumous promotion from Private First Class to Corporal, a Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, and Good Conduct Medal for his service.

While I didn't know Corporal Schoff personally, I do know the quality of our soldiers serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the globe. They are caring, patriotic, God-fearing men and women. I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Brian Schoff for his selfless sacrifice. May he live on in eternal happiness with his Lord in heaven.

Corporal Schoff is survived by his father, Brian L. Schoff; his mother, Cathy Odle; his stepfather, Kenneth Odle; stepsisters, Alicia Burgess and LaDawn Mauk; stepmother, Debra Schoff; and his half-sister, Brianna Schoff.

A TRIBUTE TO ROBIN KELLY SHEARES

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Robin Kelly Sheares, Esq., a distinguished member of the Brooklyn community. Robin Sheares was born in Harlem to the late Gloria and Herman Sheares. At the tender age of 6, her family moved to Bedford-Stuyvesant and ever since she has been a member of the Brooklyn community.

A proud graduate of the public school system, Robin has been an attorney for nearly 20

years. She is experienced in housing, criminal and civil law. In her nearly 20 years as an attorney, she has been an administrative law judge, an instructor, as well as an arbitrator. She is active in Brooklyn, working with community-based organizations, religious institutions, and youth mentoring groups.

Robin Kelly Sheares is an active member of the Wayside Baptist Church and her Block Association. At Wayside, she works closely with the Sunday School and Youth Ministry. Robin's other memberships include, but are not limited to, the Metropolitan Black Bar Association, the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association and the Brownstoners of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc.

Robin has been dedicated to the Noel Pointer Foundation and the New York Road Runner's Club. Robin is often called upon as a guest lecturer and career day speaker. She has even addressed students at her alma maters, Public School 309 and Junior High School 57. Although, Robin has no biological children, she has nurtured a number of youth and is a strong advocate for children and parents rights as evident by her work with the Brownstoners's Education Task Force and her alma maters: Brooklyn Technical High School and Ithaca College.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the accomplishments of Robin Kelly Sheares, as she offers her talents and community services for the good of our local communities.

Mr. Speaker, Robin Kelly Sheares' selfless service has continuously demonstrated a level of altruistic dedication that makes her most worthy of our recognition today.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT
OF COLUMBIA HATCH ACT RE-
FORM ACT OF 2006

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, with Government Reform Committee Chairman TOM DAVIS, I am introducing the District of Columbia Hatch Act Reform Act of 2006 to eliminate the discriminatory treatment of the District of

Columbia under the federal Hatch Act. This bill would retain federal Hatch Act authority concerning prohibited partisan and political activity that applies to every state because of the receipt of federal funds and importantly, would require the District to enact its own local version of the Hatch Act barring similar local violations, to become effective. Such a bill would, of course, automatically be held over for Congressional review for 30 legislative days as required by the Home Rule Act, typically affording several months before a District law may become effective, more than ample time for review and compliance with this bill. The House recognized that the present federal Hatch Act jurisdiction over D.C. was obsolete by removing this federal responsibility several years ago, but the Senate failed to act accordingly. Local Hatch Act violations in the District are rare, but the District needs its own Hatch Act to fully account and be responsible for local violations, with which a local objective body would be most familiar and should bear the cost of alleged violations.

This bill will leave in place the federal Hatch Act restrictions on the use of official authority as it relates to elections; the solicitation, acceptance, or receiving of political campaign contributions; and the prohibitions on running for public office in partisan elections and the use of on-duty time and resources to engage in partisan campaign activity. My bill would remove only the federal Hatch Act jurisdiction that applies solely to the District of Columbia and would require the District to have its own local Hatch Act, like every other jurisdiction, instead of requiring the Office of Personnel Management and its Special Counsel to spend time on investigation, fact-finding and judgment of unfamiliar local matters. The District will bear this local responsibility and a dual inequity—denigration of local government at the expense of the federal government—would end.

