

joined the New York City Police Department just over a year and a half ago.

Much has been said about this brave young man. His friends and family have told us what an amazing person he was and how much he meant to them. But it is the words of his mother that speak volumes about Officer Timoshenko. So tonight, I wish to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD what Tatyana Timoshenko said about a proud American . . . a hero police officer . . . her beloved son.

Speaking of their decision to immigrate to the United States: "I felt my child would have better opportunities here and a safer life. We were looking for a better life for our son . . . We wouldn't move just for us. We didn't speak English. We came here with nothing but six bags—two each . . . Do I regret it? A little, but at the same time, would he be the same person he is today if we didn't leave? I don't know . . . I know he was happy here."

Of the kind of person that her son was during his short life: "He never walked the stairs, he just flew up, skipping a step . . . And this flying, his steps, I can't forget them, I still hear them. I still can't believe it . . . He was truly unique. I want him to be remembered as a jolly, funny, kind boy. He was a leader and a hero."

Remembering the day her son became a member of the New York City Police Department: "We ordered sushi. It was a real holiday for him . . . He was really proud. I wanted him to be happy in life. He went to the academy, and I didn't want him to, but it made him happy."

And finally on the passing of her son: "I'm happy that we had such a miraculous child. That he died, it struck me in the heart, but there is nothing we can do now."

For Russel Timoshenko, his life was lost much too early. I offer my condolences to the Timoshenko family. My words cannot possibly ease your suffering or bring light to these dark days, but I want you to know that we grieve with your family . . . say a prayer for healing . . . honor Russel and his service to New York . . . and thank you for raising a young man of immense character and integrity.

FISCAL YEAR 2008 INTERIOR AND ENVIRONMENT APPROPRIATIONS BILL

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 23, 2007*

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for H.R. 2643, the Fiscal Year 2008 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill. For the first time in years, the House is investing the resources needed to improve air and water quality, protect our pristine natural landscapes and historic structures, manage wildfires appropriately, and increase services for visitors to national parks, refuges and forests.

H.R. 2643 provides \$2.5 billion for our National Parks—\$223 million above 2007 levels and \$148 million above the President's request. This impressive commitment reverses years of chronic underfunding that has significantly weakened the system and represents a major step toward upgrading our parks in time

for the centennial anniversary of the National Park Service in 2016. The bill also renews America's support for the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities by including \$160 million for each program in Fiscal Year 2008. Significant increases over current funding levels will help arts and humanities programming across the country recover from a decade of deep cuts.

In addition, I am very pleased the bill includes funding for critically important U.S. Forest Service International Programs. The U.S. Forest Service International Programs promote sustainable forest management in countries around the world and return important technologies and innovations to the United States. H.R. 2643 includes \$8 million to support Forest Service efforts abroad—a much-needed \$1.1 million increase over the current level of funding.

The hard work of Forest Service professionals abroad is not a luxury; it is essential to the mission of the Forest Service. These International Programs support vital national priorities that matter to our constituents, including federal efforts to combat global climate change; strengthen the U.S. timber industry and fight illegal logging; protect North American migratory bird habitat; stop invasive species before they enter the U.S.; and improve America's global image by working in close partnership with Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Indonesia, Mexico, Liberia and many other key U.S. partners.

America's forests are part of a global forest ecosystem. Protecting and sustaining a healthy forest system in the U.S. requires the Forest Service to work with scientists and land managers in countries around the world. Consider the fight against invasive species. One invasive species alone—the Asian Longhorn Beetle—threatens to inflict losses up to \$138 billion on the U.S. economy. By investing in efforts to identify and suppress invasive species abroad, we can save the hundreds of billions of dollars needed to deal with a widespread infestation in America. In addition to saving taxpayers money, Forest Service International programs leverage private funds from groups including Ducks Unlimited and the Nature Conservancy.

Madam Speaker, this bill represents the values and priorities of the American people, from honoring our obligations to Native American communities to making critical investments in drinking water infrastructure. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Fiscal Year 2008 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF PAUL M. WELLS, SR.

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 23, 2007*

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember Paul M. Wells, Sr. for a life dedicated to his family, country, faith, and fellow brothers and sisters. Paul passed away July 13, but the mark he left on the Cleveland community will endure.

Paul has always demonstrated a commitment to serving others. After completing his service to our country in the United States

Army, Paul returned to Cleveland and started his career in public service, working for the City of Cleveland in the Division of Streets. As his career progressed, Paul sought more opportunities to serve. He became a union steward in an effort to improve working conditions and protect his fellow brothers and sisters. Paul eventually was elected Local 1099 President in 1971, a post he held for over 25 years. Over the course of his career, Paul spearheaded numerous efforts that led to historic gains for union workers.

