

shell companies in the Cayman Islands. H.R. 6081 also stops tax benefits for Americans who renounce their citizenship in order to avoid paying U.S. taxes.

The men and women of the armed forces who serve this country with honor during times of war should be assured that their families will not suffer financially from being deployed. I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ELAINE
BUNDESEN

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to recognize the passing of one of our notable local residents and a good friend, Elaine Bundesen. Elaine died last month at the age of 85 of complications from Parkinson's disease.

Originally from Washington State, Elaine grew up in Seattle and attended the University of Washington. After she graduated in 1945 with a degree in English, she headed for San Francisco, where she met and married Jim Bloom, a Navy pilot from my hometown of Petaluma.

After the war—World War II—Elaine lived in Guam with her husband as one of the first Navy dependents to be stationed there. Later, the couple moved to Petaluma, where Elaine was introduced to small-town life. Petaluma being the egg capital of the Nation, Elaine eventually got a job at Bundesen Bros. Hatchery, where she met her second husband, Paul Bundesen. Sadly, their life together ended when Paul was killed in a plane crash in 1967.

Elaine returned to school, and in 1974 received her master's degree in counseling at Sonoma State University in Rohnert Park. She worked for more than 25 years in the university's office of admissions and records. During this time, she helped form the public lecture series "Pandora's Box" with a small group of women whose activities started the women's studies program at Sonoma State.

Elaine is survived by her three stepchildren, Margaret, David and Laura, and many nieces and nephews.

Madam Speaker, Elaine was a wonderful woman and a good friend who influenced many lives. She was a mentor to me and will be greatly missed.

TRIBUTE TO AZERBAIJANIS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise as a member of the House Azerbaijan Caucus, to honor Azerbaijanis around the world, as they prepare to celebrate Republic Day on May 28. Republic Day commemorates Azerbaijan's declaration of its independence from the Russian Empire in 1918, becoming the first democratic secular republic in the Eastern hemisphere. Despite its short existence, 1918–

1920, the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan had achieved considerable success in state building and creation of educational foundations for future generations. The Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan granted suffrage to women shortly after its creation, ahead of most Western democracies.

Despite all of its successes, the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan was not in a position to withstand the occupational forces of the then newly formed Soviet Russia. Consequently, Azerbaijan had temporarily lost its independence in 1920 and later was included into the U.S.S.R.

In 1990, Azerbaijan regained its independence from the U.S.S.R., ending 70 years of Soviet rule. Meantime, Azerbaijanis will never forget the tragic events of January 1990, forever known to all Azerbaijanis as Black January, as the Soviet army crushed peaceful demonstrations in the streets of the capital Baku. On August 30, 1991, Azerbaijan's Parliament adopted the Declaration on the Restoration of Independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and on October 18, 1991, the independence was approved by the Constitution.

Since its independence, the Republic of Azerbaijan has been an invaluable ally and is among the first nations, who offered unconditional support to the United States in the War Against Terror, providing its airspace and the use of its airports for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Today, Azerbaijani troops continue to serve with distinction in Afghanistan and in Iraq.

Azerbaijan is also a founding member of GUAM—Organization for Democracy and Economic Development, which includes Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova. Azerbaijan is a leading nation in regional economic cooperation through development of various international projects. Azerbaijan is also one of the key players in European energy security matters.

Madam Speaker and dear colleagues, please join me in thanking the people of Azerbaijan for their sincere friendship towards our country, and congratulate Azerbaijanis around the world on the 90th anniversary of Republic Day.

I also would like to thank and congratulate my Azerbaijani-American constituents, lead by Naimi and Naila Amiraliyev, for their tireless efforts in developing and strengthening the friendship and understanding between our nations.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN
HERITAGE MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 19, 2008

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House passed H. Res. 1153—Celebrating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. I honor this important month of May which marks the 30th anniversary of the passage of a joint Congressional Resolution designating the first 10 days in May to celebrate Asian American Heritage. Congress later voted to expand the commemoration to a month-long celebration to truly honor the im-

pact that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have in this great Nation.

