

IN HONOR OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DANBURY CHAPTER OF THE NAACP

HON. CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, throughout America, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, has worked tirelessly to ensure our Nation's creed, "that all men are created equal," rings true.

Recently, Connecticut's Greater Danbury Chapter of the NAACP celebrated its 50th anniversary. I rise to honor the efforts and contributions of those who have been instrumental in the development of this local chapter over the years and commend them for their support and dedication to the community.

During the height of the civil rights movement, the Danbury chapter of the NAACP was actively involved in numerous local and national events in pursuit of justice and equality. In 1963, approximately 75 members traveled from Danbury to Washington, DC to listen to Dr. Martin Luther King's historic "I Have a Dream" speech and participated in the historic March on Washington.

In 1979, Danbury's main street was flooded with some 400 people, including the son of President Jimmy Carter, James Earl "Chip" Carter, to march from Kenney Park to city hall protesting the distribution of offensive pamphlets by a member of the Klu Klux Klan.

And in the 1960s and 1970s, the Danbury NAACP was instrumental in influencing policy changes to encourage the hiring of African-Americans and minorities citywide in response to discriminatory hiring and admission practices at the Henry Abbott Technical School.

Today, continuing the tradition of promoting social justice, the Danbury chapter of the NAACP is focused on improving affordable housing, ensuring quality education for children and adults, and encouraging people to vote and participate in the political process. Under the leadership of the Reverend Ivan S. Pitts, the chapter has seen a surge in membership, amplified meeting attendance, and the renewed respect of its leaders within the community.

Beyond today's chapter leadership, I would like to formally applaud former presidents of the Danbury NAACP over the past 50 years: Constantine Brandi, the Reverend Leslie G. Lawson, Richard Brown, Dr. Frederick Adam, Samuel Hyman, Sylvester Craig, Ben Andrews, Robert Cherry, Jr., Harold Taylor, Gladys Cooper, the Reverend Aaron Samuels, William J. Knight, Stanford Smith, Sr., Daryle Dennis, Sherrie Neptune, and the Reverend Donald Dolberry.

Recent events in Danbury remind us that racism is not just a historical stain in our community—it is ever present. The Danbury chapter of the NAACP is an example and an inspiration to all organizations dedicated to the cause of justice and I am proud to recognize them for their efforts. I ask that all Members of the United States House of Representatives join me in honoring their 50 years of outstanding achievement.

HONORING THE FIRST RESPONDERS AND SUPPORTING THE VICTIMS OF THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, over the course of just one week, my home State of California has witnessed the most destructive and expansive wildfires in its history. Across southern California, more than a dozen large fires fueled by powerful Santa Ana winds burned over 500,000 acres. The flames engulfed forests, homes and businesses alike. In my congressional district, the city of Malibu lost homes, a community church, and Castle Kashan, an iconic landmark on the California coast.

As these fires raged, thousands of courageous firefighters risked their lives to battle the flames, tirelessly working shift after shift in grueling conditions. Hundreds of volunteers donated money, resources, and time to help the nearly 1 million Californians evacuated at the height of the crisis. Officials at all levels of government acted swiftly to coordinate a rapid response. While we grieve for the hundreds of families who have been devastated, we must be thankful that even greater losses were averted.

The damage caused by the fires is staggering in its scope and heartbreaking in its impact on those who must start over from scratch. But Californians are resilient and determined to restore their communities and rebuild their lives. Today we stand in solidarity as we consider H. Res. 778, a resolution honoring the first responders and supporting the victims of the southern California wildfires. This resolution sends an important message to all Californians that the Nation is with them, and that Congress stands prepared to provide the assistance they need.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RANDY BLACK, SR.

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Randy Black, Sr., who is the recipient of the 2007 Lieder Award. The Lieder Award is given annually to a person or organization that demonstrates outstanding leadership in the southern Nevada real estate industry by the Lied Institute for Real Estate Studies at the University of Nevada Las Vegas.

Randy has had a lasting impact on southern Nevada that began when he enrolled in Clark County Community College in an effort to become a realtor. Throughout his career he has had a multi-faceted experience, working as a title examiner for First American Title/Stewart Title, a commercial real estate salesman with Robert Realty Investment and Development, and a commercial real estate broker with Consolidated Realty and Management. Since 1977, he has served as the chairman of the board, owner, and broker with Diversified Re-

alty. He has also been a partner with many different businesses in southern Nevada including Beano's Casino Restaurant and Lounge and Shuck's Seafood Restaurant and Lounges. In addition, he has been a managing partner with Virgin River Hotel and Casino, Casablanca Hotel Resort and Casino, and Oasis Resort Casino in Mesquite, Nevada. Randy also owns many development projects in southern Nevada.

Along with all of his work in the real estate industry, Randy has also dedicated his time to various boards and commissions. He has been active with the City of Las Vegas Citizens Advisory Board and the Nellis Air Force Base Support Team. He has utilized his expertise in real estate to contribute his time to the Southern Nevada Homebuilders Association and the Las Vegas Board of Realtors Political Action Committee.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Randy Black, Sr. His constant commitment to the advancement of the real estate community in southern Nevada is honorable, and I wish him congratulations as the 2007 Lieder Award recipient.

PROTECTING VETERANS FUNDING LETTERS

HON. STEVAN PEARCE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Mr. PEARCE. Madam Speaker, I submit the two letters I referred to in my 1 minute this morning.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, October 4, 2007.

Office of the Senate Majority Leader,
U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID: We write today to ask you to keep the Senate in session the week of October 8, to help pass this years' veterans appropriations. Now that we are already into the new fiscal year, it is imperative that the House and Senate reach a prompt agreement on the conference report on the FY2008 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act (H.R. 2642).

It is unfortunate the Senate has been unable to act upon many of its Constitutionally mandated appropriations bills. While the House continues to wait upon the Senate to complete its work, we call upon you to quickly move veterans appropriations through conference so a final version of the bill may be passed and presented to the President. We believe that veterans issues rise above the partisan divisions of Washington which is evident by the passage of the FY08 MilCon-Veterans appropriations with overwhelming majorities in both Houses, 501-3 combined.

The Senate cannot allow this critically important funding to continue to fall victim to the usual partisan wrangling which occurs all too often in Washington. If tragedies such as the recent revelations at Walter Reed Army Medical Center are to be diverted in the future, we must pass veterans funding now. From FY 2001 the total VA budget rose from \$48 billion to approximately \$70 billion in FY 2006, a 46 percent increase. This year, the House voted to increase funding by \$6 billion dollars over FY07, one of the largest in the 77 year history of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Because we have asked so much of our brave men and women in uniform