

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING BERTHA LEWIS OF
BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Bertha Lewis of Hernando County, Florida. Bertha has done something that all of us strive to do, but that very few of us will ever accomplish, celebrate her 102nd birthday.

Bertha Lewis was born October 19, 1906 in Georgia. Following school in Cuthbert, GA, Bertha went to work as a seamstress. After marrying her sweetheart, Lovorge Lewis, the happy couple had one daughter. The proudest moments in Bertha's life were getting married and having a child.

Thinking back on her long life, Bertha said her fondest childhood memories are of going to church and Bible study. When asked what gives her the most pleasure now in life today, Bertha said she thanks God that she is alive.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Bertha Lewis for reaching her 102nd birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as she has.

FIGHTING IDENTITY THEFT AND
DEFENDING THE HOMELAND

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, according to a 2005 GAO study, employers reported the use of 1.4 million Social Security numbers that did not exist. Nearly 1.7 million numbers had been used by multiple individuals, sometimes as many as 500 times for the same Social Security number. In my district, the Waukegan police find that at least 20 fake Social Security cards are found by law enforcement every week.

Now, upgrading the Social Security card should be common sense. It's about seniors. It's about identity theft. It's about illegal immigration. And it's about keeping Americans safe.

When we look at today's Social Security card, we find a 1930s design. It lacks a picture. It lacks a bar code. It lacks a magnetic strip. It poses almost no barrier to the thousands of counterfeiters that make false Social Security cards.

Today, along with my colleague from Illinois PETER ROSKAM, I have introduced legislation to finally give Americans the choice between the old 1930s design Social Security card and the new secure Social Security card. This card offers enhanced protections across the board. It would replace that flimsy and easily counterfeitable Social Security card with a 21st century identity document that gives sen-

iors real protection. Our legislation and this design is based on the Government's common access card. Already the U.S. Government has issued 10 million of these cards, and its protections, in our judgment, we believe, should be offered to people in the 21st century against Social Security card counterfeiters.

We think this legislation is important to propose a significant barrier to those who would counterfeit Social Security cards, to help seniors in fighting identity theft, and to make sure that a person who has that number and this card is really who they say it is.

We saw on September 11 that 18 of 19 hijackers had valid U.S. IDs during their crime of the century. I think it's time to make sure that at least the Social Security card has the 21st century protections that we can offer to make sure that we protect seniors, to make sure that we protect all Americans, and to protect the Social Security system. That's why we think that this legislation to create these secure Social Security cards is an idea whose time has come.

INTRODUCING THE SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFICIARY TAX REDUCTION ACT AND THE SENIOR CITIZENS' TAX ELIMINATION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce two pieces of legislation to reduce taxes on senior citizens. The first bill, the Social Security Beneficiary Tax Reduction Act, repeals the 1993 tax increase on Social Security benefits. Repealing this increase on Social Security benefits is a good first step toward reducing the burden imposed by the federal government on senior citizens. However, imposing any tax on Social Security benefits is unfair and illogical. This is why I am also introducing the Senior Citizens' Tax Elimination Act, which repeals all taxes on Social Security benefits.

Since Social Security benefits are financed with tax dollars, taxing these benefits is yet another example of double taxation. Furthermore, "taxing" benefits paid by the government is merely an accounting trick, a shell game which allows members of Congress to reduce benefits by subterfuge. This allows Congress to continue using the Social Security trust fund as a means of financing other government programs, and masks the true size of the federal deficit.

Instead of imposing ridiculous taxes on senior citizens, Congress should ensure the integrity of the Social Security trust fund by ending the practice of using trust fund monies for other programs. This is why I am also introducing the Social Security Preservation Act, which ensures that all money in the Social Security trust fund is spent solely on Social Security. At a time when Congress' inability to

control spending continues to threaten the Social Security trust fund, the need for this legislation has never been greater. When the government taxes Americans to fund Social Security, it promises the American people that the money will be there for them when they retire. Congress has a moral obligation to keep that promise.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to help free senior citizens from oppressive taxation by supporting my Senior Citizens' Tax Elimination Act and my Social Security Beneficiary Tax Reduction Act. I also urge my colleagues to ensure that moneys from the Social Security trust fund are used solely for Social Security benefits and not wasted on frivolous government programs.

JOE RINEHART

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise today to recognize the outstanding service and leadership of Joe Rinehart on the occasion of his retirement after more than 37 years of service to Chillicothe, Missouri, as Fire Chief, Disaster Director and head of Department of Emergency Services.

Joe began his career as a firefighter in 1972, and rose to Fire Chief in 1979. Fourteen mayors have served during his tenure, but he has consistently been there to oversee numerous personnel and to put the safety of the citizens of Chillicothe, Missouri, before himself. Chief Rinehart has also been instrumental in assisting in many projects over the years. During his years of service, he has modernized the fire department, overseen the move to its current location, helped form the Livingston County Ambulance District and provided the leadership to help pass the capital improvement sales tax.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in commending Chief Joe Rinehart for his dedicated service to ensuring the safety of the people of Chillicothe, Missouri. I know Joe's colleagues, family and friends join with me in thanking him for his commitment to others and wishing him happiness and good health in his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO DAVID S. BLIDEN

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to honor David S. Bliden upon his retirement from the position of Executive Director of the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo).

