

our military uses overseas, yet it has just 35 percent of the equipment it needs. The time has come to fix this.

Since 9/11, every single person in this country has benefited from the exemplary service provided by the men and women of the Guard. I urge the new leadership in this Congress, as they examine defense policies and budgets, to keep in mind the needs of these brave men and women, who for too long have been treated as second-class citizens by our military. This country cannot afford a broken state/federal response to homeland emergencies.

Madam Speaker, those National Guardsmen responsible for our homeland defense and military assistance to civilian authorities deserve the resources, planning and training they need. These reforms are long overdue, and the National Guard Empowerment Act of 2007 represents an essential step in the right direction.

HONORING RONALD PHILLIPS—3
MILLION MILES ACCIDENT FREE

HON. DAVID DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2007

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ronald Phillips, a resident of the First Congressional District of Tennessee, who has recently accumulated over 3 million accident-free miles during his career as a truck driver.

In June 2004, Ronald was the first driver to receive the 2 Million Mile Safe Driving Award at Con-way.

His other accomplishments include: 25,000 Safe Driver & Worker Hours Distinguished Driver Recipient; Member Con-way Freight's Elite President's Club; Quarterly Leaders Award from Con-way; National Finalist for Ray O'Brien Award in 2003, 2004, and 2005; Tennessee Truck Driving Championships—2nd place in straight truck class in 2006; Highway Watch Member; Certified Driver Trainer and Mentor; Con-way Defensive Driver Trainer; National Eagle Scout Association Member; Regional Values Task Force Member for Con-way; Member Trucker Buddy International.

Ronald Phillips is an AWANA leader at his church and has participated in several mission trips and charitable work.

Ronald Phillips resides in Gray, Tennessee with his wife of 23 years, JoAnn. They are the proud parents of one daughter, Regina (21) who is graduating from King College this year.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and my fellow members to join me in honoring Ronald Phillips, a testament to hard-work, determination and the values that have made this Nation so great.

HRANT DINK'S DEATH A LOSS FOR
MANY

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2007

Mr. CAPUANO. Madam Speaker, I supported H. Res. 102 and I condemn in the

strongest possible terms the cowardly murder of journalist Hrant Dink in Istanbul on January 19. I find particularly contemptible the actions of those who seemingly chose a seventeen-year-old youth—the alleged killer—to commit this appalling crime. This despicable act should not, however, obscure the inspiring solidarity of tens of thousands of secular, Muslim, and Armenian Christian Turks who filed past Mr. Dink's bier and marched in his funeral procession. Western news media have estimated the crowds between 50,000 and 100,000. Important Turkish officials, such as Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Ali Sahin; Interior Minister Abdulkadir Aksu; the governor of Istanbul, Muammer Guler; the head of the security forces, Celalettin Cerrah; and two generals joined Arman Kirakossian, the deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia, and other Armenian officials at the funeral service.

Everyone in the world who cherishes freedom and brotherhood must take heart when signs proclaiming "We are all Armenians" are carried through the streets of Istanbul. I wish to express my condolences to the family and friends of Hrant Dink. I want also to express my profound respect for all his fellow citizens who protested his murder and mourned his death.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BUDGET AUTONOMY ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2007

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, next to H.R. 328, the bill to give the District its first full vote in the House, the bill we introduce today is the most important bill to the District of Columbia that will come before Congress this session. The District of Columbia Budget Autonomy Act that Oversight and Government Reform Ranking Member TOM DAVIS and I introduce would give the District the right to enact its local budget without annual congressional oversight. The original Senate version of the Home Rule Act provided for budget autonomy, and 32 years of unnecessary difficulties and delay occasioned by the extra layer of oversight offer ample evidence that the time is at hand for Congress to permit the city to enact its local budget and move forward immediately to operate and manage the city.

This is the most important of the bills to be introduced as part of the "Free and Equal D.C." series of bills designed to accomplish two goals: (1) to give the city control over its core functions, such as budget, legislation and criminal justice; and (2) to transfer to the District the Home Rule Act provisions that prescribe the city's structure and others that make it necessary to come to Congress for changes, as well as many other provisions that have been included in the Act over the years. Budget Autonomy is most important because the ability to enact a budget and spend its own taxpayer funds as authorized is central to a jurisdiction's ability to operate and manage a functioning government. For that reason, the budget process is essential to the right to self government. By definition, Congress will retain jurisdiction over the District of Columbia under Article I, Section 8 of the

Constitution. Since, therefore, Congress could in any case affect changes in the District's budget and laws at will, it is unnecessary to require lengthy repetition of the District's budget process here. The redundancy of the congressional appropriations process is its most striking feature, considering that few if any changes in the budget itself are made.

