

TRIBUTE TO SONIA GUTIÉRREZ

HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. HINOJOSA. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to take this moment to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the founder and acting director of the Carlos Rosario School here in Washington, DC, Ms. Sonia Gutiérrez.

Carlos Manuel Rosario was the founder of the Program of English Instruction for Latin Americans in 1970, and was based out of the Columbia Heights neighborhood here in Washington, DC. In 1972, he met a woman named Sonia Gutiérrez, a professional educator who had just recently moved to Washington from Puerto Rico, and persuaded her to work for PEILA.

In October 1972, Ms. Gutiérrez became the Director of PEILA and transformed the small, underfunded English as a Second Language (ESL) program into a comprehensive adult education program. In 1974, the Office of Right to Read of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare designated it as one of the best literacy programs in the nation.

At Ms. Gutiérrez's request in 1992, the city council renamed the school after Carlos Rosario, who founded PEILA. The program provides 4,500 students per year with the necessary language, cultural, vocational and job skills to become functional and productive members of society. Their current waiting list stands at 2,000.

The school became a national and international model, and delegations from other states and other nations frequently visited the center to review its operations and curriculum, with hopes of replicating the success of the program.

In 1996, the District of Columbia faced a financial crisis that brought about the elimination of all DC Public Schools adult education programs, including the Carlos Rosario Adult Education Center. Ms. Gutiérrez vowed to rebuild the school for the benefit of her students and her community.

From August 1996 to March 1997, Ms. Gutiérrez worked tirelessly out of the basement of her home and raised \$100,000 dollars from local foundations to reopen the school as the non-profit Carlos Rosario International Career Center. The new school opened its doors in April 1997 with Ms. Gutiérrez as Executive Director & Founder.

Realizing that there were still many in the community who were not being served, Ms. Gutiérrez actively sought for Public Charter School funding to increase the number of classes and opportunities available. She succeeded and in 1998 the school became the first Adult Public Charter School in the nation.

Today, the non-profit Carlos Rosario International Career Center and Public Charter School provides more than 1,200 students with English as a Second Language, GED in Spanish and English, courses in different areas of technology, citizenship classes, culinary arts, family literacy and Spanish classes.

Ms. Gutiérrez has also been very involved in the social and economic development of the Latino Community. In 1977, she founded the Council of Latino Agencies. She was instrumental in establishing the Mayor's Office on

Latino Affairs and presided over the Latino Festival. She is the past President of the Metropolitan Association of Adult and Continuing Education and also for both DC Commission for Women and the Latino Community Development Commission.

These are just a few of her accomplishments as a community organizer and leader. Ms. Gutiérrez should be an inspiration to us all, and should serve as a reminder that one person can make a difference in the lives of many.

I am honored to have a moment to recognize her 35 years of service to the Latino community of Washington, DC.

HONORING ST. PAUL YWCA'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the St. Paul YWCA for its 100 years of providing hope, opportunity, and a community gathering place for the residents of St. Paul.

Founded in 1907 by a group of dedicated young women who moved to St. Paul to look for employment opportunities in the factories and mills, the St. Paul YWCA and its programs have continuously evolved to meet the changing needs of the community. The first YWCA was constructed on Fifth Street in downtown St. Paul with a gymnasium, club, classrooms, auditorium, and a 100-bed residence. Since its beginning, the YWCA has maintained its commitment to serve and support women by providing programs in education, business skills, home arts and crafts, and physical fitness.

Over the years, the St. Paul YMCA has helped to foster other community initiatives and organizations. It provided office and meeting space for organizations such as Campfire Girls and the League of Women Voters, and later helped to spur the beginning of community agencies such as the Hallie O. Brown Center, Travelers Aid, International Institute of Minnesota, and Capitol Community Services. The YWCA was a pioneer of the first Festival of Nations grand opening in 1932.

During the Great Depression, the St. Paul YWCA helped to build up the community by offering job assistance and counseling for women in business and industry. Similar efforts were undertaken during World War II, when the YWCA provided support for women entering the labor force as well as support for servicemen and women through the USO and relief efforts.

In the second half of the 20th century, the St. Paul YWCA expanded its community outreach by offering educational and recreational programs, including housing projects as well as emergency shelter for homeless women and children in the state of Minnesota.