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Mr. Bliden holds a bachelors degree in economics from the University of Maryland, College Park, and after earning a law degree from the University of Maryland School of Law in 1973, began his career in government as a legal intern at the State's Attorney's office in Prince George's County. By 1974, Dave was an Associate County Attorney, serving as a liaison to the Maryland Association of County Civil Attorneys. Serving as Deputy County Attorney in the Office of Law for Anne Arundel County from 1984-1991, Dave served as the County Executive's liaison to the General Assembly, Governor's staff, and the Maryland Association of Counties.

In 1991, Mr. Bliden was appointed Executive Director of the Maryland Association of Counties. As executive director, Dave managed the trade association which represents Maryland's twenty-four political subdivisions. He has served as MACo's primary representative to the Maryland General Assembly, the Governor's office, and the Local Government Insurance Trust. Throughout his tenure, he was a proactive communicator and was always conversant in emerging trends with local issues.

Dave's willingness to look at each county in Maryland individually, as well as part of one great state provided the backbone for Maryland's continued success. Although times are tough today in Maryland, they could be considerably worse were it not for the talents, persuasiveness, and dedication of Dave Bliden.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join with me today to honor David S. Bliden in his retirement from the position of Executive Director of the Maryland Association of Counties. His legacy as a brilliant and competent director will be forever remembered in his service to one of Maryland's largest associations. It is with great pride that I congratulate Dave Bliden on his exemplary legal career and his outstanding leadership at MACo.

IN HONOR OF MICHELLE L. SMITH

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to the late Michelle L. Smith. On Monday morning, December 22nd, the Delaware City Fire Company was informed of the tragic loss of Firefighter Michelle L. Smith, who succumbed to the traumatic injuries she sustained on December 20th. Michelle was assisting with the care of a critically injured motorcyclist at the scene of an accident on DuPont Highway when she was hit by a passing car. This is the first death in the line of duty for the Delaware City Fire Company in its 121-year history.

Michelle L. Smith has served the Delaware City Fire Company and the Delaware City Ladies Auxiliary for over five years, holding the position of Secretary with the Ladies Auxiliary. She also served with the Volunteer Hose Company of Middletown, DE.

Michelle will be greatly missed by her family, friends, and coworkers. She exemplified the honor and dedication that all firefighters throughout Delaware and across the United States strive for on a daily basis. The President of Delaware City Fire Company, Wally

Poppe stated that, "Firefighter Smith typified Delaware City Fire Company as a firefighter and as a member of the Ladies Auxiliary. She took great pride in her numerous contributions, including emergency response, fire prevention and community awareness."

Michelle L. Smith will be greatly missed and her heroism, dedication, and selflessness will serve as an inspiration to all those who knew her.

HONORING MILES HOCHARD

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Miles Hochard of Weston, Missouri. Miles is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1249, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Miles has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Miles has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Miles Hochard for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO TEAM LETTERKENNY

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. SHUSTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to salute the service of a distinguished group of American citizens. This dedicated group has worked for many years to enhance the military value of Letterkenny Army Depot and sustain the installation's work to increase support to our military. Each of these individuals has professionally served our Nation with great distinction.

Mike Ross has aggressively led Team Letterkenny from the start. Mike has sacrificed countless days, night and weekends to ensure that Letterkenny projects move forward and Letterkenny is prepared to meet worldwide military priorities. Mike has led numerous team visits to Washington and Harrisburg to ensure that we understand the importance of Letterkenny and support their initiatives. Mike has also focused his Franklin County Area Development staff to work countless individual projects to modernize, expand and promote the depot. Mike Ross's professional leadership and hard work have significantly increased the military value of Letterkenny Army Depot and dramatically increased community understanding and support for Letterkenny.

Dave Sciamanna and Commissioner Robert Thomas serve as co-chairs of the local component of Team Letterkenny. Dave is also President of the Greater Chambersburg Chamber of Commerce and Bob is the Presi-

dent of the Franklin County Commissioners. These dedicated community leaders have many high priority community responsibilities, but they always find time to work on initiatives to support Letterkenny's military mission. Dave and Bob are instrumental in marketing Letterkenny's capability, and they aggressively partner with Letterkenny to show potential workers the highlights of working at Letterkenny and living in Franklin County. Despite their busy schedules, Dave and Bob are always ready to adjust their calendars and do whatever is needed to support Letterkenny and our military.

