

Mr. Speaker, the next time you or any of my other colleagues find yourself in western South Dakota, on your way to visit Mount Rushmore or the Black Hills, I encourage you to stop by Wall Drug to enjoy a refreshing cup of ice water and take in a little bit of western culture. I assure you it won't be hard to find; just follow the signs.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL  
EMPLOYEE COMBAT ZONE TAX  
PARITY ACT

**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 27, 2006*

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Federal Employee Combat Zone Tax Parity Act, which would provide parity by extending the tax credit currently received by military personnel to the civilian Federal employees working along side them.

Just the other day I received an e-mail from a constituent who is currently stationed in Afghanistan. She said: "I am completing a one year tour with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Kabul, Afghanistan. I work with the U.S. military and I live in the same residences with the U.S. military. During the riots on Memorial Day, I listened to the same gunfire as the U.S. military and I wore the same 30 pounds of Individual Body Armor and the Kevlar Helmet as the U.S. military."

It is only equitable that both military and civilian employees who are serving side by side receive the same tax treatment. In fact, even contract employees can get a tax break through the foreign earned investment tax credit, but Federal employees are specifically exempted from that tax credit.

As a former Federal employee, I am keenly aware of the invaluable contributions Federal employees make to our country. I believe we must ensure that our Federal workforce is treated with fairness and respect.

The Pentagon stated in the proposed regulations for the new National Security Personnel System that "NSPS is essential to the department's efforts to create an environment in which the total force, uniformed personnel and civilians, think and operates as one cohesive unit." What kind of message does it send to civilian employees if they receive disparate tax status from their military colleagues?

Just as military personnel, Federal employees serving in combat zones must leave their families behind and this can increase the financial burdens on families. Families with two working parents suddenly have only one parent able to care for the needs of the family. Military personnel in combat zones were given a tax credit back in 1913 to help alleviate their tax burden, but Federal employees were left out.

Since 9/11 it has become ever more vital to have a thriving civil service participating in our efforts to fight the war on terrorism. Now more than ever in our nation's history we must take action that reflects the contributions both our civilian and military employees are making—in the war on terrorism and as well as the daily operations of the Federal Government in providing the services upon which every American relies.

Federal employees are on the front lines of the war against terror.

The first American to die in Afghanistan was a CIA agent from my district.

Federal employees are in Iraq helping the Iraqi people to build a free nation.

Throughout the world, America's civil servants are serving our government and our people, often in dangerous locations.

How can we tell them we will not give them a fair and equitable tax credit that recognizes their hard work, dedication, and sacrifice?

We are asking Federal employees to take on more and more responsibility every day. They are on the ground in the war on terrorism taking over new roles to relieve military personnel of tasks civilian employees can perform. They are all playing a vital role in keeping us safe and deserve to be treated with respect and fairness.

We have a long tradition in the Congress of recognizing the valuable contributions of our federal employees in both the military service and in the civil service by providing fair and equitable treatment. This is not the time to shirk our duty to the civil service.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of the Federal Employee Combat Zone Tax Parity Act.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK ROMERO

**HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 27, 2006*

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an upstanding member of my community. Frank Romero passed away on Monday, July 24, 2006. He was 77.

Frank was a good man whom I knew well. He was a man committed to his family, his community and the Lord.

Frank spent 20 years as the treasurer for Conejos County. In that time, he produced some of the best audit reports the county had ever seen.

Frank was a tireless advocate for agriculture in the San Luis Valley. A farmer and rancher himself, Frank was connected to the land and knew the value of a hard day's work.

In our community, Frank was a servant in the true sense of the word through his work in the Knights of Columbus and other organizations.

Frank will be remembered as a loving family man, a devoted public servant and a genuinely good man. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, dancing, welding, traveling, reading, working on his ranch, snowmobiling and all outdoor activities with his family.

My heart goes out to Frank's family including his wife Philomena and his many children and grandchildren. I would like to express my personal gratitude for Frank's friendship.

TRIBUTE TO GREATER PHILADELPHIA  
HEALTH ACTION, INC.

**HON. ROBERT A. BRADY**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 27, 2006*

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Greater Philadelphia Health Action, Inc. (GPHA) as it joins commu-

nity health centers nationwide in celebrating "National Health Center Week," August 6–12.