A TRIBUTE TO KIM BEST SIMMS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 15, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Kim Best Simms.

Kim Best Simms, the eldest child of Albert and the late Martha Best, has actively served our community for many years. She began serving the community via the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation. While serving at the Corporation, she worked in the community outreach centers where she conducted blood pressure checks and audio screenings, provided housing assistance and employment referrals and helped coordinate community outreach projects. She has received numerous awards including the Special Congressional Award, City Council Citation Award, State Senator Velmanette Montgomery Outstanding Community Service Award, Appreciation Award, NYC Sanitation Achievement Award, and the 79th Precinct Council Outstanding Community Service Award:

Kim Best Simms has been employed with the Department of Sanitation for many years. She is currently a Staff Analyst with the Department of Sanitation and has served in various capacities. In addition, she has also worked for the New York State Department of Mental Health for 13 years. She is a very talented individual with expertise in mortgage financing underwriting, real estate, and secretarial/computer technology, mental health, purchasing procurement, analytical, loan auditing, and management. She has certifications/licenses/degrees in the following areas: Contract Administration, Information Technology, Computer Technology, Specification Writing, Price & Cost Analysis, Real Estate, Guardian and Court Evaluation, AMAP, Foster Parenting, Royal Business College, OES, Amaranth, Citizens Police Academy, Procurement Planning and Management, and National Mortgage Underwriting.

As a Community Advocate, she loves working with people and serving her community. She especially enjoys mentoring teenagers as well as nurturing children. A devoted parishioner of St. Gregory's Church in Brooklyn, Kim is devoted to her church family and excellently serves the community via the church.

Mr. Speaker, Kim Best Simms is an outstanding leader and pillar of our community and most deserving of this tribute.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 16, 2006 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 17
 9 a.m.
 Judiciary
 Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.
 S-207, Capitol

MARCH 28
 9 a.m.
 Judiciary
 To resume closed hearings to examine war time executive power and the FISA Court; to be followed by an open session.
 SH-219

9:30 a.m.
 Indian Affairs
 To hold hearings to examine the settlement of Cobell v. Norton.
 SR-485

10 a.m.
 Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 Aviation Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine Federal Aviation Administration budget and the long term viability of the Aviation Trust Fund.
 SD-562

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
 Bioterrorism and Public Health Preparedness Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine public health infrastructure.
 SD-430

Appropriations
 Energy and Water Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2007 for Bureau of Reclamation.
 SD-138

2:30 p.m.
 Judiciary
 To hold hearings to examine judicial nominations.
 SD-226

Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 National Ocean Policy Study Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine offshore aquaculture.
 SD-562

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
 Retirement Security and Aging Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine Older Americans Act.
 SD-430

MARCH 29

9:30 a.m.
 Armed Services
 Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine U.S. non-proliferation strategy and the roles and missions of the Department of Defense and the Department of Energy in non-proliferation in review of the defense authorization request for fiscal year 2007 and the future years defense program.
 SR-222

Indian Affairs
 Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.
 SR-485

10 a.m.
 Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 Technology, Innovation, and Competitiveness Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine the importance of basic research to United States' competitiveness.
 SD-562

2 p.m.
 Judiciary
 Constitution, Civil Rights and Property Rights Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine state regulation of violent video games and the first amendment.
 SD-226

2:30 p.m.
 Armed Services
 Strategic Forces Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine missile defense programs in review of the defense authorization request for fiscal year 2007.
 SR-222

MARCH 30

10 a.m.
 Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 Disaster Prevention and Prediction Subcommittee
 To hold an oversight hearing to examine National Polar-Orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System.
 SD-562

Appropriations
 Energy and Water Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2007 for Yucca Mountain/EM/Office of Safeguards and Security.
 SD-138

Veterans' Affairs
 To hold hearings to examine the legislative presentations of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans Affairs, the AMVETS, the American Ex-Prisoners of War, and the Vietnam Veterans of America.
 SD-106