John Gray chairs the depot component of Team Letterkenny. His brilliant leadership and professional focus have dramatically increased the community's understanding of Letterkenny's importance to our military services. He has consistently dedicated countless off-duty hours to expanding community support for the depot and raising awareness of military contributions to the economy of the State. John Gray consistently provides thought provoking ideas and focuses the organizational energy on the best way to turn ideas into reality.

Stacy Gregson and Joe Spielbauer chair the State component of Team Letterkenny. They have worked tirelessly to obtain Pennsylvania resources to support Team Letterkenny initiatives and they can always be counted on to actively support all of the team initiatives. They have done an outstanding job educating Commonwealth leaders on the importance of Letterkenny to our military and our State.

I am proud of the work of these fine Americans, and I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring this team for their long and honorable service to our great Nation.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I share with our colleagues moving remarks that 19-year-old Ti-Anna Wang, a U.S. citizen, delivered at a press conference on the occasion of International Human Rights Day.

She had recently returned from China where she visited her father, Dr. Wang Bingzhang, who is serving a life-sentence in a Chinese prison for his pro-democracy activities. His ordeal bears the markings of so many Chinese dissidents who have been robbed of their freedom and endured severe hardship at the hands of their captors.

One thing we learned from President Ronald Reagan in his dealings with the Soviet Union is that it both inspires hope in the oppressed and shames the oppressors when we raise the individual cases of political and religious prisoners, like Dr. Wang.

I would like to start by thanking everyone here, on behalf of my family, for taking the time to come to this event. Since I started my work in DC, I've been lucky enough to be surrounded by supportive, generous and kind people who are genuinely concerned about my father's case. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been involved in his fight for freedom. More specifically, I would like to thank Dr. Yang, Congressman WOLF, Congressman SMITH, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN and Senator

FEINSTEIN for their recent work on my father's case. It is the compassion of everyone here that gives my family hope and reason to believe that the unlikely is possible.

I'm here today to tell you about my recent visit with my father just two weeks ago. To give a little background, my father's sentence allows for only one visit a month. Each of these visits last about 30 minutes. The standard procedure is that my family receives a visitation notice in the mail that lets us know the date of the visit. As my whole family lives in North America, we usually have a very short amount of time to make the necessary travel arrangements for a long trip to China. Once there, we have to go through a lengthy authorization process before we are allowed to see him. For my latest visit, I had some difficulties getting my visa as scheduled, and didn't have the proper paperwork, which added a lot of additional stress to this already difficult process. The visit takes place in a bare concrete building that borders the gate of his remote prison, several miles away from the closest city. It is so secluded that we have to be driven there by the prison officials, as some of the terrain in that area has yet to be paved. Right before we can meet, the prison authorities reminds us of the rules and regulations, which include only speaking in Chinese, and staying away from topics that will cause my father anxiety. These visits are conducted in visitation booths and are monitored by four prison officials, two standing behind the each of us. Separated by metal bars and two layers of plexi-glass, my father and I can only communicate using a telephone.

I was very nervous about seeing my father this time. It had been over a year since my last visit, and my family had lost contact with him for 2 months without any clear explanations from the prison, so I was worried about the state that my father was in. I was so relieved when I was finally able to see him, cheerful enough to smile. My first concern was his health. My father said that while he is stable, his chronic allergies and sever phlebitis continues to plague him. We talked mostly about my family, my educational future and the work that we are doing on his behalf. As we spoke, it was clear to me that my father's untreated depression and psychological health continues to worsen. He had difficulty making steady eye contact and sometimes repeated the same sentences several times. The prison officials monitoring our conversation were kind enough to allot us an extra 10 minutes.

My father wanted me to let everyone know that he is eternally grateful for all the work that has been done on his behalf and that he remains hopeful that justice will prevail. As our conversation came to an end, my father began to cry. He said the thought of never seeing his ailing 87-year-old mother again often brings him to tears and that his only wish is that they will be reunited before it's too late.

It has now been over 6 years that my father, now almost 62 years old, lingers alone in prison. I come here today in hopes of conveying the message that my father's situation has become evermore critical and his time is running out. This is my third time I've visited my father, and it is obvious that both his physical and mental health is deteriorating. He has aged so much in the last few years, and his depression is becoming dangerously severe. The prison authorities have told my family that my father's only chance of receiving medical parole is if he admit guilt to the charges of "terrorism" and "espionage". . .but I know that my father would never, nor does my family want him to confess to claims that are not only false, but that will comprise his dignity and values.

As we commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I just want to remind everyone that it is because of my father's unwavering commitment to this cause that he is being so unjustly punished today. As the founder of the Chinese overseas pro-democracy movement, there was nothing harder that my father fought for than the values of human rights, freedom and democracy for the people of his homeland. His contribution to his beliefs has now cost him 6 years of solitary confinement, and possibly his life if we do not continue to fight for his freedom.

So I would like to close today by asking the present and new administration to call for my father's immediate release on medical and humanitarian grounds.

