

disrupture and avulsion from their beds by the most powerful agents of nature, corroborate the impression. But the distant finishing, which nature has given to the picture, is of a very different character. It is a true contrast to the foreground. It is as placid and delightful as that is wild and tremendous. For the mountain being cloven asunder, she presents to your eye, through the cleft, a small catch of smooth, blue horizon, at an infinite distance in the plain country, inviting you, as it were, from the riot and tumult roaring around, to pass through the breach and participate in the calm below.

The landscape Jefferson depicts has been inspirational to American leaders for hundreds of years. From Susquehannock Indian trading routes and to Revolutionary War battles; from the homes of the founding fathers to the first brave pioneers to make a home beyond the Blue Ridge Mountains; from the Civil War battles which threatened to divide the union to the underground railroad, our Nation was forged along this route. From Blue Ridge Mountains to the west and the fertile Piedmont to the east of the corridor the route in many ways exhibits the birth and development of our Nation's economy, social movements and political landscape. Perhaps even more significant than the battlefields that cluster along the route are the documents penned in the homes along the corridor. The Declaration of Independence, the Monroe Doctrine and the Marshall plan have influenced not only this Nation, but the entire world.

Every American citizen should take a trip along this route so that they know not only from where our Nation has come, but also to where we are going.

As we come upon the 400th anniversary of America's birthplace at Jamestown, I urge my colleagues to join with me in supporting this legislation.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA TAX INCENTIVES IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2006

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce the District of Columbia Tax Incentives Improvement Act of 2006. The legislation builds on and adds to federal tax incentives I first got through Congress in 1997 in order to help produce residential and business stability and growth. These tax credits have surpassed the city's highest hopes with a renewed and replenished residential and business tax base to show for it. However, this bill is necessary if this growth is to continue to make up for the fact that the District is not a state.

Studies and investigation by experts widely agree that the D.C. credits have been very successful and have been the single most important factor both in stemming residential flight and in stimulating commercial development in the applicable neighborhoods. However the changes are appropriate to: reduce but target the credits to poor neighborhoods not yet reached; increase the efficiency of the incentives; achieve increased leverage from city and other federal resources; and provide

more incentive to purchase homes given the large increase in housing prices in the District.

The legislation would extend the life of the D.C. Enterprise Zone (EZ) Benefits to 2009 to put the District on par with the other cities that have empowerment zones and will allow the city to fully realize and assess the effectiveness of the incentives and eliminate the continuing uncertainty that has plagued the program. There was a disruption of economic activity and planning by the business sector when Congress did not immediately renew those provisions that expired at the end of 2003. The District is experiencing this setback again as H.R. 4297, the Tax Reconciliation Act of 2005, has not yet been passed and the District tax provisions are extended in that bill.

The improved EZ incentives will target the areas of greatest need; align the Zone boundaries with areas designated for concentrated investment by the Mayor's Great Streets Initiative; and more effectively connect the unemployed with job opportunities by limiting the Employment Credit to those businesses that employ persons residing in those census tracts that have unemployment rates twice that of the national average.

The legislation also asks for a triple tax exemption for District bonds which would allow the District to issue bonds at lower interest rates and put D.C. on par with other "stateless" jurisdictions, including Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands, with no loss of revenue to the federal treasury. Currently, bonds issued by the District are exempt from federal and District taxes, but subject to taxation by state and local governments for bondholders located outside the District.

With the first-time homebuyer tax credit, this bill raises the \$5,000 credit for a first-time homebuyer in the District to \$10,000 to help meet sharply increased home prices that are driving many lower middle and middle income taxpayers from the city. Senator TRENT LOTT raised the amount in the Senate bill several years ago, but that bill did not pass the House. The homebuyer credit and the economic development occurring in the District have been almost entirely responsible for significantly stemming taxpayer, residential and business flight, bringing both in significant numbers to the District. However, the improvements in my bill are essential if the District is to achieve the 100,000 new residents necessary to sustain its stability that the former D.C. control board said was necessary.

The federal tax incentives provided under the Enterprise Zone and homebuyer credit programs will be critical to the continuation of the District's essential fiscal partnership with the federal government, which seeks to diversify the D.C. economy, reverse the continuing rise in the unemployment rate in significant portions of the city, strengthen and diversify the District's narrow tax base, and address its structural fiscal imbalance.

The D.C. Enterprise Zone tax incentives and the homebuyer credit alone cannot solve these problems. But by extending and improving these measures, Congress can continue to make a low-cost, efficient and effective contribution to the District's economic well being.

COMMEMORATING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CIVILIAN DEATHS AT QANA, LEBANON

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, the violent death of innocent civilians not involved in military hostilities is an appalling human tragedy. For decades, the violence in the Middle East has claimed a multitude of innocent civilian victims: Men, women and children, Arab and Israeli. It is with great sorrow that we remember one such incident that occurred just over ten years ago in Qana, Lebanon. A number of my constituents lost precious relatives on that day, April 18, 1996. Aboudi and Hati Bitar of Dearborn, Michigan, ages 7 and 9, were visiting their grandmother at Qana when they were killed. On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Qana incident, we solemnly remember and mourn the loss of these innocent children and the hundreds of others who were killed or wounded on that tragic day. On behalf of Michigan's 14th Congressional District, my family and I offer our support and prayers to the Bitar family and to the many others who lost loved ones at Qana.

When it comes to civilian deaths, violent hostilities play no favorites. I call on my colleagues to pause to remember the civilian victims that the violence in the Middle East has claimed on all sides. Let us remind ourselves that this carnage among the innocent will continue until America makes a stronger effort to help resolve the issues that have bred the violence there.

HONORING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE POLISH AMERICAN WAR VETERANS

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 25, 2006

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 60th Anniversary of the Polish American War Veterans located in Caseyville, Illinois.

The year 1946 saw our Nation's veterans return home from serving their country during World War II. During that year, a group of Polish American veterans in East St. Louis, Illinois gathered to form an organization that would recognize the contributions of Polish Americans during the war, celebrate their Polish heritage and assist veterans, their families and other organizations within their community.

The first discussions took place at Steve Mizulski's S.M. Tavern and the first organizational meeting was held at the Polish Hall in East St. Louis. Soon after this meeting, the Polish American War Veterans organization was chartered by the State of Illinois.

With the formation of the PAWV a slate of officers was installed. Stanley Gula was the first Commander and other officers were: Stanley Boryczko, Vice Commander, Joseph Skowron, Adjutant, Michael Bartosz, Quartermaster and Adam Wondolowski, Sergeant-At-Arms. Initial charter members were: Walter