

passed H. Res. 1237, recognizing the historical significance of Juneteenth Independence Day. I voted in favor of this resolution and I commend my colleague, Representative DANNY DAVIS of Illinois for introducing this legislation. Juneteenth marks the anniversary of June 19, 1865, the day Union General Gordon Granger and 2,000 Federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas, to take control of the State and formally free the slaves.

News of the end of slavery did not reach frontier areas of the United States, for more than 2 years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, and months after the conclusion of the Civil War. When word finally reached the enslaved populations in these areas, African Americans celebrated their liberation in towns across Texas and the southwest. These celebrations became a tradition for African Americans in Texas and have since spread across the United States.

Juneteenth is not only a time to commemorate the historical significance of the emancipation of slaves, but also time to recognize and celebrate the vast achievements and progress of African Americans across the Nation. In my home State of Connecticut, Juneteenth is an officially recognized holiday. We make note of fearless Connecticut abolitionists James Mars and J.W.C. Pennington who fought tirelessly to end slavery and petitioned Connecticut's Legislature regarding voting and social rights for African Americans in the 1840s and 50s. We also recognize the significant milestone of the United States Supreme Court decision restoring freedom to the survivors of the *Amistad* Slave Ship, then living in Connecticut. Through museums and sites such as the Old State House, the Mark Twain House, the Harriet Beecher Stowe House, the Connecticut freedom trails, and the Amistad Center for Arts and Culture at the Old State House, we pay homage to the African American experience throughout the State.

And so Madam Speaker, I rise to commemorate a day that represents not only an end to centuries of a great injustice, but the beginning of a new journey for all of Americans.

GREAT CARIBBEAN AMERICAN
CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN
CULTURE

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Caribbean-American Heritage Month and the many contributions of persons of Caribbean descent into the American fabric.

Despite the lack of wealth and resources available to many in the Caribbean, the region continues to produce exceptional talent and is endowed with a capacity to overcome incredible odds. Our Nation has thrived as a country of immigrants, and we are more vibrant and hopeful because of the talent, faith, and resilience of Caribbean Americans. For centuries, Caribbean Americans have added to the strength of our country. They have been leaders, innovators, athletes, artists, entertainers, doctors, and lawyers.

The world has had the privilege of reading the words of internationally recognized Carib-

bean writers and poets like Jamaica Kincaid, Derek Walcott (who won the 1992 Nobel Prize in Literature), and Edwidge Danticat (a finalist for the National Book Award). We have listened to the creative sounds of Kompa that has its origins in Haiti, Zouk from Guadeloupe, Soca from Trinidad and Tobago, and Reggae from Jamaica. Steel Pans, the only musical instrument invented in the 21st century originated from Trinidad and Tobago. Jamaica's First Lady of Theatre and Film, Leoni Forbes, won the Gemini Award for best actress in a comedy.

During Caribbean-American Heritage Month, we celebrate the great contributions of Caribbean Americans to our Nation. We recognize that without them, our country would not be what it is today and we pay tribute to the common bonds that unite the United States and the Caribbean.

TRIBUTE TO PAT JOHNSON

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2008

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a community leader, Mrs. Patricia "Pat" Johnson, on her retirement after 27 years of service on the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District Board of Trustees.

Pat's service to the Paso Robles public schools officially started when she was elected to the Paso Robles elementary school board, now the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District Board of Trustees, but her contribution to the community of Paso Robles began long before that. With her daughter, Danielle, coming up through the Paso Robles school system, Pat served as both a classroom and library volunteer, often spending her entire day at Marie Bauer Elementary School and George H. Flamson Middle School. She served as president of the local Parent Teacher Association and the School Site Council prior to her election to the Board of Trustees.

During her time on the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District Board of Trustees, the district experienced significant growth. Seven new schools and three administrative buildings were built during her tenure of service, a local middle school was modernized and property was purchased that would later make room for the teacher's center. Of the new schools built, she knew and worked with several of the teachers the buildings were named after.

In addition to playing a vital role in Paso Robles school district's growth, Pat also presided over several areas of conceptual transformation of the school district, including unification in 1996, of the Paso Robles elementary school board and the current board she serves on, as well as implementation of the Middle School Concept, an independent study program, and accreditation of the district high schools and high school graduation diplomas. Throughout her tenure with the Paso Robles public schools, she was also an active participant in various California School Boards Association events.