Paul's faith guided him throughout his life. Paul is reunited in faith with his high school sweetheart, Nita Ruth Murray, to whom he was married for over 50 years. He is survived by his four children Pauletta; Constance; Paul, Jr.; and Eric, as well as seven grandchildren.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in remembering Paul M. Wells, Sr., for a life spent in service to his community. Paul seized every opportunity to improve the lives of others. May we all follow his example.

COMMENDING MR. PINKY KRAVITZ ON 50 YEARS OF RADIO BROADCASTS AND HIS OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO HIS COMMUNITY

**HON. FRANK A. LoBIONDO**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 23, 2007*

Mr. LoBIONDO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Mr. Pinky Kravitz on his long and distinguished service to his community, and congratulate him on 50 years as an on-air radio talk show host in Atlantic City.

Starting his career on WLDB 1490AM and airing weekdays during the mid-afternoon, his first show was called "Pinky's Pool Party." Three years later, Pinky would move to his current home on WOND 1400AM, where for the last 47 years he has hosted his talk show at various times and locations across Atlantic County. For the past 28 years, he has broadcast live from Atlantic City's famed casinos including the Hilton, which is the current home of "Pinky's Corner."

A respected radio personality and dedicated community servant, Pinky has interviewed all of New Jersey's governors since 1974, all of the state's sitting U.S. Senators for the past 35 years, and myself on countless occasions—always with class and character. Without question, Pinky is an institution in southern New Jersey. On behalf of the House of Representatives and the residents of New Jersey, I would like to personally congratulate Mr. Pinky Kravitz who has entertained and informed his faithful listeners for five decades.

DEMOCRACY IN INDIA

**HON. DAN BURTON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 23, 2007*

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, as many of our colleagues in this House know, India prides itself on being the world's most populous democracy. Although relations between India and the United States have been rocky in the past, since 2004 Washington and New Delhi have been pursuing a

“strategic partnership” based on shared values such as democracy, multiculturalism, and rule of law. In addition, numerous economic, security and globally focused initiatives, including plans for “full civilian nuclear energy cooperation,” are currently underway. I support these initiatives but I remain deeply concerned about the numerous serious problems that remain when it comes to India’s respect for the rights of all of her citizens.

In fact, according to the Department of State’s 2006 Human Rights Report for India: “Major problems included extrajudicial killings of persons in custody, disappearances, torture and rape by police and security forces. The lack of accountability permeated the government and security forces, creating an atmosphere in which human rights violations often went unpunished. Although the country has numerous laws protecting human rights, enforcement was lax and convictions were rare.”

Again, these are not my words; this is from the State Department’s official report on Human Rights. I firmly believe that as the United States and India move towards greater cooperation in numerous endeavors we must at the same time continue to insist that India adhere to the full expression of democracy and basic human rights; especially for members of ethnic or religious minorities.

For example, according to reports, on April 20, 2006, Sikh activist Daljit Singh Bittu was arrested after making a speech. He was charged with sedition and “making inflammatory speeches.” Mr. Bittu’s crime was to speak out against the acquisition of the land of poor farmers by the State of Punjab on behalf of private business firms. Fortunately, Mr. Bittu was ultimately released on bail. The issue of government taking land by eminent domain for private usage is also extremely controversial in this country, but to the best of my knowledge no one has ever been charged with sedition for speaking out about it. On June 2nd of this year, Daljit Singh Bittu, was again arrested and charged with sedition. What did Mr. Bittu do this time? He participated in a peaceful march protesting government inaction on several issues where some of the marchers—and by all accounts not Mr. Bittu—allegedly expressed their desire—unrelated to the topic of the march—for an independent Sikh nation of Khalistan by shouting “Khalistan Zindabad.”

As I understand it, according to the Indian Supreme Court in the case *Balwant Singh vs. State of Punjab*, the mere public use of the slogan “Khalistan Zindabad” is not illegal; and as the march itself was peaceful, it is difficult to understand how the Indian Government believes Mr. Bittu did anything that can, to the best of my knowledge, be legitimately considered a crime—much less sedition—under United States, International, or Indian law.

