

votes due to unforeseen circumstances. Had I been present, the record would reflect the following votes:

H. Res. 981: Recognizing March 6, 2008, as the first-ever World Glaucoma Day, "yes";

H.R. 5151: Wild Monongahela Act: A National Legacy for West Virginia's Special Places, "yes"; and

H.R. 831: Coffman Cove Administration Site Conveyance Act, "yes."

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

**HON. TOM DAVIS**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 22, 2008*

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 322.

Following the allied victory in World War II, the United Nations voted to partition the British Mandate of Palestine, leading the way for the people of the region to create, on May 14, 1948, the State of Israel. United States recognition of the State of Israel came within hours of Israel's creation. Since that historic day in 1948, the United States and Israel have remained steadfast allies and friends. On May 11, 1949, the Government of Israel was officially admitted as a member of the United Nations.

Since the creation of the State of Israel, enemies of freedom and peace have persistently attempted to undermine Israel's right to exist. The very day after the creation of Israel, rogue Arab forces from surrounding Middle Eastern countries invaded the land given to Israel based on the U.N. partition. Though less than 24 hours old, the nascent country staved off the invasion, and on June 7, 1949, a ceasefire was called, resulting in Israel acquiring western Galilee, a broad corridor through central Palestine to Jerusalem, and part of modern Jerusalem.

Subsequent attempts to undermine Israel's security have all failed, and Israel has become stronger at each turn. In 1956, 1967, 1973, and 1982, attacks on Israel by her neighbors in the region were met with fierce resistance and resounding defeat for Israel's enemies.

In 1988, Yasir Arafat, then leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organization—a group which had for decades fiercely opposed Israel's right to exist—officially acknowledged Israel's sovereign right, and announced his willingness to enter negotiations for peace. Although peace talks have yet to produce a lasting accord, discussions between the relevant parties have met with progress. It is my firm belief that peace can and will be achieved in the region. It is clear that Israel's right to exist is fully established. The United States will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with her friend until and beyond that day when peace is established.

Israel is a shining example of the success that a democracy can produce. Because of the freedom that Israelis enjoy, Israel has been at the forefront of innovation. Israeli scientists have made significant contributions to genetics, medicine, electronics, engineering, and the high-tech world. Indeed, the very cell phones that the world over has become ac-

customed to using were first invented by Israeli entrepreneurs.

Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to congratulate the State of Israel on her 60th Anniversary. I encourage my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 322.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE REEF

SPEECH OF

**HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 22, 2008*

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to express my support of H. Res. 1112, a resolution recognizing 2008 as the International Year of the Reef.

I have the great honor of representing the Florida Keys, an area rich in natural wonders including two national parks, four national wildlife refuges, and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary—one of the most diverse marine ecosystems in the Nation. The natural and cultural resources and environmental setting of the area make it among the most diverse in North America. Within the surrounding waters are resources deserving of special consideration and protection, including America's only living barrier coral reef.

This designation is part of a global effort to raise public awareness of the value of coral reefs, the significance of the threats faced by coral reef systems, and to mobilize action to develop and implement innovative solutions and strategies to protect and conserve these important natural resources. Coral reef systems provide economic, environmental, and cultural benefits to millions of people around the world and are vital in protecting shorelines and supporting coastal economies. Coral reefs are some of the most valuable and spectacular places on earth. Covering less than 1 percent of the planet's surface, coral reefs and their associated mangrove, sea grass, and other habitats are the world's most biologically diverse marine ecosystems.

Last September, I had the distinct opportunity of participating in a dive to the Aquarius Undersea Laboratory in the Florida Keys. While in Aquarius, I participated in a live, underwater question and answer session with schoolchildren on topics such as coral reef conservation and the dangers of offshore drilling. This visit demonstrated how the Aquarius facility plays a direct role in improving our youngsters' understanding and appreciation of the marine environment.

As part of my passion for preserving the environment, I am proud to serve as co-Chair of the National Marine Sanctuary Caucus along with my colleague Congresswoman LOIS CAPPS. The National Marine Sanctuary Caucus is a bipartisan coalition of Members dedicated to increasing awareness and strengthening commitment to our Nation's cherished marine sanctuaries. The caucus promotes understanding of how national marine sanctuaries help to safeguard our natural heritage and economic well-being. It also serves to inform local communities about the importance of maintaining these ecosystems for future generations to enjoy, educates Members of Congress on the importance of sanctuary protection and management, and ensures that

adequate resources are directed to foster and restore these vital habitats.

I would like to also take this time to recognize the incredible National Marine Sanctuary officials in my district, including Billy Causey and Commander Dave Score, as well as Sanctuary System Director Dan Basta, for all of their work on behalf of our underwater ecosystems.

Once again, I would like to express my support for designating 2008 as the International Year of the Reef. Through this designation, it is my hope that it will encourage further research and development efforts to preserve coral reefs around the world.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 23, 2008*

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, on April 22, 2008, I missed rollcall votes numbered 205, 206, and 207. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 205, 206, and 207.

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF SPACE-BASED OBSERVATIONS OF THE EARTH BY LANDSAT SPACECRAFT

SPEECH OF

**HON. MARK UDALL**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 22, 2008*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House yesterday passed my resolution, H. Res. 891, on Celebrating 35 Years of Space-Based Observations of the Earth by Landsat Spacecraft. I would like to thank my colleague, Representative REGULA from Ohio, who has joined me as an original cosponsor of this resolution.

It is only fitting that we celebrate Landsat and its thirty-five year record of space-based observations of the land at a time when we are beginning to address the current and future implications of climate change. The U.S. Climate Change Science Program recently recognized Landsat noting that "Landsat data are invaluable for studying the land surface and how it affects and is affected by climate." I thank my colleagues in Congress for continuing to support Landsat and for enabling the development of these long time-series data that are so important for research on climate variability.

The data collected by Landsat satellites are being used by almost all Federal agencies, by state, regional, and local governments, by researchers and private industry. I held a field hearing earlier this month in Colorado on the important ways in which remote sensing data, including Landsat imagery, can help our state and local officials carry out their responsibilities more effectively. The broad application of these data to provide scientific and societal benefits testifies to the nation's sound investment in space technology. We owe our thanks and appreciation to the talented and dedicated scientists, engineers, and professionals who have contributed to Landsat and its success.