

Rollcall vote 343, to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 223, supporting the goals and ideals of a National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims—had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

Rollcall vote 344, to suspend the rules and pass H. Res. 385, recognizing National AmeriCorps Week—had I been present, I would have voted “yes.”

FREEDOM FOR ROLANDO JIMÉNEZ
POSADA

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about Rolando Jiménez Posada, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Jiménez Posada is a lawyer and a director of the Democratic Human Rights Center. As a pro-democracy activist, Mr. Jiménez Posada has devoted himself to portraying the genuine terror of life in totalitarian Cuba. Because of his brave commitment to freedom for the Cuban people and his activities as a pro-democracy activist, the regime began by firing him from his job.

Mr. Jiménez Posada has been detained and threatened numerous times over the past years. On December 10, 2001, while taking part in a peaceful celebration to observe the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, he and several others were beaten and pushed into police vehicles and then discarded in remote areas as a means of psychological torture. Amnesty International reports that in July 2002 Mr. Jiménez Posada was threatened at his home after handing out copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Later, the tyrant's thugs told him that he would be imprisoned if he continued carrying out public activities in support of Cuba's political prisoners.

Despite harassment and the continuous threats, Mr. Jiménez Posada never wavered in his conviction. On April 25, 2003, he was arrested and thrown in the gulag on accusations of “disrespecting the commander” (the tyrant) and “revealing state secrets”. For 4 years, he languished in sub-human conditions awaiting “formal charges” and a “trial” for his “crime” of believing that all men have an inherent right to live in freedom.

On April 6, 2007, Mr. Jiménez Posada was “sentenced” to 12 years in a second secret trial in less than a week. His family and loved ones were never notified of his trial date, and when he even so much as attempted to voice concerns about the lack of defense counsel he was summarily thrown into a dungeon once again and prohibited all forms of legal defense. Let me be clear, Mr. Jiménez Posada rejects the gangster regime's constant propaganda and its lies. For that reason, he languishes in the most infernal conditions in the tyrant's dungeons.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Jiménez Posada suffers in the repulsive squalor of the totalitarian regime's gulag because he believes in truth and fundamental human rights for the Cuban people. It constitutes a crime of the highest order that a mere 90 miles from our shores, honorable men and women are jailed in dun-

geons simply for their desire to make known the truth of Cuba's tragic reality and for believing that all Cubans are deserving of human rights. My colleagues, we must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Rolando Jiménez Posada and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

TRIBUTE TO LISA RAE AUSTGEN

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take this time to remember one of northwest Indiana's most distinguished citizens, Lisa Rae Austgen of Lowell, Indiana. Lisa's numerous contributions to her community are worthy of the highest admiration, especially her service as the director of the Challenger Center of Northwest Indiana in Hammond, Indiana. Lisa passed away on Friday, May 11, 2007, and following services at the Sheets Funeral Home in Lowell, she will be laid to rest on Tuesday, May 15, 2007, at Plum Grove Cemetery, also in Lowell.

Lisa was an integral part of the success of the Challenger Learning Center of Northwest Indiana. Housed on the Purdue University—Calumet campus in Hammond, Indiana, the Challenger Learning Center provides a worthwhile educational resource to area schools. Under Lisa's direction, this 8-year old program has opened the window to space exploration to students who might otherwise have no exposure to our final frontier.

Lisa's passion for the Challenger Learning Center of Northwest Indiana is entwined into the legacy of this program. Completely devoted to improving and modernizing educational opportunities for children, Lisa created programs at the center that simulated space missions, integrating information provided by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA, into real-life missions controlled and operated by students. These missions not only offered students the chance to experience life as astronauts, but also taught valuable life skills, such as teamwork and cooperation, that they are able to apply to other facets of their academic development.

Thanks to Lisa's selfless dedication to actively pursuing funding for the center, thousands of students throughout the First Congressional District have had the unique opportunity to participate in the programs at the center which instill and increase students' enthusiasm for science, math, and technology. Further, her innovative approach to education fomented a genuine excitement among the students' attitudes toward math and science. Lisa was truly the backbone of the Challenger Learning Center and will be sorely missed by all the individuals with whom she worked so diligently to provide this resource to the region.

Lisa is survived by her loving husband, Tom; two sons: Ethan and Ryan; one daughter, Cassie Karney; mother, Karen Stover of Elwood, IN; father, Max (Mary) Stover of Kokomo, IN; one brother, Mike (Billie) Stover of Elwood, IN; one sister, Jennifer (Shaun) Boetijer of Galveston, IN; and several nieces and nephews. Lisa also leaves to cherish her memory many other family members and

friends who will forever remember her devotion to, not only her community, but to her family as well.

Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in honoring Mrs. Lisa Austgen for her outstanding devotion to Indiana's First Congressional District. Her unselfish and lifelong dedication to the young people of northwest Indiana is worthy of the highest commendation. Lisa's selflessness was an inspiration to us all, and I am proud to have represented her in Congress.

U.S. TROOP READINESS, VETERANS' CARE, KATRINA RECOVERY, AND IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of beginning the process to redeploy our troops in the coming months.

I first began calling for troop redeployment early last year when—despite the removal of Saddam Hussein, significant training of Iraqi police and army units, and the opening for a potential democracy in the Middle East—it became clear, it was time for a new direction in Iraq. I called for our troops to be redeployed within the year as it had become all too evident that they would be caught in the middle of escalating sectarian violence if they stayed. I urged the administration to adopt the recommendations of the Iraq study group to get the most stable result, but the administration rejected that advice and escalated the war.

Yet today, as violence in Iraq has only gotten worse with the number of U.S. dead and wounded continuing to grow and countless numbers of Iraqis dying in what has become a full blown civil war, this Administration tries to impose a military solution that cannot work. The escalation, which this administration now says will last until next spring, is simply the wrong way to go. Let us serve our men and women fighting overseas and recognize their sacrifices by charting a new course in Iraq.

Over the coming months, we must begin a responsible withdrawal of our troops. Only by moving forward with a redeployment of our troops can we provide the teeth necessary to force the Bush Administration and the Iraqi government to implement the benchmarks they set themselves, including de-bathification, minority rights, and sharing oil revenue.

I fully support funding for our troops as we scale down our operations in Iraq. I also believe the United States must stay engaged, leaving a limited number of forces to hunt down Al Qaeda and other terrorist operatives, help train Iraqi forces, and maintain a presence in neighboring countries.

It is just as important for this administration to start getting serious about a diplomatic offensive. I believe it must work harder in coordination with Iraq's neighbors and other leading countries to help the Iraqis settle their political differences and provide support for the reconstruction efforts.