National Health Center Week highlights the importance of community health centers as a vital part of health care systems in medically underserved areas. "Celebrating Patient Voice and Community Choice," is the theme of this year's campaign. The theme emphasizes the vital role that community boards of directors provide related to the delivery of health care to the community and determining the range of affordable services provided by the centers.

GPHA was founded in 1970 by the late Carl Moore, a long-time community activist who came together with other community leaders to form GPHA, one of the first medical managed care programs in Philadelphia. It is a community-based, grass roots effort whose mission is to provide quality comprehensive primary health care, health education, human services and child development services to families and individuals throughout the Delaware Valley, regardless of a patient's ability to pay.

The celebration of National Health Care Week also affords the opportunity to highlight the contributions of Mr. Moore and GPHA CEO Ron Heigler, recently elected chair of the Pennsylvania Primary Health Care Forum and his committed staff. All are to be congratulated for continuing to carry on Mr. Moore's vision of providing quality health care to the underserved.

Today GPHA operates six full-service health centers and a behavioral health program, as well as the Woodland Academy Child Development Center in Southwest Philadelphia. The centers also offer specialized treatment and patient education related to asthma, hypertension, heart disease, diabetes and HIV/AIDS.

There is no doubt that GPHA and the nation's community health centers fill a major void in our Nation's health care safety net.

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF PATROL  
AGENT SIMON GARZA, JR.

**HON. HENRY BONILLA**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 27, 2006*

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great American soon scheduled to end his lifelong career of service to our Nation—U.S. Customs and Border Protection Border Patrol Marfa Sector Chief Patrol Agent Simon Garza, Jr.

Born in Laredo, Texas, Chief Garza has spent his entire career fighting to secure our borders and ensure our freedoms. Chief Garza began his career, after studying engineering at the University of Houston, by serving in the United States Army, including service in the Republic of Vietnam in 1969 and 1970. In 1975 he joined the United States Border Patrol as a member of the 10th Session at Port Isabel, Texas. After graduation from the Border Patrol Academy, he received his first assignment in his home State in the Del Rio Sector. After much hard work and determination, Chief Garza was promoted in 1985 to Supervisory Border Patrol Agent. By 1990 he was again promoted to Patrol Agent in Charge, and by 1994 he was part of the senior staff at the Del Rio Sector Headquarters, serving as Assistant Chief Patrol Agent.

One year later Chief Garza's leadership role dramatically expanded when he was named Deputy Chief of the United States Border Patrol in Washington, D.C. There he represented the Border Patrol across the world, including in the Middle East, where he shared his valuable insight and experience with foreign leaders and governments.

After serving in Washington, DC, Chief Garza returned back to the field to lead the Marfa Sector as Chief Patrol Agent. During his tenure as Chief Patrol Agent, Chief Garza has modernized his sector to respond to the growing threats to our national security by utilizing mission-oriented technology and transitioning the Sector Intelligence Unit to a pro-active organization. Day in and day out, Chief Garza and his well-trained staff put their lives on the line to tirelessly work to protect our country.

I am proud to commend my good friend—and a hero to our Nation—Chief Simon Garza, Jr., for his distinguished and honorable career. His straightforward and unwavering leadership will be greatly missed. Congratulations on a job well done, Chief.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STEVENS-INOUE INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE LEGACY ACT

**HON. RICHARD W. POMBO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 27, 2006*

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, today, my colleagues, NEIL ABERCROMBIE, DON YOUNG, JIM SAXTON and I are introducing the Stevens-Inouye International Fisheries Monitoring and Compliance Legacy Act. This legislation will amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act—the Nation's premier fishery conservation statute—and Title IV of the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act to promote additional measures to reduce Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing activities. In addition, the bill will implement two international fisheries treaties—the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention and the Agreement between the Governments of the United States and Canada on Pacific Hake/Whiting.

This legislation continues to build on the United States' tradition of implementing fishery conservation and management measures domestically and internationally. The United States has been a leader at many international fora to move forward policies that require countries to enforce conservation measures on their flag vessels.

Some international fisheries commissions have been more successful than others in passing resolutions recommending the implementation of conservation measures for fish species in international waters and tying to these measures adequate enforcement provisions. Title I of the Stevens-Inouye International Fisheries Monitoring and Compliance Legacy Act requires the Secretary of Commerce to work toward getting all international fisheries commissions to adopt effective enforcement provisions for species of fish under their jurisdiction.

