

today. The Cobb County Chamber of Commerce recently presented two awards for notable devotion to public safety and awareness. The presentation of these awards marked the beginning of Public Safety Awareness Week, a celebration of the men and women who work every day throughout Cobb County to keep our communities safe and secure.

On October 1, 2007, the Cobb Chamber Public Safety Employee of the Year Award was presented to Mr. James Arrowood, the Director of Public Safety for Cobb County Schools. This award is a notable highlight in a distinguished 35-year career in public safety for Mr. Arrowood. Each day Cobb County parents place their trust in Director Arrowood, as he ensures a safe learning environment for all Cobb students. I applaud Mr. Arrowood on this exceptional honor and all he does for our community.

Also recognized for their pursuit of public safety, the Cobb Chamber Award of Merit was presented to the Wildland Fire Response Team of the Marietta Fire Department. The Team courageously traveled to fire-ravaged South Georgia in May of 2007 to assist in a vital fight to extinguish the out-of-control blazes. When Georgians needed help the most, the Marietta Wildland Fire Response Team responded as true heroes would. Sacrificing their safety to ensure the survival of an endangered area of the State, the Team epitomizes strength and character of our public safety professionals.

The countless hard working men and women of public safety too often go unnoticed. It is necessary and responsible that we honor them this way, and I commend the Cobb County Chamber of Commerce for their support of this initiative. Public Safety Awareness Week serves as an important reminder that our safety is not assured without the hard work of public safety professionals and volunteers.

Madam Speaker, I join with the House of Representatives today in declaring a sincere appreciation for these honorable award winners and dedicated public servants. Congratulations, Director Arrowood and the Marietta Wildland Fire Response Team.

COMMISSION ON THE ABOLITION
OF THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE
TRADE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 2, 2007

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3432, an excellent bill that commemorates the abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

This year marks a very important anniversary in history—the 200th anniversary of the enactment of the Transatlantic Slave Trade Act. It was in 1807 when then President Thomas Jefferson signed into law this vital Act. Nearly 200 years prior, in 1619, twenty Africans arrived in Jamestown, Virginia aboard a Dutch ship. This was the beginning in America of the atrocity of slavery which unfortunately lasted for more than 2 centuries.

While America was in deep turmoil over the morality of slavery, William Wilberforce, a

Member of the U.K. Parliament, led the campaign to abolish the transatlantic slave trade in Britain. This great man was a statesman, an avowed and practicing Christian, and a champion of the underprivileged.

Early on, Wilberforce wrestled with whether he should pursue a calling from God or serve as a driving force in the House of Commons. He successfully accomplished both. Wilberforce was an example of faith in action, modeling that we do not have to abandon our values to be effective in our jobs—whether as a business owner, nurse, mechanic, working mom or Member of Congress.

We must stand up for our beliefs and fight passionately for our causes. We must not betray our values or our faith, and never cease to help those in need. On the 200th anniversary of the 1807 abolition of the U.K. and U.S. slave trade, we should reflect on the greatness of those who stood up for what was right and true—even though it was not popular.

It wasn't until 1865 that slavery in the United States was abolished through the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment. Then President, Abraham Lincoln, helped push the bill through Congress. Earlier in his presidency, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation freeing all slaves. He believed this was “the central act of my administration, and the great event of the nineteenth century.”

While slavery ended, discrimination continued. It is my hope that we will remember the struggles of this great Nation and continue our efforts to stand for what is right. We can build momentum and engage communities to find new ways to improve our culture.

I am honored each day to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives and stand faithfully for what is right. It is a privilege to cast my vote in favor of a bill that honors a great moment in our history.

I look forward to today's passage of H.R. 3432.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE
OF IMPROVING THE HIGH
SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE OF
FOSTER YOUTH

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, today I introduced a resolution to recognize the importance of improving the high school graduation rate of foster youth. I was accompanied by my colleagues JIM McDERMOTT, the Chairman of the Income Security and Family Support Subcommittee on which I serve as ranking Republican, PHIL ENGLISH, and JOHN LEWIS.

A recent series of hearings in the subcommittee reflected on the fact that school stability and high school completion are strongly associated with better outcomes for young people making the transition to adulthood. We know that connecting kids with their schools means strengthening the circle of friends, teachers, coaches, and other mentors that can help them become more independent and develop the habits and skills needed to succeed for life on their own.

Over 20,000 youth “age out” of the Nation's foster care system each year. Among many

serious challenges, these young people have lower high school graduation rates, higher rates of homelessness, and a greater chance of becoming incarcerated than other youth their age. Too many youth who age out of foster care stumble and fall on their way to adulthood. Some never recover. Others find their way only through extraordinary personal effort, the involvement of dedicated relatives and other adults, a little luck, or all of the above.

We should be doing everything we can to increase high school completion rates in general. And for kids in foster care, it is especially important for them to stay connected to their school and complete high school. Such action will give former foster youth a solid start on their way to a successful adulthood. That is in everyone's interest.

HONORING THE SAFETY EXCELLENCE OF SMURFIT-STONE CONTAINER CORPORATION

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the outstanding effort of Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation paper mill in Hodge, Louisiana, under the leadership of General Manager Roger P. Hagan, in fulfilling its responsibility as a Good Corporate Citizen.

As of September 14, 2007, The Hodge branch of Smurfit-Stone became the first mill in the company's history to successfully reach two million hours of operation without an accident, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards. For any corporation, this is an accomplishment, and I am proud to honor the men and women of Smurfit-Stone who strive to maintain high standards in the workplace and make safety a top priority.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Roger P. Hagan and Smurfit-Stone Container Corporation for promoting a safe environment in the work place and for putting employee safety first.

90TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
ROTARY CLUB OF LONG BEACH

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, the Long Beach Rotary is celebrating 90 years of service to the community on Wednesday, October 10, 2007. In honor of this auspicious occasion, the Long Beach Rotary partnered with the City of Long Beach and the Conservation Corps of Long Beach to plant 90 trees in one day at various parks around the City.

The 90th Anniversary Celebration and tree planting at Rotary Centennial Park will be the culmination of this year's endeavors. Rotary Centennial Park, which was created by the Long Beach Rotary in anticipation of its century of service, was created in a former redline right-of-way. The site is now a clean, green,