I am gratified that Congress itself has moved toward the position embodied in this bill. The congressional experience with the District's budget has matured, and year after year, Congress has made no changes. At the same time, there has been increasing recognition of the hardship and delays that the annual appropriations process causes. As a result, Congress has already begun freeing the city from the congressional appropriations network. Last year, Congress approved the Mid-year Budget Autonomy bill, offering the first freedom from the federal appropriations process, the most important structural change for the city since passage of the Home Rule Act 32 years ago. The District can now spend its local funds annually without congressional approval, instead of returning mid-year to become a part of the federal supplemental appropriation in order to spend funds collected since the annual appropriations bill. Moreover during the past few years, appropriators have responded to our concern about the hardships resulting from delays in enacting the D.C. appropriation. I appreciate the agreement that has allowed the local D.C. budget to be in the first continuing resolution, permitting the city to spend its local funds at the next year's level. This approach has ended the lengthy processes that began years before I was elected, whereby the D.C. budget was delayed for floor fights about local policy and laws unrelated to the budget.

I have long argued that budget autonomy would benefit the city financially and operationally without withdrawing congressional jurisdiction. Only statehood would completely eliminate congressional power over the budget, but that option is not available at this time because the Mayor and City Council turned over the costs for some state functions carried by the city to the federal government in 1997. However, permitting the local budget to go into effect on time benefits the District and the Congress alike. For the city, a timely budget would: eliminate the uncertainty of the congressional process that in turn affects the city's bond rating and adds unnecessary interest for local taxpayers to pick up; significantly increase the District's ability to make accurate revenue forecasts; and reduce the countless operational problems, large and small, that result when the city cannot proceed on budget on time. Among the many examples, one particularly comes to mind that resulted when the D.C. budget was enacted five months late. Despite significant cuts in most functions, the city had increased the budget of the D.C. Public Schools (DCPS), but DCPS was forced to spend at the prior year's levels under a Continuing Resolution without the benefit of its urgently needed increase. As a result, for example, textbooks had to be returned to publishers under contract provisions; school supplies were returned; school buses under the bus lease contract were reduced, creating longer rides for disabled children; and tuition payments for special education students went unpaid.

Leaving its local budget to the District also would bring benefits to Congress. The D.C.

budget typically has had to come to the floor repeatedly before it passes because of attachments. Members then complain about the time and effort spent on the smallest appropriation affecting no other members. No budget autonomy bill can eliminate the possibility of attachments because there are countless ways to attach riders, but our bill reduces the likelihood that they will hold the city's local budget hostage and sometimes the appropriations process itself.

Members of Congress were sent here to do the business of the nation. They have no reason to be interested in or to become knowledgeable about the many complicated provisions of the local budget of a single city. In good times and in bad, the House and Senate pass the District's budget as is. Our bill takes the Congress in the direction it is moving based on its own experience and completes the process. Three decades of congressional interference into the vital right to self government should end this year and end first with budget autonomy for the District of Columbia.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT JEDEDIAH
BERMAN, BOISE, IDAHO

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2007

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Sergeant Jedediah Berman, an Idaho native, a constituent of mine, and a proud member of the United States Military for over 15 years.

In 2004, Sergeant Berman was serving in Iraq when he was seriously wounded by an IED explosion next to his Fox vehicle. The right side of his head was badly injured. His arm was mangled, his lung had collapsed, his knee was injured, and he had shrapnel in his shoulder. He was treated first at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, then transferred to Walter Reed Medical Center here in Washington, and finally sent to Madigan Medical Center in Fort Lewis to undergo intensive treatment and rehabilitation. While his doctors were able to rebuild much of his face, they could not replace his eye or repair his hearing in his right ear. Shrapnel remained lodged in his body and his brain, his knees continued to cause him intense pain, and he had only limited use of his arm.

Despite these enormous hardships and the significant pain of his injuries, Sergeant Berman badly wanted to return to Iraq to be with his unit, the Stryker Brigade Combat Team, which had been redeployed to Iraq while Berman was recovering. Last November, he received good news from the review board that he was fit for duty and would be able to rejoin his fellow soldiers. He deployed a few days before Christmas and has rejoined the Stryker Brigade in Iraq where he continues to serve our great Nation.