I also invite everyone here, along with your friends and family to visit www.initiativesforchina.org to sign an online petition addressed to President Hu Jintao, also calling for my father's release. Lastly, I would like to work with congressional leaders toward the goal of obtaining honorary U.S. citizenship for my father as recognition of his lifelong service to democracy and as a statement of America's recommitment to making human rights a priority in its agenda. On behalf of my family, I would like to thank everyone here for coming and for your sincere concern for my father.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY PRESERVATION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise to protect the integrity of the Social Security trust fund by introducing the Social Security Preservation Act. The Social Security Preservation Act is a rather simple bill which states that all moneys raised by the Social Security trust fund will be spent in payments to beneficiaries, with excess receipts invested in interest-bearing certificates of deposit. This will help keep Social Security trust fund moneys from being diverted to other programs, as well as allow the fund to grow by providing for investment in interest-bearing instruments.

The Social Security Preservation Act ensures that the government will keep its promises to America's seniors that taxes collected for Social Security will be used for Social Security. When the government taxes Americans to fund Social Security, it promises the American people that the money will be there for them when they retire. Congress has a moral obligation to keep that promise.

With federal deficits reaching historic levels, and with new demands being made on the U.S. Treasury on an almost weekly basis, the pressure from special interests for massive new raids on the trust fund is greater than ever. Thus it is vital that Congress act now to protect the trust fund from big spending, pork-barrel politics. As a medical doctor, I know the first step in treatment is to stop the bleeding, and the Social Security Preservation Act stops the bleeding of the Social Security trust fund. I therefore call upon all my colleagues, regardless of which proposal for long-term Social Security reform they support, to stand up for America's seniors by cosponsoring the Social Security Preservation Act.

HONORING KEARNEY HIGH SCHOOL OF KEARNEY, MISSOURI

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the outstanding achievements of the students, teachers, administrators, parents, and patrons of Kearney High School and the Kearney R-1 School District. Kearney High School was named a 2008 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School of the year.

Madam Speaker, Kearney R-1 School District encompasses 100 square miles in northern Clay County and Clinton County. In order for Kearney High School to receive such a prestigious national distinction, they were required to score in the top 10 percent on the State of Missouri's assessment test. I would like to make a special note of Kearney R-1 School District Superintendent Dr. Chris Belcher, newly retired Kearney High School Principal Daryl Rinne, and current Kearney High School Principal Randy Wepler for their commitment and leadership to the students of Kearney High School.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in applauding the outstanding achievements of Kearney High School. It is an honor to have a high school like Kearney in the Sixth Congressional District of Missouri that strives for educational excellence. We wish them many more years of success.

INTRODUCING LEGISLATION TO STUDY METHODS OF ERADICATING ASIAN CARP FROM THE GREAT LAKES ECOSYSTEM

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand here today to introduce legislation which provides for the exploration of methods to eradicate the dangerous Asian carp from the Great Lakes.

Each year, invasive species in the Great Lakes cause more than \$5 billion in economic damage and irreparable harm to an ecosystem that provides more than 40 million people with jobs, water, food, and recreation. A new invader, the Asian carp, threatens to further destroy the region's ecosystem and economy, and it is imperative that we act to prevent this catastrophe.

A single barrier in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, built as a temporary demonstration project 5 years ago, is the only thing preventing these invaders from entering Lake Michigan and drastically altering the entire region's ecosystem. While Congress recently provided full authorization and funding for this critical barrier, it may not be enough to prevent the Asian carp from infiltrating the Great Lakes and the devastating consequences that would follow.

It is therefore critical that we also explore alternatives and supplements to the carp barrier. My legislation would direct the Fish and Wildlife Service in conjunction with the National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration and

Great Lakes States to conduct a study on the feasibility of a variety of approaches to eradicating Asian carp from the Great Lakes. The legislation specifically directs the agencies to study the feasibility of temporarily harvesting Asian carp as a means to eradicate the invasive species in an environmentally responsible manner.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation to explore all possibilities to effectively eliminate the threat that this dangerous species poses to our Nation's most precious natural resource.

RECOGNIZING BARBARA KUJAWA
OF WEEKI WACHEE, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Barbara Kujawa of Hernando County, Florida. Barbara will do something later this year that all of us strive to do, but that very few of us will ever accomplish, celebrate her 100th birthday.

Barbara was born December 5, 1909 in Ironwood, Michigan. After attending schools in Detroit at St. Stanislaus and Resurrection schools, Barbara went on to work as an assembly line worker. Happily married to Aloysius Kujawa, she had four wonderful children, thirteen grandchildren and twenty-one great grandchildren.

Her proudest moments were seeing all of her children get married and the happiest moment was when she gave birth to her daughter. Growing up in Michigan, some of her fondest childhood memories are of sledding on a big hill in Grand Rapids with her cousins and walking out on the ice to see her father ice fish.

