

of us. Teacher Appreciation Week is sponsored by the National PTA and is a time to strengthen support and respect for teachers.

One of the top priorities of the fiscally responsible budget recently passed by the House of Representatives was to put our children and families first by increasing investments in education and expanding access to a high-quality education for all of America's children.

Unfortunately, the President's fiscal year 2008 budget cut education funding by \$1.5 billion below this year's level—at a time of record school enrollments and the challenging academic requirements of No Child Left Behind.

In sharp contrast, the budget passed by the House reverses the administration's policy of under-investing in education for our children. It rejects the President's proposal to cut funding for the Department of Education by \$1.5 billion below the 2007 enacted level and eliminate 44 different programs, instead providing for new investments in vital programs such as Head Start, special education (IDEA), Title I and other programs under the No Child Left Behind Act.

Overall, the House budget provides for investments of nearly \$8 billion more for 2008 and 11 percent more over the next 5 years for education and training than the President deemed necessary.

To see the future, we must stand on the shoulders of giants, and giants in our local communities are our school teachers who—despite the many challenges they face in classrooms each day—get up every day to teach and inspire our children.

On this day, let us remember why the House—in our recent budget—invested in our schools to ensure that our teachers have the tools and resources they need. Only when teachers have all they need to teach, can they give our children the high-quality education necessary to succeed in this increasingly competitive global economy.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE DIABETES TREATMENT AND PREVENTION ACT OF 2007

### HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 9, 2007*

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Diabetes Treatment and Prevention Act of 2007 with my good friend, VITO FOSSELLA.

There is no question that diabetes is a mounting challenge for our nation's health care system. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the number of Americans with diagnosed diabetes has doubled over the past 15 years. Over 20 million Americans are currently living with this disease, but 6 million of them have not yet been diagnosed. Another 54 million are classified as "pre-diabetic," with a high-risk of developing this condition. The statistics are simply staggering.

Beyond being a public health threat, Diabetes accounts for over \$92 billion in direct medical costs every year, and these numbers are only likely to increase. The Diabetes Treatment and Prevention Act would increase our

ability to prevent new cases of diabetes and improve disease management.

Our bill would codify the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Diabetes Translation and set up demonstration grants to allow for further research on how to translate effective diet and exercise interventions for us in the general populations. It would also increase the ability of state and local health departments to engage in surveillance and education activities, and set up demonstration projects to examine the best ways to treat diabetes when it occurs in conjunction with other chronic health conditions.

I am proud that we have taken a multi-pronged approach in this legislation to attack our mounting diabetes epidemic on two fronts; it will promote research at the Centers for Disease Control so that we may better understand this disease while also funding innovative treatment and education efforts at the state and local level.

This legislation, combined with the Engel/Fossella Gestational Diabetes (GED) Act (H.R. 1544), which combats growing rates of Diabetes in pregnant women across the nation will go a long way towards managing and preventing the onset of Diabetes.

I urge my colleagues to co-sponsor this legislation today.

#### TRIBUTE TO PARTICIPANTS IN 2007 WE THE PEOPLE NATIONAL FINALS MARCH 8, 2007

### HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 9, 2007*

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, from April 28–30, 2007, more than 1,200 students from across the country visited Washington, D.C., to take part in the national finals of We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution, the most extensive educational program in the country developed to educate young people about the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. Administered by the Center for Civic Education, the We the People program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education by act of Congress.

I am proud to announce that a class from St. Thomas Aquinas High School of Overland Park, Kansas won the Unit Three: Constitution Shapes Institutions Award at this prestigious national event. Six unit awards were presented to the schools achieving the highest scores, based on the first two days of competition in each of the six units of the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution text. These outstanding students, through their knowledge of the U.S. Constitution, won their statewide competition and earned the chance to come to our Nation's Capital and compete at the national level.

While in Washington, the students participated in a three-day academic competition that simulates a congressional hearing in which they "testify" before a panel of judges. Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles as they evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. It is important to note that independent studies of the We the People program indicate that alumni of this nationally acclaimed program

display a greater political tolerance and commitment to the principles and values of the Constitution and Bill of Rights than do students using traditional textbooks and approaches. With various reports and surveys that reveal the lack of civic knowledge and engagement, I am pleased to support such an outstanding program that continues to produce an enlightened and responsible citizenry.