Over the past 27 years, the students and community served by the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District have benefited from Pat's dedication and energetic service. She

worked tirelessly to ensure the students of Paso Robles had a school system that provided them a world-class education to ensure they were prepared for the future and successful throughout their lives.

Her many contributions to Paso Robles are a shining example of the dedicated public service to which we should each aspire. I know Pat looks forward to spending time happily in her retirement with her husband Fred, daughter Danielle, and grandchildren Nicolas, Isabella, and Jose. I commend Pat for her service to the Paso Robles Joint Unified School District and the local community, and I wish her all the best as she enters this next stage of her life.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. KEVIN
WILLIAMS

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2008

Mr. ROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in recognition of Mr. Kevin Williams of Secaucus, New Jersey, for his extraordinary public service and congratulate him for being honored with the Congressional Award Gold Medal.

The Congressional Award is an esteemed recognition bestowed on exemplary young people who complete a minimum of 400 hours of voluntary public service, 200 hours of personal development activities, 200 hours of physical fitness, and four consecutive days and nights of an exploration or expedition. Kevin epitomizes everything that this award is seeking to extol; particularly his dedication to his community and commitment to public service.

At the young age of 18, Kevin Williams has already founded two nonprofit organizations, People to People International's Go International For Tomorrow Student Chapter and Wrap4ASmile Foundation, Inc. The first of these organizations, Go International For Tomorrow, focuses on developing youth leadership through educational, cultural and humanitarian activities. The second, Wrap4ASmile, raises funds, collects products, packs care packages, and distributes personal care items that cannot be purchased with food stamps. These two groups successfully encourage young adults to get involved in various public service activities.

Kevin has spent over one thousand hours performing valuable community service, both in my home State of New Jersey and abroad. He has earned numerous awards documenting and celebrating his achievements. Most recently, Kevin received the 2008 Comcast Leaders and Achievers Award, the People to People International Golden Award, and, for the past 4 years, the Presidential Volunteer Service Gold Award.

Kevin is a truly exceptional young leader in our community. In addition to founding two nonprofits, Kevin has participated in the International Student Leadership Conference of Operation Smile, the American Legion New Jersey Boys State Conference, and the National Youth Leadership Council Conference in Healthcare Medicine. He is an ambassador of public service, and his efforts help make the world a better place for all of us.

Today, I would like to congratulate Mr. Kevin Williams for receiving the Congressional

Award Gold Medal in recognition of his exemplary contributions to New Jersey and beyond. I extend to him my very best wishes.

HONORING THE BOY SCOUTS OF
IOWA

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2008

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, our thoughts and prayers go out to the families and friends, fellow Scouts of the four young men—Josh Fennen, 13, Sam Thomsen, 13, and Ben Petrzilka, 14, from Omaha, Nebraska, and Aaron Eilerts, 13, from Eagle Grove, Iowa—who were killed on June 11, 2008, when a tornado hit their campsite in western Iowa.

As an Eagle Scout myself, I am saddened, but also very proud of the young men in Iowa, and their poise and strength in the face of one of Mother Nature's most ferocious storms. These young men lived up to our pledge which says:

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong,
mentally awake, and morally straight.

The tornado destroyed the four cabins of the 1,800-acre camp and ripped up tents. However, in the critical moments caused by the disaster and through the rubble, these brave men exemplified our motto of being prepared when they immediately set up triage operations to assist and, most likely, save the lives of other young men who were in grave danger.

As a Member who represents an area of the country which, unfortunately, experiences more than its share of hurricanes and tornados, I know all too well the devastation severe weather causes. And, as a Scout, having participated in camping experiences similar to the Iowa Scouts' experience, I know and appreciate the challenges those young men faced.

So today, I ask that you join me in taking this opportunity to recognize the four heroes lost that day.

MEMORIAL TRIBUTE FOR CAPTAIN
JENNIFER HARRIS, USMC

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2008

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Marine Captain Jennifer Harris, who was killed in a CH-46 crash outside of Baghdad on February 7, 2007.

Captain Harris embodied many of the great traits our men and women are displaying both at home and abroad in three theaters of war. Captain Harris was dedicated to her Nation, her Corps, and to the Iraqi people.

Captain Harris was a member of the United States Naval Academy's class of 2000 and graduated with an honors degree in political science and a minor in Spanish. She was a

graduate of the Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Instructor course in Yuma, Arizona. Accordingly, she served as a primary tactics instructor for her squadron, HMM-364. As the pilot training officer and lead instructor pilot, she was responsible for training new copilots and evaluating seasoned pilots for advanced designations.