Moving to Hernando County in the 1980's because it was a nice place to live, Barbara said the things she likes most about Weeki Wachee are that it's peaceful and quiet. Today, reading gives Barbara the most pleasure. If she could live her life over, Barbara would not have gotten married but would have traveled the world and made sure she had gotten a better education. Her advice to young people today is to work hard, be honest, don't drink or do drugs, and honor your parents.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Barbara Kujawa for reaching her 100th birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as her.

HONORING ALEXANDER THOMAS
TRITICO

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Alexander Thomas Tritico of Kansas City, Missouri. Alexander is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1261, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Alexander has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Alexander has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Alexander Thomas Tritico for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE
AND SACRIFICE OF SERGEANT
PRESTON R. MEDLEY, UNITED
STATES ARMY

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the life of Sergeant Preston Medley, United States Army. Sergeant Medley was killed in action on October 14, 2008 while serving our nation in Qazi Bandeh, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Sergeant Medley was assigned to D Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, Fort Hood, Texas.

A 2003 graduate of Baker High School, Preston played football and was involved in the broadcasting program. "He was the energetic, joyful kind of person that helped make our program successful," one teacher said. After his mother passed away in 2005, Preston decided he wanted to serve this nation and joined the Army. He will now go to his eternal resting place next to his mother in the Pyron Chapel Cemetery in Baker, Florida.

While Preston was serving on active duty at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, he met his beautiful wife, Sarah, who was a fellow Soldier. Sarah gave birth to their daughter, Raelynn, in September 2007 and gave birth to their son, Preston Ray Medley Jr. on December 8, 2008. Preston's name, his fighting spirit and his caring soul will continue to live on through Raelynn and Preston, Jr.

I am always reminded of the greatness of our country by the patriotism of those like Preston and the dedication of our military families like Sarah and the Medley family. We have an all-volunteer military and continue to ask our sons and daughters to travel to far-away lands to fight for our freedom. Men and women like Preston Medley continue to answer the call.

The people of Northwest Florida have reason to be proud of Sergeant Preston Medley for his service and sacrifice for freedom. While his passing is a tremendous loss for our country, his selfless service stands as a pillar of strength for us all. Vicki and I will keep Preston's entire family in our thoughts and prayers. I trust that all the people of Northwest Florida and our nation do the same.

THE FAIR AND SIMPLE TAX ACT

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, virtually everyone is talking about the need for us to have a second economic stimulus package. From falling home prices to rising unemployment, there is no doubt that the economic volatility our nation has experienced over the past few months has caused great uncertainty and there are many needs that have to be met. As we seek to get our economy back on track, I am very proud to be introducing what I think is the closest thing to a panacea to the economic growth challenge that we are facing.

This plan, known as Fair and Simple Tax Act, or simply FAST, would cut the number of tax brackets in half, with three simple tax rates—10 percent on the first \$40,000 in income, 15 percent on incomes between \$40,000 and \$150,000 and 30 percent on any income above \$150,000, significantly reducing the burden on taxpayers at all income levels. Furthermore, it will dramatically simplify the tax filing process by creating a one-page tax form that implements the three-tier simplified marginal rate structure, while retaining many of the popular deductions, including mortgage interest, state and local taxes, charitable giving, the personal exemption and the child tax credit.

But the FAST Act is about much more than just lowering marginal tax rates for working families or making that April 15 deadline easier to meet each year. It's about getting our economy growing again and creating new opportunities. This bill reduces the capital gains rate from 15 percent to 10 percent, lowers the top corporate rate from 35 percent to 25 percent and permanently extends the research and development tax credit. These provisions will not only promote new economic growth, but they will also make the U.S. economy more competitive and help to provide the tax certainty that spurs investment and capital improvements.

The FAST Act will permanently end the death tax and will further index the alternative minimum tax (AMT) to inflation, ensuring that fewer taxpayers are impacted each year. It also permanently extends the 2001 and 2003 pro-growth tax cuts.

Finally, the FAST Act will enable Americans to better prepare for their future needs. This legislation creates three new, tax-free savings accounts: the Retirement Savings Account and the Lifetime Savings Account, both providing a \$5,000 tax-free contribution, and the Lifetime Skills Savings Account, which provides a \$1,000 tax-free contribution. Additionally, the FAST Act provides a \$7,500 tax deduction for individuals and a \$15,000 tax deduction for families who do not receive employer-sponsored health coverage. This expanded deduction will provide individuals and families with additional assistance to purchase healthcare and allows unspent funds to be allocated to a Health Savings Account (HSA). Each of these provisions will help Americans to secure their financial futures by saving for healthcare costs, continuing education and retirement.

Madam Speaker, our nation is facing a severe economic crisis that must be addressed

comprehensively. I believe that the FAST Act will go a long way toward providing the simplicity, fairness and clarity that are needed for long-term growth. As we consider economic stimulus proposals in the days and weeks ahead, I hope my colleagues will join me in pursuing this pro-growth reform agenda.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
GREATER HOUSTON PARTNERSHIP

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th anniversary of the Greater Houston Partnership. I ask my colleagues and those visitors in the House Chamber to join me in congratulating the Greater Houston Partnership and applauding the many achievements they have accomplished over the past 20 years.