In the first 7 years of the 21st century, the YWCA has risen to new opportunities, serving more than 6,000 people through its programs that include wellness services, supportive housing, long-term mentoring, childcare, youth development programs, volunteer services, and community programming. In addition, the YWCA has served over 350 schools, commu-

nity and government agencies, service providers, and businesses through its programs. I look forward to celebrating YWCA's many successes in the years to come.

Madam Speaker, in honor of the founders of the St. Paul YWCA, its staff, board members, and volunteers, and its delivery services that have made a difference for the lives of others, I am pleased to submit this statement for the Congressional Record recognizing the 100th anniversary of the St. Paul, MN, YWCA.

HONORING THE "WELCOME HOME A HERO" VOLUNTEER CAMPAIGN AT THE DFW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON ITS THIRD ANNIVERSARY

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, the United States Army's Personnel Assistance Point at DFW Airport, the North Texas Commission and to DFW Airport's dedicated staff and thousands of community volunteers for reaching the third anniversary of the "Welcome Home a Hero" volunteer campaign.

In June 2004, the DFW International Airport and the North Texas Commission organized the "Welcome Home a Hero" volunteer campaign to honor and serve the brave men and women of the U.S. Army who travel through the DFW Airport on leave for Rest and Recuperation (R&R). The campaign has developed into one of the largest and most respected ongoing community initiatives in North Texas and the U.S. The campaign involves a wide array of business, civic and volunteer organizations, including the USO, churches, corporations, chambers of commerce, the Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts of America and many veterans groups. "Welcome Home a Hero" has been so successful that it has been honored with the George Washington Honor Medal by the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge and it has received hundreds of messages of gratitude from our servicemen and women who appreciate the patriotism and hospitality of DFW Airport and its loyal volunteers in North Texas.

This year more than 500,000 U.S. soldiers will have passed through the airport and participated in the R&R program and "Welcome Home a Hero" campaign. When these courageous soldiers arrive they are greeted with a warm reception and the thankful words of fellow Americans who wish to honor the enormous sacrifices made by all of our men and women in uniform.

Madam Speaker, it is with great honor that I recognize all those who have made the DFW Airport and Texas an emblem of patriotism to countless troops from around the nation. I congratulate the "Welcome Home a Hero" campaign for three great years and I am proud to witness the raw emotion and thanksgiving that emanates from both the soldiers and those who come here to celebrate their resolve.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 291, a resolution that commemorates and observes Peace Officers' Memorial Day, which honors law enforcement officers and those killed or disabled in the line of duty.

Law enforcement officers risk their lives daily to protect the citizens of this Nation and sadly 143 law enforcement officers were killed in the line of duty in 2006. Next week, thousands of law enforcement officers will come to Washington, DC, to pay their respects to their fallen fellow officers at the National Law Enforcement Memorial. As a former police officer, I also pay tribute to law enforcement officials who died in the line of duty in 2006 and continue to honor those police officers who made the ultimate sacrifice.

As a proud member of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus, I strongly support critical funding for programs, such as the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, to hire additional police officers and help law enforcement acquire the latest crime-fighting technologies. I will continue to be a strong supporter of the law enforcement community and will advocate on behalf of public safety in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, in honor of our courageous law enforcement officers, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing and paying respect to our valiant heroes. As a proud cosponsor of H. Res. 291, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

INTRODUCTION OF THE POLAR BEAR PROTECTION ACT

HON. JAY INSLEE

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will close the polar bear loophole and prohibit U.S. citizens from bringing sport hunted polar bear trophies from Canada into the United States. I call on my colleagues to support the Polar Bear Protection Act, which if passed, will help conserve and protect one of the most beloved American icon species by discouraging U.S. citizens from contributing to their decline through sport hunting.

The Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 established a moratorium on the importation of marine mammals and marine mammal products, including the importation of all sport hunted marine mammals such as seals, walrus and polar bears. But in 1994, Congress enacted an exemption to this ban and allowed American sport hunters to bring home polar bear trophies from Canada for their personal use. There is no other such exemption in the Marine Mammal Protection Act. This exemption has had the effect of increasing Canadian polar bear deaths by U.S. sport hunters.