Let us join the rest of the country in celebrating this year's theme of "Building Today for Tomorrow." As legislators we must constantly remember that the decisions we make now greatly impact our future. That is why I am proud to say this Democratic Congress has passed legislation to raise the minimum wage, to make college more affordable, to fund nutrition programs, to protect families facing foreclosure, and to lower prices at the pump. We will continue to fight for the needs of Asian American and Pacific Islander communities by creating legislation to address this country's growing economic and energy needs.

Mr. Speaker, this year during Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I urge my colleagues to recognize beyond the month of May the continued struggles that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders face—the health disparities, language barriers, stereotypes, and discrimination they attempt to overcome on a daily basis. I urge us to remember their unyielding contributions to our Nation and honor those who have sacrificed their lives and families to bravely fight for our country. Above all, I urge us to work together to make choices that will move our Nation forward to a better tomorrow.

SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL DRUG
COURT MONTH

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support and recognition of May as National Drug Court Month.

Since the first drug court was created in 1989 drug courts have been a legitimate alternative to incarceration for nonviolent, drug-addicted offenders.

By combining judicial supervision, comprehensive substance abuse and mental health treatment, random and frequent drug testing, incentives and sanctions, clinical case management and life skills services drug courts provide substance abusing offenders with the much-needed chance at long-term recovery and productive lifestyles.

My home State of Maryland is a leader in the drug court movement. The Drug Treatment Court Commission was established in 2003 by Chief Judge Robert M. Bell of the Maryland Court of Appeals. The Commission has supported the development of 40 drug courts throughout the State so that Maryland can effectively respond to the thousands of individuals arrested in Maryland who are dependent on drugs and/or alcohol.

Drug courts work. According to an April 2008 evaluation of the Harford County District Court Adult Drug Court program participants were significantly less likely to be re-arrested than offenders who were eligible for the program but did not participate. In Harford County and throughout the State drug courts are making a difference. During May, National Drug Court Month, I am proud to share that 30 graduations are being held across the State.

Drug courts play an important role in breaking the cycle of addiction and crime and will

help to reduce the over-reliance on incarceration for the addicted. We must do all that we can to maximize the impact of drug courts across the Nation.

I applaud the work that the Maryland Drug Treatment Court Commission is doing and I congratulate all of the dedicated drug court professionals and graduates from Maryland and around the country.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to submit documentation consistent with the new Republican Earmark Standards.

Requesting Member: Congressman JOHN R. CARTER.

Bill Number: H.R. 5658—The Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009.

Account: Military Construction, Army.

Legal Name of Receiving Entity: Fort Hood, TX.

Address of Receiving Entity: U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Hood, Bldg. 1001, Rm W321, Fort Hood, TX 75544.

Description of Request: I have secured \$18,288,000 in authorization funding in H.R. 5658 in the Military Construction, Army account for a Chapel with Religious Education Center project at Fort Hood, TX.

This project will construct a standard design chapel complex and religious education center. Primary facilities include a chapel complex, religious education center, administrative area, conference rooms, library, multipurpose activity area, kitchen and storage areas, fire alarm and fire suppression systems, connection to Installation Energy Management Control System (ECMS), and building information systems. Special foundations are required due to the expansive soils. Supporting facilities include electrical, water, sanitary sewer, and natural gas utilities; storm drainage; chilled water distribution; paving, walks, curbs and gutters; security lighting, information systems; landscaping and site improvements. Heating will be provided by self-contained natural gas units. Access for the handicapped will be provided. Comprehensive Interior Design package is required. Anti-terrorism/Force Protection (AT/FP) measures include mass notification system, structural reinforcement, special doors and windows, high curbing, and other measures to maintain stand-off distance.

Fort Hood, Texas is a strategic installation for the Army. This project was programmed to receive funding in Fiscal Year 2012, but was identified by the garrison commander as the highest unfunded priority in Fiscal Year 2009. The project is necessary to improve psychological and spiritual care for the soldiers and their families.

Military Construction projects are always 100% funded by the U.S. Federal government so there is no opportunity for matching funds.