In 1989, the Houston Chamber of Commerce, the Houston Economic Development Council and the Houston World Trade Center joined together to make the dream of an organization that would be an advocate for the business community in the greater Houston area a reality.

The Greater Houston Partnership has grown into an influential organization that now has two thousand member businesses and serves 10 fast growing counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto and Waller.

The Partnership has had an impressive impact on the region. In the last year, 53 percent of all jobs created in the United States were created in Texas—and one in four of those were in Houston. This is astounding and a testimony to the contributions the Greater Houston Partnership has made to cultivate a vibrant business environment. The Partnership's efforts are focused on building Houston's prosperity and promoting regional economic development. The Partnership is actively involved with public policy issues and works with local elected officials to ensure the Greater Houston community is well represented in areas such as clean air, education and transportation.

In its two decades of existence there is much to be proud of. It is an honor to recognize such an impressive organization. All Americans can learn from the collaborative example the Greater Houston Partnership continues to display through their leadership and guidance to the people and businesses in the Greater Houston community.

Madam Speaker, today more than ever, we must support the efforts of the Greater Houston Partnership and other similar organizations across the country. The work they do to help create jobs in our country is essential for continued economic growth and stability in the face of the global economic changes. I urge you to join me in congratulating the Greater Houston Partnership for 20 years of serving as the voice for the greater Houston business community.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PRESCRIPTION
DRUG AFFORDABILITY ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Prescription Drug Affordability Act. This legislation ensures that millions of Americans, including seniors, have access to affordable pharmaceutical products. My bill makes pharmaceuticals more affordable to seniors by reducing their taxes. It also removes needless government barriers to importing pharmaceuticals and it protects Internet pharmacies, which are making affordable prescription drugs available to millions of Americans, from being strangled by federal regulation.

The first provision of my legislation provides seniors a tax credit equal to 80 percent of their prescription drug costs. While Congress did add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare in 2003, many seniors still have difficulty affording the prescription drugs they need in order to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. One reason is because the new program creates a "doughnut hole," where seniors lose coverage once their prescription expenses reach a certain amount and must pay for their prescriptions above a certain amount out of their own pockets until their expenses reach a level where Medicare coverage resumes. This tax credit will help seniors cover the expenses provided by the doughnut hole. This bill will also help seniors obtain prescription medicines that may not be covered by the Medicare prescription drug program.

In addition to making prescription medications more affordable for seniors, my bill lowers the price for prescription medicines by reducing barriers to the importation of FDA-approved pharmaceuticals. Under my bill, anyone wishing to import a drug simply submits an application to the FDA, which then must approve the drug unless the FDA finds the drug is either not approved for use in the U.S. or is adulterated or misbranded. This process will make safe and affordable imported medicines affordable to millions of Americans. Madam Speaker, letting the free market work is the best means of lowering the cost of prescription drugs.

I need not remind my colleagues that many senior citizens and other Americans impacted by the high costs of prescription medicine have demanded Congress reduce the barriers which prevent American consumers from purchasing imported pharmaceuticals. Congress has responded to these demands by repeatedly passing legislation liberalizing the rules governing the importation of pharmaceuticals. However, implementation of this provision has been blocked by the federal bureaucracy. It is time Congress stood up for the American consumer and removed all unnecessary regulations on importing pharmaceuticals.

The Prescription Drug Affordability Act also protects consumers' access to affordable medicine by forbidding the Federal Government from regulating any Internet sales of FDA-approved pharmaceuticals by state-licensed pharmacists.

As I am sure my colleagues are aware, the Internet makes pharmaceuticals and other products more affordable and accessible for millions of Americans. However, the Federal

Government has threatened to destroy this option by imposing unnecessary and unconstitutional regulations on Web sites that sell pharmaceuticals. Any federal regulations would inevitably drive up prices of pharmaceuticals, thus depriving many consumers of access to affordable prescription medications.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to make pharmaceuticals more affordable and accessible by lowering taxes on senior citizens, removing barriers to the importation of pharmaceuticals and protecting legitimate Internet pharmacies from needless regulation by cosponsoring the Prescription Drug Affordability Act.

BAD POLLUTERS ACT

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to stand here today to introduce this bipartisan legislation that will help protect the Great Lakes from harmful pollution that poisons our water and closes our beaches. The Great Lakes are the world's largest freshwater system and serve as a source of drinking water, food, jobs and recreation for more than thirty million Americans. It is critical that we enhance our restoration efforts for this critical resource, not degrade the condition of the lakes even further.