Madam Speaker, the names of these outstanding students from St. Thomas Aquinas High School are:

Elizabeth Berra, Andrew Billam, Hannah Cisper, John Clark, Greg Correia, Lindsey Drilling, John Drouhard, Shanna Gast, Whitney Gremillion, Kyle Hauesser, Brigid Halling, Michael Hare, Thomas Hartung, Jordan Herbert, Kaitlyn Hirt, Kelly Jefferson, Ryan Johnson, Andrea Lickteig, Joseph McGroder, Mason Miller, Helen Mubarak, Andrew Peck, Derek Peterson, Erin Peterson, Andrew Robison, Christopher Sevedge, Dylan Slaven, and Melissa Smith.

I also wish to commend the teacher of the class, Spencer Clark, who is responsible for preparing these young constitutional experts for the national finals. Also worthy of special recognition is Lynn Stanley, the State coordinator, and Ken Thomas, the district coordinator, who are among those responsible for implementing the We the People program in my State.

I congratulate these students on their exceptional achievement at the We the People national finals.

#### CELEBRATING THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF LA LUZ

### HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 9, 2007*

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor La Luz, a weekly bilingual newspaper that serves the English- and Spanish-speaking communities of Lake County, Illinois. This Wednesday, May 9, La Luz will celebrate its fifth anniversary.

The newspaper and its editor, Mr. Ryan Pagelow, provide an invaluable public service to the Latino community of northern Illinois. I have had the pleasure of working with Mr. Pagelow and La Luz since the newspaper's inception on a variety of issues, and I know firsthand the professionalism that the staff displays on a daily basis.

One issue in particular that deserves special recognition is La Luz's coverage of my office's Abuelitas program. Through this initiative, we work with local community members and our embassy in Mexico to bring grandparents of 10th Congressional District residents to the United States. Many of these families have not seen each other for more than 20 years. The Mexican visitors spend 1 month with their loved ones, reconnecting and catching up on years of missed memories.

I credit La Luz with spreading the word about this heart-warming program. By publicizing the issue, we have expanded the Abuelitas program to multiple visits each year. In groups of 20 to 30 people at a time, we are bringing families together.

It is focusing on this and many other issues of importance to Lake County that makes La Luz an indispensable part of the 10th Congressional District. I ask that my colleagues

join me in celebrating their fifth anniversary, in hopes of many more years of continued success.

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S MENTAL  
HEALTH AWARENESS DAY

**HON. JOHN ABNEY CULBERSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 9, 2007*

Mr. CULBERSON. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. According to the U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health, approximately one in five of the children and adolescents in this country will experience the signs and symptoms of a mental health problem this year.

Today, local children's mental health initiatives across the nation will celebrate the strides they have made with children who are experiencing serious emotional and behavioral problems. I congratulate the Harris County Systems of Hope in Houston, Texas, which has been successful in using a family-driven approach to help emotionally disturbed youth become productive, responsible citizens and thrive in their communities, rather than getting caught in the juvenile justice system.

I urge my colleagues to join in celebrating National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day and supporting their local children's mental health initiatives.

CONGRATULATING ROBERT  
WAPLES

**HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 9, 2007*

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, dedicated and well-prepared first responders are one of the greatest assets to a community during an emergency. Today, I am honored to recognize Mr. Robert Waples of Rural/Metro Ambulance in Aurora, Colorado. Mr. Waples has been named as a Star of Life Award recipient by the American Ambulance Association for his exceptional service and commitment to the Colorado community.

Mr. Waples has been a member of EMS for the past 30 years, over which time he has sought to improve the standard of medical transportation for the Aurora region. His hard work and efforts are shining examples of leadership and vision, helping the ambulance community better respond to the public.

The Star of Life Award is given to outstanding individuals nationwide within the ambulance service field who have shown above-and-beyond dedication to their profession and society. Recipients are medics, dispatchers, and EMS personnel who have promoted the success of pre-hospital care and the effectiveness of medical transportation. This May, the American Ambulance Association will honor these men and women in Washington D.C., recognizing their heroic, life-saving achievements and contributions to their local communities.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Waples for this honor. May he

continue to be an inspiration to his organization as well as to the medical transportation community as a whole.

OUTSTANDING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS  
FIRST CONGRESSIONAL  
DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO

**HON. HEATHER WILSON**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 9, 2007*

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, the following graduating high school students from the First Congressional District of New Mexico have been awarded the Congressional Certificate of Merit. These students have excelled during their academic careers and proven themselves to be exceptional students and leaders with their scholastic achievements, community service, and participation in school and civic activities. It is my pleasure to be able to recognize these outstanding students for their accomplishments. Their parents, their teachers, their classmates, the people of New Mexico and I are proud of them.