2 p.m.
 Armed Services
 Personnel Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine reserve component personnel policies in review of the defense authorization request for fiscal year 2007.
 SD-106

2:30 p.m.
 Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 To hold hearings to examine competition and convergence.
 SD-562

Energy and Natural Resources
 Water and Power Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine S. 1577, to facilitate the transfer of Spearfish Hydroelectric Plant Number 1 to the city of Spearfish, South Dakota, S. 1962 and H.R. 4000, bills to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to revise certain repayment contracts with the Bostwick Irrigation District in Nebraska, the Kansas Bostwick Irrigation District No. 2, the Frenchman-Cambridge Irrigation District, and the Webster Irrigation District No. 4, all a part of the Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, S. 2028, to provide for the reinstatement of a license for a certain Federal Energy Regulatory Commission project, S. 2035, to extend the time required for construction of a hydroelectric project in the State of Idaho, S. 2054, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of water resources in the State of Vermont, S. 2205, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain parcels of land acquired for the Blunt Reservoir and Pierre Canal features of the initial stage of the Oahe Unit, James Division, South Dakota, to the Commission of Schools and Public Lands and the Department of Game, Fish, and Parks of the State of South Dakota for the purpose of mitigating lost wildlife habitat, on the condition that the current preferential leaseholders shall have an option to purchase the parcels from the Commission, and H.R. 3812, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to prepare a feasibility study with respect to the Mokolunne River.
 SD-366

APRIL 4

10 a.m.
 Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 Aviation Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine Federal Aviation Administration funding options.
 SD-562

APRIL 5

9:30 a.m.
 Armed Services
 Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine Department of Defense's role in combating terrorism in review of the defense authorization request for fiscal year 2007 and the future years defense program; to be followed by a closed session.
 SR-222

Indian Affairs
 To hold hearings to examine the problem of methamphetamine in Indian country.
 SR-485

10:30 a.m.
 Appropriations
 Legislative Branch Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2007 for the Sergeant at Arms and U.S. Capitol Police Board.
 SD-138

2:30 p.m.
 Energy and Natural Resources
 Public Lands and Forests Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine the 2005 wildfire season and the Federal land management agencies' preparations for the 2006 wildfire season.
 SD-366

3 p.m.
 Armed Services
 Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine improving contractor incentives in review of the defense authorization request for fiscal year 2007.

SR-222

APRIL 6

10 a.m.
 Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 National Ocean Policy Study Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine offshore aquaculture, focusing on current proposals to regulate offshore aquaculture operations, discuss research in this field being conducted off the coasts of New England and Hawaii, and the impacts that expanded aquaculture operations would have on fishermen, seafood processors, and consumers.

SD-562

3:30 p.m.
 Armed Services
 Strategic Forces Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine military space programs in review of the defense

authorization request for fiscal year 2007.

SR-222

APRIL 26

10 a.m.
 Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 Technology, Innovation, and Competitiveness Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine fostering innovation in math and science education.

Room to be announced

10:30 a.m.
 Appropriations
 Legislative Branch Subcommittee
 To resume hearings to examine the progress of construction on the Capitol Visitor Center.

SD-138

MAY 3

10:30 a.m.
 Appropriations
 Legislative Branch Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2007 for the Government Printing Office, Congressional Budget Office, and Office of Compliance.

SD-138

MAY 17

10 a.m.
 Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 Technology, Innovation, and Competitiveness Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine accelerating the adoption of health information technology.

Room to be announced

MAY 24

10:30 a.m.
 Appropriations
 Legislative Branch Subcommittee
 To resume hearings to examine the progress of construction on the Capitol Visitor Center.

SD-138

JUNE 14

10 a.m.
 Commerce, Science, and Transportation
 Technology, Innovation, and Competitiveness Subcommittee
 To hold hearings to examine alternative energy technologies.

Room to be announced