Madam Speaker, Sergeant Berman is an inspiration and example to us all. He exemplifies the sort of brave and honorable military men and women that are protecting our Nation in Iraq, Afghanistan, and throughout the rest of the world. I am proud and honored to represent him and many others like him in Congress, and I am grateful for their service to our great Nation. I would also like to recognize

Sergeant Berman's family, and the many other military families throughout America, for their sacrifices and thank his mother, in particular, who brought her son's service and commitment to my attention.

As we conduct our business in Congress, I know that my colleagues and I will continue to recognize and pay tribute to the honorable men and women who are serving our country and honor the many Sergeant Bermans who willingly make such great sacrifices to protect those of us at home. To our military men and women serving at home and abroad, the American people thank you for your great service to our country.

CONGRATULATING IRVIN
"CHOPPY" SMITH

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2007

Mr. BOUSTANY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to applaud the devoted service of Irvin "Choppy" Smith to the people of Acadia Parish. Choppy recently retired following 22 years of dedicated work as the Chief Deputy in the Acadia Parish Tax Assessor's Office.

During his distinguished service to Acadia Parish, Choppy was known as a devoted public servant who always provided a warm and welcoming environment for the many parish residents that sought the service of the Tax Assessor's Office. Choppy's vast knowledge of Acadia Parish was invaluable as he assisted countless taxpayers.

Madam Speaker, it is people like Choppy Smith that continue to inspire all of us, and I ask my colleagues to join me and the people of Acadia Parish in congratulating Choppy for his invaluable accomplishments for the State of Louisiana.

A TRIBUTE TO REV. JAMES
MOORE, SR.

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2007

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Rev. James Moore, Sr. the pastor of the Second Mount Zion Baptist Church, upon the occasion of his installation as the president of Black Clergy, Inc. of Philadelphia and Vicinity.

Rev. Moore is a man of uncompromising faith and vision. His absolute devotion to church and community is recognized by his parishioners, his fellow clergy members and civic officials.

As the president of the Black Clergy I know he will take the organization to even greater heights because of his commitment to build working partnerships beyond the walls of the church to solve some of the serious problems our communities are facing.

Biblically guided by Philippians 2:5, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus," Rev. Moore, in spite of his accomplishments, walks the path of humility as he offers spiritual inspiration to those in need.

I know that all of my colleagues in the Congress join me in honoring Rev. Moore.

CONDEMNING ABBAS'S REMARKS
AGAINST ISRAEL

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2007

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, at a Fatah party rally on January 11, 2007, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas reportedly said that Palestinians "have a legitimate right to direct our guns against the occupation [Israel]" and that Fatah's "fighting" stance is a "model for liberation."

I find it disheartening and deeply troubling that Abbas would sanction violence against Israel instead of calling upon his people to support peaceful compromise with Israel.

Palestinian leaders must understand that they can no longer support peace when speaking to Western audiences while advocating violence against Israel when addressing their people. Abbas' statements suggest that he is not the "moderate" Palestinian leader that many claim he is. Unless he renounces violence once and for all and takes steps to disarm terrorists, Abbas may not deserve additional U.S. aid.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEWARK
PUBLIC LIBRARY ON THEIR
BLACK HISTORY MONTH EXHIBITION

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2007

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to congratulate the Director and Board of Trustees of The Newark Public Library, and Dr. Sibyl E. Moses, guest curator, on the occasion of the opening of the Library's Black History Month exhibition entitled "The Creativity and Imagination of African American Women Writers in New Jersey." As the representative from the 10th Congressional District, I am very proud of my long affiliation with the library and the valuable services they render to our community.

The exhibition at Newark Public Library celebrates the diversity and richness of published works created by African American women in New Jersey. The exhibition documents an important aspect of New Jersey's cultural history, and brings this information together in one place and at one time, for the people of Newark and for all residents of New Jersey. I applaud The Newark Public Library for interpreting their collections for all to see.

I also commend Sibyl E. Moses, the guest curator, for her achievements and many years of commitment and service to the people of New Jersey. She is an outstanding citizen, whose leadership is recognized nationally and internationally in the field of library and information science. For more than 20 years, she has identified, preserved, and promoted an awareness of books published by African American women in New Jersey. Her book, *African American Women Writers in New Jersey, 1836-2000: A Biographical Dictionary and Bibliographic Guide* (Rutgers University Press), upon which this exhibition is based,