The effective enforcement of conservation measures for vessels fishing in international waters will help reduce and work toward elimi-

nating the illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities occurring in many high seas areas. This legislation would require the Secretary to work with international fishery commissions to adopt market-based incentives, use vessel monitoring systems, and create international vessel registries as ways to eliminate unregulated fishing activities.

Title II and III of this legislation would implement the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention and the Agreement between the Governments of the United States and Canada on Pacific Hake/Whiting, respectively. These two titles will allow for U.S. participation in these important international fishery commissions. As in Title I of this legislation, U.S. participation at these international commissions is critical to moving forward U.S. policies to further conserve Pacific Highly Migratory Species and Pacific Whiting and the adoption of effective enforcement measures.

The Senate Commerce Committee, led by Co-Chairmen STEVENS and INOUE, have been leaders on this issue and have passed similar legislation through the Senate and the short title of the bill recognizes their leadership in this area.

This is an important piece of legislation and I look forward to working with my House Colleagues and my Senate Colleagues to pass this bill to the President before the end of the year.

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE IRVING G. BERGMAN AMERICAN LEGION POST IN BANNING, CALIFORNIA

**HON. JERRY LEWIS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 27, 2006*

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, the American Legion is one of the most respected institutions in our Nation, honoring our veterans and providing service to local communities. This is especially true of the Irving G. Bergman Post 428 in Banning, California, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary in August.

Post 428 was chartered as the San Geronio Pass Post of the American Legion in August 1931, to serve the veterans living in the Riverside County cities of Banning, Beaumont, Cabazon, Cherry Valley and Calimesa. Over the years, the Post has also become a community resource in the rapidly growing area.

More than 200 veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the Persian Gulf are active members of the Post, which refurbished a building in downtown Banning for its headquarters. My colleagues will be pleased to know that a flag flown over our Capitol waves over the Post each day.

Members of the Post provide service to disabled veterans at the Jerry L. Pettis Memorial VA Medical Center in nearby Loma Linda. The Post is a frequent host for ceremonies on Veterans Day, Memorial Day and other observances. Members have sponsored widely recognized salutes, including a Salute to Blue Star Families and a communitywide Welcome Home to Troops which drew hundreds of area residents to honor California National Guard members returning from fighting the War on

Terrorism. The Post also helped completely refurbish the local Armory.

Post 428 is especially active in the community, with members visiting schools to talk about patriotism and what it means to be a veteran, presenting small flags to students and large flags to be flown at the schools. Members have also participated in safety fairs and local parades.

I am particularly grateful to the past commander of Post 428, Rees Lloyd, who has been a strong advocate for protection of the Mojave Cross Veteran's Memorial in the Mojave National Preserve in the desert area of my congressional district. Although it is in a remote location and has a clear history as a veterans memorial, the cross has been challenged by the American Civil Liberties Union, which sued the National Park Service to remove it. Through the efforts of Mr. Lloyd, who is now commander of all Riverside County Posts, the American Legion has taken a strong stand in support of maintaining the cross. With their support, I am hopeful we will prevail in keeping this memorial to our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, the American Legion motto is "Still Serving God and Country," and I believe that is especially true of Post 428. Please join me in thanking them for their public service, and congratulating them on their 75th anniversary.

UNITED STATES AND INDIA NUCLEAR COOPERATION PROMOTION ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

**HON. JIM McDERMOTT**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 26, 2006*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5682) to exempt from certain requirements of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 a proposed nuclear agreement for cooperation with India:

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Chairman, as a long time supporter of India and one of the co-founders of the India Caucus I have watched with gratification over the past decade as India and the United States have emerged as strategic partners. I believe the world's oldest and largest democracies have a lot to learn from and share with one another.

I am concerned, however, that the Bush administration seems to have focused all of the energy in this bilateral relationship on the recent proposal to commence nuclear cooperation. I understand India's growing energy demands and shortages (a crisis which we in the United States also face) and I believe that our two countries should cooperate and share technologies to promote energy independence. That is why, despite serious reservations about the proposed U.S.-India nuclear cooperation agreement and the Bush administration's ability to properly implement it, I co-sponsored H.R. 5682. I believe it is important that we continue to engage India on this important issue, and I supported this legislation to move this process along.

But I have serious concerns with the agreement as it stands. India has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and