In 1994 the polar bears' survival was not known to be at risk. Today, we know their future is precarious. Polar bear populations are facing threats previously unprecedented in the history in the Arctic. The polar bear is dependent on sea ice for survival—it relies on the ice for hunting, breeding and rearing its young. Yet as a result of climate change, Arctic sea ice is receding at a rate even a non-scientist can observe, rapidly enough for polar bears to feel the impacts. An unknown number of these magnificent creatures—which can swim at least 50 miles—have drowned and are starving. Populations are changing their distribution, bringing them closer to human villages and exposing them to greater risk of negative interactions with people as they desperately search for food. Leading scientists project that the Arctic may be completely free of sea ice in the summer as early as 2040. This has disastrous implications for polar bears.

In July 2005, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Polar Bear Specialist Group (PBSG) released its quadrennial report, which reviewed the status of polar bears. Although the world population estimate remains at 21,500–25,000, in fact many populations are “data deficient,” due to the difficulties of studying this species in its remote, harsh habitat. At least some populations are declining and more may be. The IUCN PBSG concluded that the species should be upgraded from “a species of least concern” to “vulnerable,” based on the “likelihood of an overall decline in the size of the total population of more than 30 percent within the next 35 to 50 years.” It further concluded that the principal cause of this decline is global warming, with pollution an additional negative influence. For the first time, they expressed a need for caution when determining hunting quotas.

The U.S. Department of the Interior has confirmed that warming temperatures and the receding of sea ice in the Arctic pose a threat to polar bears and has concluded that polar bears could be endangered within 45 years. Based on the threats posed to polar bears, the Interior Department proposed that polar bears be listed under the Endangered Species Act as “threatened” on December 27, 2006. As many of you know, I actively have supported the listing of polar bears on the Endangered Species List. I feel strongly that such a listing is vital to the bears' survival. I also feel strongly that sport hunting at this time is an additional unnecessary burden that these beleaguered bears can ill afford.

More than half of the world's polar bears are in Canada and most of these are in the territory of Nunavut. In 2005, Nunavut increased its polar bear hunt quotas by almost 30 percent without scientific basis, despite documented declines in some populations and the increased threats to polar bears from the effects of climate change. The increase was based on anecdotal accounts that more bears were seen near villages; however, this increase in sightings likely was the result of hungry bears being drawn to village dumps than an actual increase in bear numbers. As a result, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has expressed concerns with this increase in quotas. Indeed, I am concerned that the money generated by American trophy hunters in Nunavut was a motivating factor in this quota increase.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also acknowledges that at least five polar bear popu-

lations, of which four are hunted, have poor and/or inadequate information on population statistics. It admits that four populations are possibly being over-harvested, posing conservation challenges for the bear.

Some of my colleagues here today may have supported the polar bear trophy importation exemption in 1994. I recognize that the landscape was different then, when many polar bear populations appeared sound. However, circumstances have dramatically changed. Seventeen years ago it was inconceivable to think that we could envision a world without these magnificent animals. Now, in 2007, we are learning that polar bear extinction could become a reality. While long-term action clearly is required to address the significant environmental factors negatively affecting polar bear survival, immediate action can and must be taken to control direct human-caused mortality, including addressing the harmful effects of U.S. trophy hunting.

I hope you all agree that contributing to the mortality of these bears from unnecessary sport hunting is no longer justified. We need to eliminate the exemption that allows the importation of polar bear trophies into the United States. The Polar Bear Protection Act will further polar bear conservation at a time when these animals need it most. I urge my colleagues to join me by supporting this legislation, and I hope that the Natural Resources Committee will hold hearings on polar-bear conservation and this bill.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2237, PROVIDING FOR REDEPLOYMENT OF UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES AND DEFENSE CONTRACTORS FROM IRAQ; PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2206, U.S. TROOP READINESS, VETERANS' CARE, KATRINA RECOVERY, AND IRAQ ACCOUNTABILITY APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007; AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2207, AGRICULTURAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE AND WESTERN STATES EMERGENCY UNFINISHED BUSINESS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this measure before us today because it provides a clearly needed change in course in Iraq. The President has placed roughly 160,000 of our troops in a highly vulnerable position—refereeing a civil war—while the various factions in Iraq have not made adequate progress toward reconciliation. The needed political reconciliation among these groups will not happen until we make it clear to the Iraqis that our occupation is coming to an end.

But our open-ended occupation of Iraq is not only not working; it's working against us. It undermines our fight against al-Qaeda and provides extremists a rallying point. We have every indication that al-Qaeda is resurgent in Pakistan, that bin Laden finds himself stronger