DUNCAN HUNTER NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 21, 2008

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5658) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2009 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2009, and for other purposes:

Mr. BACA. Mr. Chairman, I stand here in support of H.R. 5658, the Duncan Hunter Defense Authorization Act of FY 2009.

Just a few months ago, we reflected on the 5-year anniversary of this war. Today we send a message to our troops that we are with them.

This bill authorizes additional funds for the needs of our troops overseas, and more importantly will authorize a pay raise larger than that requested by the President.

During these hard economic times of recession, foreclosures, and high gas prices, our military families need all our help and support. This bill prohibits fee increases in TRICARE and expands available health care services.

This bill is a step in the right direction, with directives for the Afghanistan conflict, and more accountability of the Iraqi government and contractors.

Today we make our commitment to the Americans we represent, and their sons, daughters, husbands, wives, sisters and brothers serving as part of the Armed Forces. They are fighting a war that is not their fight.

In my district alone, 13 families will sit at their dinner table without a loved one. To these families in my district and those throughout the Nation, I thank you for your service, your sacrifice and your love for this Nation. You are the back bone of the Armed Forces.

I urge my colleagues to keep our commitment to our troops, redirect this war in the right direction and vote for H.R. 5658.

INTRODUCTION OF FAIRNESS IN NURSING HOME ARBITRATION ACT

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Fairness in Nursing Home Arbitration Act of 2008 to protect one of our most vulnerable groups: the elderly. This legislation is designed to make unenforceable all pre-dispute, mandatory binding arbitration clauses in contracts between long-term care facilities and their residents. Let me be clear: I am supportive of the principles of arbitration, so this legislation will not prohibit arbitration. Instead, it will simply ensure that residents have the choice whether to arbitrate a dispute after it has arisen.

The Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law, which I chair, has held three hearings this term on issues related to the

Federal Arbitration Act. During these hearings, witnesses testified that many businesses utilize arbitration agreements to the disadvantage of consumers by limiting constitutional rights, imposing unreasonable costs, and creating a system in which consumers are likely to lose even when they file a valid claim.

The long-term care industry is one stark example where businesses draft take-it-or-leave-it admission agreements for prospective residents that include pre-dispute mandatory arbitration clauses. A witness at the Subcommittee's October 25, 2007 hearing on H.R. 3010, the Arbitration Fairness Act of 2007, testified that the "current system of binding mandatory arbitration employed by nursing homes creates a playing field that is tilted in favor of nursing homes and against frail, vulnerable residents who suffer terribly at the hands of their caregivers. Sadly these residents are, all too often, the victims of abuse by their caregivers. They should not be further abused by an arbitration system that dispenses anything but justice."

After hearing several stories of abhorrent conditions in nursing homes and how arbitration clauses have effectively silenced residents who want to improve those conditions, I am introducing this legislation to make unenforceable pre-dispute mandatory arbitration clauses and to restore to residents and their families their full legal rights. Residents and their families will no longer have to worry about losing their right to a jury trial when they are going through the emotional and traumatic process of searching for long-term care facilities and then choosing the perfect one. I understand the emotional toll and the sense of vulnerability when moving a loved one and his belongings into the care of strangers at a nursing home. My father was recently placed into a nursing home, and one of the last things I wanted to worry about was whether he was forgoing his legal rights when he entered it. Instead, I wanted to focus solely on the quality and range of services the facility would provide him. This legislation will allow families and residents to retain their legal rights while they look for that perfect long-term care facility.

Several groups, including the AARP, the Alzheimer's Association, the National Senior Citizens Law Center, and many others who advocate on behalf of the elderly and consumers, support this legislation. Already a similar bipartisan bill has been introduced in the Senate. I am optimistic that Congress can soon send a bill to the President for his signature so that nursing home residents will retain their choice whether to arbitrate a dispute.

I urge my colleagues to join me, Representatives ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, JOHN CONYERS, HANK JOHNSON, DENNIS KUCINICH, and WILLIAM DELAHUNT, and take the important step of co-sponsoring this bipartisan legislation.

TRIBUTE TO MEGHAN NORTH LAMPO

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 2008

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a young constituent whose life tragically ended way too early, as the result of an automobile accident.