From 1992 to 1993 Chief Taylor served as the President of the Indiana Fire Chiefs Association. This association strives to increase the professionalism and success of fire departments throughout Indiana. He has served on numerous other boards across the State of Indiana each benefiting greatly from his expertise.

In 2005 Chief Luther Taylor was awarded the Sagamore of the Wabash, the highest honor bestowed by governors of Indiana, by Governor Joe Kernan. This award is given only to those who make major contributions to the lives of Hoosiers.

So today, on behalf of the citizens of South Bend, I thank Luther Taylor for his years of dedication to the safety and security of our community. As he retires from almost 35 years on the South Bend Fire Department, I pay special tribute to one of the finest fire chiefs to ever serve Indiana. His service will always be remembered for numerous lives that were saved as a result of his efforts and the changes that each citizen can see as a result of his leadership.

TRIBUTE TO THE CITY OF LENEXA, KANSAS, ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity today to recognize the 100th anniversary of my community of residence, the city of Lenexa, Kansas, one of the leading communities in the Third Congressional District of Kansas. Lenexa officially became a city on May 8, 1907, and the community is coming together for an eight-day celebration from May 5–12 of this year.

Lenexa was platted in 1869 by French-born civil engineer, Octave Chanute, who, in addition to designing the original Hannibal Bridge over the Missouri River in Kansas City, also served as a mentor to the Wright Brothers in their quest for flight. Lenexa was named for Na Nex Se, a highly respected, hard-working Shawnee Indian woman, the daughter-in-law of Chief Black Hoof. Thirty-eight years later, on May 8, 1907, Lenexa was incorporated as a City of the Third Class in Kansas.

In Lenexa's earliest days, people from various backgrounds and cultures came together to form this great city. With a population of approximately 300, the young city boasted a healthful location, graded schools, three churches, suburban train service, excellent telephone service, and an electric railway station.

Today, Lenexa, which has grown to a population of 46,000 residents and enjoys a healthy business base, is considered a city of choice for a variety of high tech and bioscience companies. The city also is looked to as a leader in local government initiatives such as watershed management and public safety.

Lenexa, which is known as the City of Festivals for the numerous festivals and events it hosts each year, will hold a week-long community celebration (May 5–12, 2007) to mark the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

Madam Speaker, Lenexa cherishes its rich history, heritage and culture, and with this celebration marking the city's 100th anniversary, Lenexa honors its past while looking forward to the future. I join with my neighbors, friends and constituents in Lenexa in honoring this important milestone.

INTRODUCING THE ENHANCED OPTIONS FOR RURAL HEALTH CARE ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I raise to introduce the Enhanced Options for Rural Health Care Act. This legislation allows critical access hospitals to use beds designated for critical access use, but currently not being used for that purpose, for assisted living services financed by private payments.

This bill will help improve the financial status of small rural hospitals and extend the health care options available to people living in rural areas without increasing federal expenditures. Currently, fear that rural hospitals will lose critical access status if beds designated for critical access are used for another purpose is causing rural hospitals to allow beds not needed for a critical access purpose to remain unused. This deprives rural hospitals of a much-needed revenue stream and deprives residents of rural areas of access to needed health care services.

My colleagues may be interested to know that the idea for this bill comes from Marcella Henke, an administrator of Jackson County Hospital, a critical access hospital in my congressional district. Ms. Henke conceived of this idea as a way to meet the increasing demand for assisted living services in rural areas and provide hospitals with a profitable way to use beds not being used for critical access purposes. I urge my colleagues to embrace this practical way of strengthening rural health care without increasing federal expenditures by cosponsoring the Enhanced Options for Rural Health Care Act.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR A NATIONAL FOSTER PARENTS DAY

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of National Foster Parents Day. Foster parents are vital to the development of today's children and tomorrow's leaders. As former President John Fitzgerald Kennedy once proclaimed, "Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future." Foster care parents dedicate their lives to care for the less fortunate children, with little compensation or recognition. They perform this noble task under very difficult circumstances with love and care. Recognizing these efforts is important.

There are 523,000 children in foster care in the United States today. Congress has made a number of improvements to foster care laws over the last decade; improvements that have helped support our children and families. It is good to recognize these advances, but we should take a moment to consider how we can improve the system further.

There are currently over 2½ million children being cared for by family members nationally. However, unless these relatives have waivers from the Department of Health and Human Services, they are not eligible for foster care maintenance payments. Withholding financial support from family providers greatly ignores the needs of these children and families. Almost 19 percent of kinship care providers live in poverty, and 30 percent to 40 percent of children in foster care have chronic medical problems. It is unrealistic to expect these providers to afford appropriate care for these vulnerable children simply because they are family. This is a very personal problem to me. The 7th Congressional District in Illinois—my Congressional District—has the highest percentage of children being raised by grandparents in the nation. Two other Chicago districts follow close behind. It also upsets me greatly that the limitations in our system have a disproportionate effect on minority children and families, who tend to opt for guardianship rather than adoption.

So, I join my colleagues in supporting a day to recognize foster parents and their tremendous contribution to society.

VAISAKHI DAY CELEBRATED AROUND THE WORLD

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, on April 13 and 14, the Sikhs community celebrated Vaisakhi Day with events in Washington, New York, London, Canada, Australia, and wherever Sikhs live. It was a very proud day for them. The Washington, DC, event was led by Dr. Paramjit Singh Ajrawat, a well-known Sikh activist and supporter of a free Khalistan.

Large numbers of Sikhs showed up in these locations to celebrate the day. They called for freedom for the Sikh nation. They raised slogans in support of Khalistan, the Sikh homeland. Freedom is the birthright of all peoples and nations.

When America became independent, Punjab was already independent. Dr. Gunnit Singh Aulakh, president of the Council of Khalistan, has called on Sikhs to celebrate Vaisakhi Day by rededicating themselves to achieving the freedom that is their birthright.

Madam Speaker, we should put this Congress on record with a resolution in support of self-determination for Khalistan and throughout the subcontinent. Why is India opposed to a free and fair vote on the matter, in the democratic way? We should end our aid and trade with India until I the basic rights of all are allowed to be enjoyed, the way that democratic countries behave.

VAISAKHI DAY CELEBRATED WITH PARADES, EVENTS

WASHINGTON, DC, Apr. 14, 2007.—Vaisakhi Day, the 308th anniversary of the creation and consecration of the Khalsa Panth by Guru Gobind Singh, is being celebrated with parades and events in Washington, London, New York, Canada, England, Australia, and around the world.

The Washington parade occurs on April 14 under the leadership of Dr. Paramjit Singh