Captain Harris was one of only four Marine officers selected by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to represent the U.S. Marine Corps in the 2007 Senate Youth Program. She was to participate in the program after her return from her last deployment to Iraq.

At the time of her death, Captain Harris was serving with HMM-364 as a CH-46 helicopter pilot in the Al Anbar province of Iraq, performing assault support, casualty evacuation, and combat raid missions. She gave her life so that the Iraqi people might have an opportunity for a better life. This was her third combat deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, including the initial invasion operation from February to October 2003.

I want to extend my heartfelt condolences to Captain Jennifer Harris's family and hope that they are able to find comfort in the knowledge that Captain Harris's countless selfless acts, including her ultimate selfless act, helped to provide opportunity for the people of Iraq.

HONORING THE WEST GENESEE
HIGH SCHOOL BOYS LACROSSE
TEAM

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2008

Mr. WALSH of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the West Genesee High School boys lacrosse team, 2008 Class A New York State Champions. With their 11-7 victory over Syosset High School on June 14, 2008 the West Genesee Wildcats won their 15th New York state title.

The road to the title was not an easy one for the West Genesee Wildcats. With an injury riddled line up the team had a bumpy start that included 3 losses and a drop to 17th in the state rankings. Many were skeptical that the Wildcats could reach the level of success that previous school teams had achieved, but the players and coaches set out to prove the skeptics wrong and ended the season on a 12 game win streak. West Genesee finished an outstanding season with an impressive record of 21-3 and their 15th state championship is the most titles won by a New York state high school team in anyone sport.

On behalf of the people of the 25th District of New York, I congratulate Athletic Director Anthony Pascale, Head Coach Mike Messere, Assistant Coach Bob Deegan, and the players of the West Genesee High School boys lacrosse team: 2—Shane Martin, 3—Mike Fetterly, 4—Dylan Sabene, 5—Ryan McConnell, 6—Kevin Grome, 7—Jim Marks, 8—Tim Besio, 9—Matt McCabe, 10—Henry Luke Cometti, 11—Owen Alberts, 12—Mike Simiele, 13—Eric Mazzoni, 14—Garrett Ryan, 15—Joe Fazio, 16—Dylan Parker, 17—Jordan Rogers, 18—Eric Miccio, 19—Jaron Davie, 20—Ryan Barber, 21—John Glesener, 22—Ike Hopper, 23—Conor Regin, 24—PJ Hart, 25—Jack Conboy, 26—Ben Waldron, 27—Jack Ken-

nedy, 28—Joe Fletcher, 29—Dan Stapleton, 30—Evan Mazzoni, 31—Steve Mahle, 32—Chris Burns, 33—Matt Lebduška, 34—Andrew Luczka, 35—Alex Iannicello, and 36—Chris Schneider.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2008

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, due to external circumstances, I was unable to promptly return to House Chambers and I missed the following vote on Thursday, June 19, 2008. I would have voted as follows: H.R. 2764, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008, rollcall vote 431, Agreeing to Senate Amendment to House Amendment No.1: "no."

I would have voted "no" on this amendment which provides \$165.4 billion in funding for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan because this amendment contained no benchmarks or timelines for redeploying our troops out of Iraq responsibly, safe, and soon.

MELANIE ROACH: INSPIRATIONAL
OLYMPIAN

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 2008

Mr. REICHERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in order to congratulate my constituent, Melanie Roach, for her resiliency while earning a place on the United States weightlifting team for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing. Her story is a wonderful example of the power of the human spirit and she will no doubt represent her family, community and country well throughout the entire 17-day competition.

Before qualifying for the games this summer, Melanie was on the verge of making her way to Sydney, Australia for the 2000 Olympic Games when an injury shattered her Olympic aspirations. Instead of wallowing in self-pity, Melanie threw herself into the role of mother to her three children, supportive spouse to her husband, a State legislator in Washington, and started a business. However, she could not shake the desire to compete athletically and worked tirelessly to get back to an Olympic level and compete with the best lifters in the world.

She is one of only four women to qualify for the team and at 33 years old, she is the oldest member of the U.S. weightlifting team, and yet the youngest at heart. She will travel to Beijing prior to the August 8, 2008, opening ceremonies and will bring the pride of her family and friends, her community and the State of Washington, and all the people of the United States of America. Melanie is an inspiration to all and I wish her the best in Beijing and safety in her travels.