

He hopes to convey that those who desire a family unit can obtain one through positive means. Since there is a shortage of police officers, he encourages young people to consider a career in law enforcement, which allows individuals to focus on making their communities a positive place to live. There are more prisons being built in our country than schools; and Hayes would like to do his part to see that change, by keeping kids out of the criminal justice system.

Hayes encourages young people to be themselves. "Don't try to be like someone else, don't try to emulate what you hear in rap music; don't try to do what you see basketball players doing. Pick a goal and each and every day, do something to try to accomplish that goal. Hard work, dedication, and sacrifice are the formula for success!"

The extremely popular basketball star, businessman, and reserve deputy sheriff believes that in life you should "continuously look for challenges." The reserve deputy position is another way for him to set a positive example for young people. Not everyone can be a professional athlete, a rapper, or actor, but everyone can give back to the community.

I am proud to recognize my friend, Elvin Hayes for his accomplishments on and off of the basketball court. He is a role model for us all, and a shining example of hard work, determination, and service to the community.

That's just the way it is.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 3685, EMPLOYMENT NON-
DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 3685, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). H.R. 3685 would extend existing employment-discrimination provisions of Federal law, including those in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, to establish "a comprehensive Federal prohibition of employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation."

Although I join with all my colleagues in abhorrence to bigotry and discrimination, this disingenuous and vaguely-constructed overhaul of labor law is inconsistent with the free exercise of religion and weaken the fundamental Defense of Marriage Act.

The right to the free exercise of religion found in the Constitution, and as codified by Congress in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), must be firmly upheld. It is a cornerstone of our Nation's founding and our future. Our Government must not take any action that unduly burdens the free exercise of religion. Unfortunately, the ENDA does not live up to this constitutional standard. America's churches, synagogues, and religious non-profit organizations must maintain the right to employ those that share their particular religious or moral worldview. Although the sponsors of this act claim that the religious exemptions found in the legislation are adequate, they are simply not strong enough to pass constitutional muster or fulfill legislative intent in the RFRA.

Madam Speaker, ENDA would also weaken the landmark Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) by giving Federal statutory significance to same-sex marriage rights under State law. Federal law states that marriage is between one man and one woman. Maintaining DOMA is essential in defending the sanctity of marriage. However, the passage of ENDA will provide activist judges around the country the legal ammunition to undermine state and federal marriage laws. Courts in New Jersey, Vermont, and Massachusetts have all used state legislation similar to ENDA as a springboard for mandating same-sex marriage or civil unions. In 2005 Kansas overwhelmingly passed the Traditional Marriage Amendment by 70 percent. The people of Kansas have spoken. With the path is so clearly defined in history, it would be irresponsible for Congress to pass ENDA.

Madam Speaker, bigotry and discrimination is clearly wrong. However, tampering with such bedrock legal and constitutional standards such as the freedom of religion and DOMA is not the right solution. I urge my colleagues to join with me in opposing this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO WESTCHESTER ELE-
MENTARY AND TO CONWAY ELE-
MENTARY

HON. W. TODD AKIN

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. AKIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Westchester Elementary in the Kirkwood School District and Conway Elementary in the Ladue School District of St. Louis, Missouri. These two schools were recently awarded the prestigious title of No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools.

As many of my colleagues know, the No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors public and private K-12 schools that are either academically superior in their states or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement.

In 2007, only 5 Missouri schools and 287 nationwide have earned the high honor of Blue Ribbon Schools.

It is the efforts and demand for excellence exemplified by Westchester and Conway Elementary that will pave the way for the successful futures of our Nation's children.

I applaud the dedication of teachers and staff at Westchester and Conway. I sincerely hope their high standards of teaching are emulated by other schools in Missouri.

I am pleased to be able to honor Westchester and Conway Elementary today. They are remarkable examples of the great teachers we have in Missouri and I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing them the best in their future endeavors as educators in Missouri.

TRIBUTE TO THE BLESSED
SACRAMENT SCHOOL

HON. GEOFF DAVIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the academic achievements of Blessed Sacrament School in Ft. Mitchell, KY.

Recently, Blessed Sacrament was announced by the U.S. Department of Education as a recipient of the 2007 Blue Ribbon Award.

The Blue Ribbon Award was presented to 287 distinguished schools nationwide and I am pleased that Blessed Sacrament School was 1 of 4 from Kentucky's Fourth Congressional District.

Blessed Sacrament has worked hard in advancing its curriculum and performance of its students to ensure that they are some of the best and brightest in our Nation. This is an accomplishment that deserves great praise for the students, parents and teachers. In a world where we are facing competition from abroad and we frequently hear that our students are lagging behind, Kentucky's Blue Ribbon recipients are forging ahead.

I would like to acknowledge Blessed Sacrament's ardent dedication to developing a well-rounded learning environment for each of its students. There is no place more deserving of the motto "Where Kids Come First" than Blessed Sacrament School. Aside from an exceptional classroom learning experience, Blessed Sacrament also promotes spiritual growth in each of its students. Every day, the teachers and faculty at Blessed Sacrament strive to help its students achieve their goals in the hopes of giving them a bright future. The teachers, students and parents at Blessed Sacrament should be applauded for their hard work in becoming a Blue Ribbon recipient. In Blessed Sacrament, the Commonwealth of Kentucky has a fine educational institution that will serve our communities for years to come.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 50TH
ANNIVERSARY OF NATIONAL
KEY DEER REFUGE

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, this year, members of the conservation community, Keys residents, and nature enthusiasts celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the National Key Deer Refuge. This federally protected area is home to the imperiled tropical hardwood hammock and 22 endangered and threatened species of plants and animals, five of which are found nowhere else on the planet.

As the Member of Congress representing all four of the Florida Keys National Wildlife Refuges, I am well aware of the vital role these refuges play in preserving our natural habitats, promoting scientific research and technology, and educating our communities as to the importance of conserving endangered and threatened fish, wildlife and plants.

Of the endangered and threatened species in the area, the Key Deer have tremendously