In 2007, British Petroleum (BP) threatened to begin a billion-dollar expansion of its refinery facility in Whiting, Indiana which would have included a large increase of pollution into the Great Lakes. The company sought to discharge an increase of 54 percent more ammonia and 35 percent more sludge into Lake Michigan per day. This would have totaled a combined increase of more than 1,800 pounds per day of these pollutants which strangle aquatic life and contribute to the increasing number of beach closures each year.

Based on a provision in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, BP was eligible for a tax credit that would have allowed them to expense half of the capital costs in the first year of the expansion. Essentially, the government would have paid the company to pollute our lakes. While providing incentives to energy production and refinery expansion helps to lower gas prices and reduce our dependence on foreign oil, we must not do so at the expense of one of America's most treasured natural resources.

Fortunately, BP yielded to public pressure and chose not to move ahead with the expansion as planned. Due to the determination and cooperation of federal, state and local officials, environmental advocacy organizations and communities around the region, BP is now working with a coalition of scientists and small businesses to seek an environmentally friendly way to expand its refinery.

While I applaud BP for making the right decision in the end, we must ensure that no refinery ever comes as close to drastically harming our precious lakes. That is why I am introducing the Bad Polluters Act, which will deny the capital expensing tax credit to any refiner whose facility's NPDES permit allows for an increase in any pollutant above its 2006 levels into the Great Lakes. This will prevent companies from seeking to increase pollution into our

drinking water. In order to claim this important tax credit, companies will be forced to search a bit harder for a new solution to water treatment. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and join in the fight to protect our national treasure.

RECOGNIZING CARL BLESSER OF
BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Carl Blesser of Hernando County, Florida. Carl has done something that all of us strive to do, but that very few of us will ever accomplish, celebrate his 102nd birthday.

Carl Blesser was born June 1, 1906, in New York City, New York. Attending school in Albany with a degree in accounting, Carl went on to be a successful CPA. Marrying his sweetheart Nadine, the two spent many happy years together traveling. One of his fondest memories, in fact, is of a trip he took with his parents and wife to see the Empire State Building, as well as several trips to the American West.

Carl moved to Hernando County when his wife was ill, and remained here following her death. Truly devoted to Nadine, Carl states that his happiest moment was when he married his wife. If he could live his life over, Carl would travel more and would like to have met President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

A lover of books, Carl loves to go outside and read, and also enjoys going to the Golden Corral for his favorite shrimp dinner. Today he spends much of his time with his friends and loves to sit outside under the trees enjoying the beauty that Brooksville has to offer. His advice to young people today is to not smoke or drink so that they can live longer and better lives.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Carl Blesser for reaching his 102nd birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as him.

HONORING MAXWELL EMORY
LANHAM

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Maxwell Emory Lanham of Kansas City, Missouri. Maxwell is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1261, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Maxwell has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Maxwell has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Maxwell Emory Lanham

for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING MASSACHUSETTS
STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN
A. LEPPER

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, today I rise in honor of John A. Lepper who is retiring after serving 14 years in the Massachusetts Legislature as State Representative for the city of Attleboro. I am proud to know and to have worked with Representative Lepper and I salute his many contributions to the citizens of Attleboro and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Representative Lepper began his career of public service in the 1980s as a member of the city of Attleboro Planning Board. He was elected to the Attleboro City Council in 1987 where he served for 6 years.

In 1995 he began his tenure as a member of the Massachusetts State Legislature and distinguished himself as a champion for children, families, and persons with disabilities. He is highly regarded for his work on a commission that championed the rights of grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. This issue is especially important to Mr. Lepper as he and his wife have devoted many years of their lives raising two of their grandchildren.

In his retirement, Representative Lepper is looking forward to staying involved with local politics but plans to take some time to relax at first and do some fishing.

Madam Speaker, I am certain that the entire House of Representatives joins me in congratulating State Representative John A. Lepper for all that he has accomplished and in wishing him the best in his retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, the American automobile industry faces almost certain extinction if this body fails to act at this time. I cannot in good conscience allow that to happen. I will therefore vote for this legislation today, December 10, 2008, but I do so with some reservations.

Admittedly, the industry has made many missteps over the years. Moreover, the many flaws in this bill were probably pre-ordained by the expedited legislative procedures—adopted under the guise of an “emergency”—by which the congressional leadership chose to craft this bill. However, to reject this imperfect solution for an imperfect industry solely because it could have been better makes little sense.

Like my constituents, I am also astonished by the actions of overpaid, out of touch executives at these companies. We need to pursue further reforms in their compensation. But if

we focus today on only the few individuals at the top of the companies, we will lose sight of the larger reality: Failure to act will cost the jobs of hundreds of thousands of average, hardworking Americans. It would also deprive our Nation of an industrial sector vital for us to remain an innovative global leader and manufacturer in the twenty-first century.

America needs its own automotive industry. I have always owned American cars. I believe in the American workforce, the thousands of men and women who make the automobiles on which we rely. They do not fly on corporate jets. They certainly do not make millions of dollars. We need to help them in their time of need.