What is really at issue here, Madam Speaker, is the fact that India is a nation comprised of a hodgepodge of ethnicities, some of whom do not wish to be a part of Hindu-dominated India. The conflict over the Muslim-majority region of Jammu and Kashmir is perhaps most familiar to Americans as it has sparked three major wars between India and Pakistan, but it is by no means the only ethnic or religious conflict roiling India. In 1948, India promised a free and fair plebiscite on the status of Kashmir. No such vote has ever been held. As our Nation fights to spread democracy to oppressed people across the globe, why don’t we insist on a simple democratic vote, with

international monitors, in Kashmir, in Punjab, Khalistan, in predominantly Christian Nagalim, and wherever people seek their freedom from India? The answer tragically is all too obvious, in the world of international diplomacy and geopolitics, sometimes expedience and “good relations” trump freedom and human rights.

I do not know whether the plebiscite promised to the people of Kashmir will ever happen, and I do not know whether a Sikh nation of Khalistan or a Christian nation of Nagalim will ever come into existence; but I do know that the Muslims of Kashmir, the Sikhs of Punjab/Khalistan and the Christians of Nagalim should never have to live in fear for freely and peacefully expressing their opinions.

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#### PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE COOPERATION ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 17, 2007*

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 980, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act.

I am a cosponsor of H.R. 980, which ensures that police officers, firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and other public safety officers have basic collective bargaining rights. Americans depend on public safety workers and first responders to keep us safe and healthy. These critical personnel should be able to depend on Congress to provide them basic rights, including the ability to negotiate for the wages and benefits that they deserve.

This bill promotes the development of labor-management partnerships, which are frequently established through collective bargaining. These partnerships enhance public safety by increasing communication and cooperation between employees and employers, leading to more effective and efficient delivery of services.

It is important to note that the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act in no way undermines existing State laws. It simply establishes a basic minimum standard that most states already meet and many exceed. This balanced legislation does not force parties to reach agreement, but rather opens the door for dialogue and negotiation. Additionally, H.R. 980 recognizes that public safety officers play a significant role in emergency situations, and for that reason includes a provision outlawing strikes.

This bipartisan bill is widely supported by the American public, and it is endorsed by the International Association of Fire Fighters, Association of State, County, and Municipal Employees, Fraternal Order of Police, International Union of Police Associations, and the National Association of Police Organizations.

It is essential for all workers to have a voice at work. Please join me in supporting collective bargaining rights for public safety officers.

HONORING THE DEDICATION OF  
EMIL “LUCKY” REZNIK OF  
SOUTH BEND, INDIANA

**HON. JOE DONNELLY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 23, 2007*

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Emil “Lucky” Reznik’s dedication to the community of South Bend, Indiana. Since its conception 40 years ago, Lucky has served on the South Bend Public Transportation Board of Directors which established the successful TRANSPO bus service in the greater South Bend area. This service, cultivated in part from Lucky’s vision, provides over three million rides each year to area residents.

When not working hard with TRANSPO, Lucky is a popular advocate for higher education, specifically at Indiana University and Indiana University South Bend. His service with the Indiana University Alumni Association, the Indiana University South Bend Board of Advisors and as president of the Indiana University South Bend Alumni Board earned Lucky the Indiana University South Bend Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1982 and the very first Sue H. Talbot Distinguished Hoosiers for Higher Education Member Award in 2006.

This month, TRANSPO is honoring Lucky with a celebration dinner and the presentation of a flag flown over the U.S. Capitol. Mayor Steve Luecke of South Bend will be presenting Lucky with the keys to the city. Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels will also present Lucky with the Outstanding Hoosier Award. Lucky will receive other commendations from Indiana Speaker of the House B. Patrick Bauer and Mayor Jeff Rea of Mishawaka.

It is my pleasure to join these dignitaries and the people of St. Joseph County by paying tribute to the many years of unselfish dedication of this tireless and devoted civil servant, Lucky Reznik. The South Bend and Mishawaka communities have been forever changed thanks to his commitment.

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TRIBUTE TO DURANGO CITY  
MANAGER BOB LEDGER

**HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 23, 2007*

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a distinguished civic leader from my district. After 25 years of service, Robert F. Ledger Jr. will retire as the City Manager for Durango, Colorado. His long history as a public servant has been marked with dedication and integrity at every stop.

Mr. Ledger has led Durango through both troubled and prosperous times, always with a passion for progress and in a way that preserved the historic and environmental ethic of the community. He championed numerous public works projects, encouraged community policing, opened city government to the citizens of the community and encouraged the public workforce to be the best that it could be.

Durango has come a long way under Bob Ledger. During his time with the City of Durango he oversaw the construction of public