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT AWARD WINNERS 2007

Daniel Lerma, Robert F. Kennedy Charter High School; Jennifer Roberts, Mountainair High School; Jennifer Johnston, Del Norte High School; James H. Caughren, Sandia Preparatory School; Arthur Chacon, Manzano High School; Siobhan Degnan, Southwest Secondary Learning Center; Abigail Martinez, South Valley Academy; Molly Nelson, Albuquerque Academy; Ashley Marie Maturino, Evangel Christian Academy; Ruby Trujillo, Rio Grande High School; Nicholas A. Maestas, Highland High School; David Aaron Parks, Cibola High School; Kelsey Byrne, Moriarty High School; Mathew Garcia, West Mesa High School; Eric Layer, Sandia High School; and Austin Baker, Temple Baptist Academy.

Angelica Aguilar, Los Puentes Charter School; Amanda Fernandez May, St. Pius X High School; Ashley Hope Darnell, Bernalillo High School; Sara Beth Dunham, Victory Christian School; Geri Lucia Lia, Menaul School; Corina Franco, New Futures School; Kelly Walker, Bosque School; Kelly D. Clingenpeel, Sierra Alternative High School; Audrey Wofford, Hope Christian School; Desiree J. Sandoval, Cesar Chavez Community School; Katie Gilliam, La Cueva High School; James C. Bohnhoff, El Dorado High School; Elizabeth McConaghy, Los Lunas High School; Charles Andres Padilla, East Mountain High School; and Stacy Daniels, Valley High School.

TRIBUTE TO VAL MCCOMIE,  
FORMER AMBASSADOR OF BARBADOS  
AND FORMER ASSISTANT  
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE  
ORGANISATION OF AMERICAN  
STATES

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 9, 2007*

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ambassador Val McComie, of Barbados, a consummate professional and diplomat who established a high bar for his

nation in the achievements of his illustrious career. I place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a tribute by Ambassador Michael King to Val McComie.

Today, I had the honor and privilege to speak at the funeral service for Ambassador Val McComie. My heart was warmed to see the outpouring of love by his family members and friends who attended the service to pay their final respects to a great man. It was obvious that he touched the lives of many with his wisdom, knowledge, and commitment to public service. He will be missed by many, but he leaves a legacy that will continue to inspire all those who knew him.

I was very encouraged by the tribute to Ambassador Val McComie by Ambassador Michael King, which was read at the funeral service today. I will reflect on the tribute when I think of my friend and his contribution to my life, democracy, and the people of the Caribbean.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONOURABLE VALERIE T.  
MCCOMIE, C.H.B.

The Honourable Valerie Theodore McComie, C.H.B. was a quintessential Caribbean man. His whole life was spent teaching his students, his colleagues and interlocutors—and anybody with a keen ear—about the dynamics of Caribbean politics and society.

His strong love and appreciation for the Inter-American System played a major role in convincing the Government of Barbados to join the Organisation of American States in 1967 and to service the Permanent Mission with quality staff with the necessary professional and linguistic skills to interact effectively with their colleagues from the rest of the Hemisphere.

Val mentored anyone who was willing to listen to his wise advice and to benefit from his institutional memory. His knowledge of Latin America and the key decision-makers was incredible and one could only marvel at his ability to keep abreast of the rapid changes of government during a period when the word "democracy" was not often part of the lexicon of the Region.

He was a stickler for detail and thorough preparation and he always felt that all diplomats should not take the floor to speak unless they had full access to facts and knowledge about the subject. He demanded and expected a certain level of excellence in the area of diplomatic representation.

As Assistant Secretary General from 1980–1990 Val was a major source of advice to several CARICOM leaders on matters related to the Inter-American System. He relished the role like a kid in a candy store. Sometimes his frankness was not appreciated but he never wavered from his strong views.

I had the privilege to be in La Paz in October 1979 when he created history by winning a very close election to the post of Assistant Secretary General. It was not an easy task for him and the delegation of Barbados but there was no doubt that the esteem with which he was held in the Hemisphere was the primary reason for his success. His re-election by acclamation in Brazilia in 1984 bought similar joy to us.

Val loved sports, especially cricket and football. He always reminded me that he was close to selection for the Barbados Cricket Team. I can also recall the joy he felt when he returned from the 1982 Football World Cup in Spain and the attention he paid to subsequent events.

He followed in death by 100 days, his good friend, the Honourable Oliver Jackman, C.H.B., who also had the great honour of serving as Ambassador of Barbados to the