The money spent on the Iraq war has put a tremendous amount of pressure on the recipients of Social Security. Many older Americans have to choose between medication and food because they cannot afford both. Add to this the fact that thousands of Americans still do not have any health insurance.

America has become greedy and corrupt. When did America stop caring about the common people? The Civics Class of Van High School wants the voice of the common man to be heard in Washington, D.C. We are the future of this great nation and our representatives must consider this while debating the course our country will take, not only in Iraq, but also at home.

Sincerely,

The Senior Civics Class of Van Jr.-Sr. High School: Justin Gent, Christopher Boulet, Robert Burnett, Joshua Cook, Jason Hoosier, Matthew Kuhn, Terry Legg, Gregory O'Dell, Jonathan Simms, Robert Valle, Scott White, Kasey Whitman.

RECOGNIZING JONATHON OTTO FOR HIS EFFORTS IN THE AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE KATRINA

HON. PATRICK J. MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Mr. PATRICK J. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Mr. Jonathon Otto for his efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Mr. Otto has raised money for and helped rebuild the Mississippi town of Bay St. Louis, which was decimated in Hurricane Katrina. Mr. Otto has been nominated for the Bucks County Chamber of Commerce's 2007 Ambassador Award.

Mr. Otto's career with Penn Valley Contractors, Inc. as a construction superintendent and estimator, along with his passion for helping others, made him the perfect candidate to spearhead fundraising efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina for the Bucks/Mont Katrina Relief Project.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Otto has truly risen to the challenge. He raised more than $2 million and personally oversaw reconstruction efforts. He stepped up and coordinated the collection of materials, volunteers, and transportation, supervising the construction of a brand-new daycare center in Bay St. Louis.

Beyond the Katrina Relief Project, Mr. Otto has served the community in a variety of ways, including acting as Treasure and Director of the Phillips Mill Community Association, trustee of the Newtown Friends School, treasurer and clerk of the Finance Committee, and director of the Heritage Conservancy.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Otto is an inspiration for us all. When a community was in trouble, he jumped in and began rebuilding. On behalf of the residents of the Eighth District, of Bay St. Louis and of all Americans, I congratulate Mr. Otto on his commendable efforts with the Katrina Relief Project. In a stunning display of good will and humanity, he has reminded us of the important things in life and the value of community.

HONORING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE METROPOLITAN YOUTH SYMPHONY OF ARIZONA WAYNE ROEDERER, MUSICAL DIRECTOR

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 25th anniversary of the Metropolitan Youth Symphony of Arizona. This is a remarkable milestone for any organization, but especially for a volunteer-run, nonprofit one. As a long-time supporter of the arts, I must take this occasion to commend them on a job well done, and commend them for undertaking this ambitious endeavor.

Let me tell you a little bit about MYS. In the spring of 1982, a group of interested parents and music educators from the East Valley began exploring the potential for developing a youth orchestra. Their goal was to provide a challenging program of excellence in orchestral music for your school musicians through the ninth grade. The first Metropolitan Youth Symphony season was launched that same year as more than 150 youngsters participated in the September auditions. The gala premiere concert, on November 10, 1982, featured two string orchestras and one full symphony orchestra.

The growth of Metropolitan Youth Symphony has been impressive. Now in its 25th season, the 267 members of MYS, under the direction of Wayne Roederer, musical director/principal conductor; Lew Felton, associate conductor; and Amy Bennett, Division III conductor, are divided into three string orchestras and one full symphonic orchestra. Members attend weekly rehearsals at Westwood High School and perform in at least four formal concerts each season. Over the years, MYS orchestras have been invited to perform in a variety of locations including Phoenix Symphony Hall, the Mesa Amphitheatre, Fiesta Mall, Disneyland and Washington, DC. On June 13, 1993, members of Division I, the full symphony orchestra, received the honor of performing at New York City's famed Carnegie Hall. The gala 25th anniversary concert will be performed at the Ikeda Auditorium of the Mesa Arts Center at 7 p.m. on April 28, 2007, with alumni performing with Division I.

In addition to orchestra performance opportunities, MYS sponsors wind sectionals, a recital series, Division I weekend retreat in Prescott, a scholarship competition and the MYS Fiddlers.

The mission of the Metropolitan Youth Symphony has always been to educate young instrumental musicians through the ninth grade in the art of orchestral performance through the use of the world's finest orchestral music to develop character, discipline, leadership, cultural awareness, and a strong commitment to excellence. This enables MYS to contribute to the East Valley's rich cultural heritage and create a higher level of appreciation for the performing arts.

This occasion marks not only the 25th anniversary of a vibrant organization, but the retirement of Musical Director and Principal Conductor Wayne Roederer. Without him, this anniversary would not have been reached, and hundreds of young musicians would have missed out on the experience of performing with similarly motivated individuals. I say thank you and well done.

TRIBUTE TO THE LADY HORNETS BASKETBALL TEAM OF HARRIS-STOWE STATE UNIVERSITY

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Lady Hornets Basketball Team of Harris-Stowe State University for their crowning achievement on March 3, 2007 when they became the first-ever Lady Hornets team to clench the American Midwest Conference—AMC—title.

To win this historic title the team, led by Head Coach Christopher Lewis, soundly defeated the Columbia College Cougars by a score of 78–58 on the Cougars' home court in Columbia, Mo. To put the score in perspective and to appreciate the tenacity of the squad, a brief recap of the victory might be appreciated.

Trailing by six points early in the first half, the Lady Hornets worked a 40 percent shooting effort into a halftime advantage of 36–29. They opened the second half with one of their patented runs, extending their lead to 13. They continued to increase their field-goal percentage to 51 percent and their three-point success to 43 percent. Senior guard Laniya Stevens led the Hornets with 23 points and junior guard Chanel Ross added a double-double with 21 points and 10 steals. Both Stevens and Ross received First Team All-Conference honors, while Kanisha Pettis received an All-Conference honorable mention. Stevens received another honor when her number, 20, was retired by the school.

With their victory—their sixth consecutive win—the Lady Hornets moved on to play in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Tournament or the NAIA, also a first for the team.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize the Lady Hornets Basketball Team of Harris-Stowe State University—Jamira Easley, Dionn Jackson, Chareka Terry, Dominique Allen, K'Vonn Brittingham, Tawanda Barns, Briranda Griffin, Kanisha Pettis, Erica Anderson, Chanel Ross, Carmon Weaver, Laniya Stevens, Kimberly Lang, Valarie Mason, Amy Williams, Stephanie Roberts, Tamara Black, Shelia Walker and Marvis Jackson—for becoming the first team to earn the American Midwest Conference title. From a 73-game losing streak a few years ago to champions today, the Lady Hornets have become a shining example of what commitment, perseverance and hard work can accomplish. They are a force to be reckoned with and the pride of the school and the entire St. Louis community. In their honor I ask my congressional colleagues to join me in honoring the team, their coach, Christopher Lewis, Athletic Director Richard Fanning, University President Dr. Henry Givens, Jr., and the entire university. With such continued dedication and hard work, a national title could be in the Hornets' nest in the near future.