

need to be carried out for an expeditious permit approval to be granted. And it requires that such actions be completed within one year.

My bill will require agencies to give high priority to refinery applications that would result in greater capacity, a cleaner-burning fuel, or a reduction in a refinery's pollution output. And it will require Federal agencies to more carefully examine the impact a proposed rule would have on energy supplies and provide that information to the public.

Instead of bringing an artificial price-control bill to the House floor that could lead to gas rationing and long lines, Democrat leaders should instead offer real solutions.

I urge my colleagues to vote against H.R. 1252 and in support of policies that will lower the cost of gasoline for the American people.

THANKING KANSAS BUREAU OF  
INVESTIGATION DIRECTOR  
LARRY WELCH

### HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, Kansas was once known for being part of the Wild West. Widespread lawlessness allowed for cattle rustlers and wild cowboys in towns like Abilene and Dodge City. Our great state also has a history of lawmen known for settling issues with a personalized style of law enforcement. Sheriffs Wyatt Earp and Wild Bill Hickok faced threats from individuals bent on destroying a peaceful way of life. The retiring Director of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation is part of this storied tradition of making Kansas a state where families can pursue a way of life envied by others. Today, Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Larry Welch's service as a leader and innovator in law enforcement.

Director Welch and I share a similar academic background. We both received a bachelor's degree and a law degree from the University of Kansas. Director Welch though, went on to serve his country in a noble profession. Where did I go wrong, becoming a lawyer then a banker and then a politician? In 1961, he was appointed as a special agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. For 25 years, his tireless commitment to justice led him around the country. Before returning to Kansas, he served in FBI assignments in Knoxville, Tennessee; Washington, DC; Miami, Florida; West Palm Beach, Florida; San Juan, Puerto Rico; San Antonio, Texas; and McAllen, Texas.

During his lengthy service with the FBI, Director Welch was charged with supervising all FBI operations in Kansas. After his time with the FBI, he began work as associate director at the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center. While at the training center he was promoted to Director and provided leadership in this position for nearly 5 years before he accepted the appointment by Attorney General Robert Stephan as director of the KBI. He was reappointed KBI director by Attorney General Carla Stovall in 1995 and by Attorney General Phill Kline in 2003.

Director Welch has been a strong advocate in the fight against methamphetamine and its devastating impact on communities across Kansas. He recognized the significant harm

and damage this poison inflicts on families and has made combating the manufacture and use of meth a priority of the KBI under his administration. Seizures of meth labs have drastically decreased in our state during the past several years. This can only be attributed to the effectiveness of law enforcement in Kansas making the production of meth an extremely risky business. The humble and relentless man that Director Welch is, could be seen when he quickly responded to compliments of the KBI's many lab seizures by explaining that meth is still coming in from foreign sources and that there was still much work to be done to protect Kansans from this destructive drug.

I would be remiss if I did not include in a tribute to this man, any mention of the care he has shown to the law enforcement community in Kansas. His compassion is well known throughout the state. He is consistently the first to express sympathies, in person, to families who have lost a loved one in the line of duty. Many in this field of work, whether in the city police, sheriff's department, or Highway Patrol, consider Larry Welch a friend and an advisor.

Director Welch has given back to his state and country for 46 years with much of his career dedicated to making Kansas a safe and desirable place to live and visit. In the many important roles he filled in his life, he served out of a sense of duty. I join Larry Welch's many friends and admirers in thanking a great man for great service.

### HONORING OAKLAND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

### HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Oakland Community Organizations (OCO), a faith-based community organizing network in Oakland, California. Today, OCO celebrates 30 years of advocacy and invaluable service to the community.

In 1972, OCO was established as an organizing project of Fathers John Baumann, S.J. and Jerry Helfrich S.J., the founders of the Pacific Institute for Community Organization (PICO) network. PICO is a national network with faith-based organizations at work in over 45 cities in 12 states across the United States, pursuing initiatives in areas such as healthcare access, education reform and affordable housing.

From 1972–1977, Baumann and Helfrich focused on building neighborhood organizations in West Oakland, San Antonio, Fruitvale, Central East Oakland from 50th to 80th Streets, and Elmhurst area. Neighborhood after neighborhood worked on issues like junkyards, stray dogs, prostitution, zoning, crime and vacant housing. On May 14, 1977 over 1,000 people gathered at Merritt College to officially give birth to OCO, articulating the faith values that today are the foundation of OCO's organizing principles.

For the next 8 years, OCO operated successfully as a neighborhood based organization, bringing people together around local and citywide issues. During this period, OCO achieved major victories in areas such as af-

fordable housing, local hiring, and the rehabilitation of once-vacant houses.

In 1985, with the support of PICO, OCO began the transition from a neighborhood-organizing model to a congregation community-based model. Using this method, OCO developed strong local organizations in seven congregations. During the 1980's OCO received national accolades in many areas, but in particular for its groundbreaking work in partnership with the City of Oakland to combat drug use.

In the 1990s, OCO leaders turned their attention on the root causes of poverty in Oakland and focused on developing sustainable solutions for complex problems. During that time, OCO organized thousands of people for major citywide action that resulted in the creation of Aviation High School, a pilot school-to-work transition program; the Hope Campaign, which created smaller kindergarten class sizes; and the opening of a grocery store in West Oakland.

OCO has continued this proud tradition of advocacy and innovation through the present day. Over the past several years, OCO has again charted new territory in several areas through initiatives such as the Restructuring of two Oakland High Schools, Castlemont High School and Fremont High School, into separate but interconnected schools within their respective schools. Furthermore, OCO continues its extraordinary advocacy work in the areas of healthcare access, immigrants' rights and affordable housing.

On May 11, 2007, OCO will celebrate its 30th anniversary in Oakland, California. I would like to mark this occasion by commending the organization for the exceptional service it has provided to the community not only in its capacity as an institution of faith and worship, but also as a leader in working to provide services and advocacy to the people of Oakland. By remaining committed to the areas of leadership and service throughout its 30 years of community organizing and action, OCO has contributed enormously not only to the Oakland community, but also to our State, our country and our world.

### SAN MATEO COUNTY AND SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY DISTIN- GUISHED SCHOOLS

### HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to proudly praise the educational system within my home state of California and, in particular, the schools in my congressional district. In the face of what seems constant criticism of our school systems, there are actually many, many instances of excellence.

California's State Superintendent of Education Jack O'Connell recently announced a remarkable list of 76 middle schools and 95 high schools that will be designated as California Distinguished Schools through 2011. San Mateo County Board of Education Superintendent Jean Holbrook said that San Mateo County, much of which is within California's 12th congressional district, is the 16th largest county in the state yet ranks fourth in receiving distinguished school awards. I agree completely with her that this "says something