

THANKING MS. ELAINE COMER  
FOR HER SERVICE TO THE HOUSE

**HON. ROBERT A. BRADY**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 6, 2008*

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on the occasion of her retirement in January 2008, we rise to thank Ms. Elaine Comer for 32 years of outstanding service to the U.S. House of Representatives.

Elaine began her career at the House as a Programmer Analyst at House Information Resources (HIR) and has held and mastered many positions, each with increasing responsibility as she continually served this great institution as a valuable employee of HIR within the Office of the Chief Administrator.

In the mid-1970s, when the House first began using minicomputers, Elaine designed, developed, and implemented the first House-developed Member Office Support System, as well as mission-critical legislative systems. Elaine was selected to represent the House in a cross-government team with the Senate and the White House that resulted in the House-wide implementation of an integrated Local Area Network (LAN) to support House committees. These accomplishments led to her instrumental involvement in an HIR-wide PC LAN implementation automating project management and time accounting.

Elaine's management abilities were showcased as she oversaw project support to 30 mission-critical House applications, provided key coordination in the modernization of the Data Center, was appointed the HIR representative to the CAO Business Process Improvement Team, and led the Process and Procedures project that supports the House Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery Program. Elaine's contributions to the House culminated in her expert management of the Configuration Management and Quality Assurance programs for the CAO.

On behalf of the entire House community, we extend congratulations to Elaine for her many years of dedication and outstanding contributions to the U.S. House of Representatives. We wish Elaine many wonderful years in fulfilling her retirement dreams.

HONORING NATIONAL GUARD DAY  
CELEBRATIONS AT THE INDIANA  
STATEHOUSE

**HON. BARON P. HILL**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 6, 2008*

Mr. HILL. Madam Speaker, today, the Indiana National Guard is hosting a National Guard Day at the Indiana Statehouse. This event will highlight our Hoosier citizen soldiers' capabilities, and provide an update as to their status as they prepare to deploy to Iraq. The event will also show strong support for the families of our Hoosier Guardmembers.

I applaud Maj. Gen. Umbarger's work with the Indiana National Guard. He has been an unwavering champion of the Indiana National Guard. His efforts today are to show support for Guardmembers and their families, as well as to help elected leaders and citizens better understand the role of the National Guard.

On this day, I too would like to express my support and deepest thanks to our Guardmembers, and their families. Many of these brave men and women are preparing to leave their homes, their loved ones, and their lives stateside in order to defend our Nation. Their commitment to duty and steadfast determination is an example to Hoosiers, and all Americans alike. They all deserve our most heartfelt thanks and admiration. Our Hoosier Guardmembers and their families will be in my prayers.

HONORING THE BLUE STAR MOTHERS OF AMERICA CHAPTER #101  
AND THE MARINES' MEMORIAL  
ASSOCIATION

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 6, 2008*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, together with Representatives MILLER, STARK, TAUSCHER and MCNERNEY, I rise today to honor and thank the California East Bay Chapter of Blue Star Mothers of America and the Marines' Memorial Association. With the support of the Marines' Memorial Association and Major General Michael Myatt (Ret.), the Blue Star Moms are hosting their third event for Gold Star parents who have lost a child in service to our country.

The East Bay Blue Star Moms was founded when Patty Martin, Peggy Conklin and Nancy Ecker reached out to each other for support after the September 11th attacks. Each had a son in the Army, and in November, 2001, they established a support group for military mothers in the East Bay area. Membership has since grown to over 150 mothers, and they are affiliated with the national Blue Star Mothers of America. The East Bay chapter sponsors a variety of activities in addition to the Gold Star event, including providing care packages for troops stationed overseas, and Operation Post Card, connecting local community groups with soldiers abroad through letter writing campaigns. The moms have also taken their good works to veterans in our community through regular visits to the VA hospitals at Livermore, Palo Alto and Martinez.

The Marines' Memorial Association in San Francisco was founded in 1946 as a living memorial to all the Marines who had lost their lives in the Pacific during World War II. Since then, its mission has expanded to include all branches of the United States Armed Services, including members of National Guard and reserves, and the U.S. Merchant Marine. The Memorial is currently led by Major General Michael Myatt, USMC (Ret.). General Myatt has overseen the development of the Memorial as a facility that both honors fallen servicemembers and actively promotes the interests and needs of men and women currently in service.

The third Gold Star Parent gathering will bring together hundreds of parents from all over California for a 2-day event to honor the families of the fallen and allow them to celebrate the lives of their children and mourn their loss. This event allows the families to come together in private and share their experiences with others who are experiencing the same loss. The Marines' Memorial Association

provides the facilities and meals for the event at a considerably reduced cost, and additionally lends support to the participants throughout the weekend. The Blue Star Moms contribute an incredible effort to make the Gold Star event successful, including personally reaching out to all the Gold Star families in the state, and underwriting expenses for families who might not otherwise be able to make the trip.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, at this time it is appropriate that we thank the Blue Star Moms and the Marines' Memorial Association for the hard work and dedication they have shown to sponsor the Gold Star parents event. Their efforts have provided an important forum for these families to come together and the event is greatly appreciated by the families who have participated.

TRIBUTE TO JACK FITZGERALD  
AND FITZGERALD AUTO MALLS

**HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 6, 2008*

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a longtime advocate for child passenger safety, my constituent Jack Fitzgerald, President of Fitzgerald Auto Malls.

As you may know, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children ages 2 to 14 and the leading cause of injury-related death for children under age 2. We know that when installed and used correctly, child safety seats and safety belts can prevent injury and save lives. In fact, young children restrained in child safety seats have an 80 percent lower risk of fatal injury than those who are unrestrained.

In order to ensure that child safety seats are properly used and installed, car seat check-up events, like those sponsored by Safe Kids Worldwide, are essential. At these events, child passenger safety technicians teach families how to safely transport their children and help make sure everyone in a vehicle is buckled up correctly on every ride. On average, technicians spend about 30 minutes with each child. These events, most of which are open to the public, are conducted by Safe Kids coalitions in central locations such as automobile dealerships, hospitals, community centers and shopping centers.

Since 1996, Safe Kids Worldwide has partnered with General Motors to help change the way parents and caregivers learn about child passenger safety. More than 13 million people have been reached by the Safe Kids Buckle Up Program and, to date, there have been more than 44,000 events that bring much needed car seat inspection services and education to families across the country.

Safe Kids is well on its way to checking one million child safety seats. Part of this success can be attributed to Jack Fitzgerald of Fitzgerald Auto Malls. In February 1999, Jack teamed up with Safe Kids Montgomery County in my home state of Maryland to hold a car seat check-up event. At that event, Stephen Guarino, who was then 5 years old, was moved into a booster seat for a better fit just one day before the family vehicle was hit by a truck. Mrs. Guarino and the police officers on the scene credit the saving of Stephen's