Experts estimate that if the Congress does not provide this initial bridge loan and the automakers do fail, 2.5 million jobs will be lost. The Big Three employ 240,000 workers, suppliers and dealerships provide 800,000 jobs, and some 1.4 million jobs are dependent on the auto manufacturers. In my congressional district, some 500 workers at Rieter Automotive in Bloomsburg produce carpets for General Motors, and these workers and their families would experience undue hardship if we allow the American automotive industry to fail.

Moreover, unemployment numbers released for November indicate this country lost 533,000 jobs in that month alone. The current unemployment rate sits at 6.7 percent. We simply cannot allow those already devastating numbers to swell further.

In addition, the loss of the industry would result in a sizable drop in government revenue, just when annual deficits have run away and our national debt soars. Unemployment assistance will skyrocket and thousands of American breadwinners will lose their homes and even the ability to feed their children. The costs of inaction will therefore be catastrophic.

Surely we all agree that the industry teeters on the precipice of disaster. Additionally, most agree that the global economic crisis bears a good deal of blame for the automakers' collective misfortune. Importantly, the industry has appropriately conceded that they deserve a large share of blame. They were reluctant to diversify their fleets of cars to suit demand and to inoculate themselves against market volatility in the price of oil.

Earlier this year, consumers quickly lost their taste for large sport utility vehicles in favor of small, fuel-efficient cars as automakers for too long ignored this shift. The automakers failed to trim costs appropriately. They retained too many unnecessary white collar jobs. As we all now know, they infamously provided private jets to transport executives across the country, all the while paying those very executives \$20 million-plus pay packages.

Over the last few years, the automakers have come to recognize the urgency of their plight by engaging in substantive changes in their corporate structures. They have now presented long-term viability plans to the Congress, and they seem intent on getting the job done. This bill—if its oversight provisions are dutifully carried out by the Executive Branch—attempts to ensure that the necessary transformations occur. As a start, the automakers have expressed that wide-scale restructuring has already begun, and at considerable cost.

This bill contains many thoughtful conditions. Executive compensation limits, taxpayer

warrants, and a czar-like overseer are among the principles necessary for us to extend Federal assistance. This legislation, however, could have been better, tougher, and as a result more likely to succeed, if we had taken the time to get it right. I remain concerned that American taxpayer money could be used in a way that might outsource American jobs because the Congress did not include a specific prohibition preventing such an action.

So, I question whether the oversight of the disbursement and allocation of all government funds is sufficiently strong. As for executive compensation, even though the CEOs have agreed to annual \$1 salaries, the Big Three could have been forced to pay their top 20 executives no more than their leaner, more-profitable foreign counterparts are paid.

Furthermore, we failed to establish what will occur in the event of a disaster scenario, in which the companies burn through this money and the hoped for results are not attained. We made some progress in planning for contingencies, but we should have done more. We could have created in legislation a structured bankruptcy system for the automakers.

We could have also relied more on the 1979 Chrysler bailout law for insight and guidance. That plan included a "certainty of success" formula and required more frequent reporting. Unfortunately, this precedent received far less attention than it deserved. Finally, I believe that we ought to have considered a buy-in incentive program, whereby Americans would hold a vested interest in the success of these companies.

Unfortunately, these and countless other potential provisions never saw the light of day because the Congress succumbed to the idea that emergencies, however real, preclude us from operating under regular order. The two are not mutually exclusive. I concede that the American automakers need money, and fast.

But, in the three weeks it took the companies to produce at least reasonable viability proposals, the Congress could have considered numerous drafts of bills, could have held additional hearings, and could have marked up legislation. In addition to producing a better legislative product, each of those activities probably would have built a stronger consensus and lessened partisan discord. Going forward into the 111th Congress, it is my sincere hope that the Congress will return to regular order so that we produce better laws and establish a more collegial, deliberative body.

That said, voting against this bill today simply was not an option. The industry might well have vanished in a matter of weeks, unemployment would have skyrocketed, and the economy would have sunk deeper. Let us hope that the money is allocated wisely, that the executives act prudently, that all stakeholders make some sacrifices, and that long-term viability is pursued tirelessly.

INTRODUCTION OF THE IDENTITY THEFT PREVENTION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, today I introduce the Identity Theft Prevention Act. This act protects the American people from govern-

ment-mandated uniform identifiers that facilitate private crime as well as the abuse of liberty. The major provision of the Identity Theft Prevention Act halts the practice of using the Social Security number as an identifier by requiring the Social Security Administration to issue all Americans new Social Security numbers within 5 years after the enactment of the bill. These new numbers will be the sole legal property of the recipient, and the Social Security Administration shall be forbidden to divulge the numbers for any purposes not related to Social Security Administration. Social Security numbers issued before implementation of this bill shall no longer be considered valid federal identifiers. Of course, the Social Security Administration shall be able to use an individual's original Social Security number to ensure efficient administration of the Social Security system.

Madam Speaker, Congress has a moral responsibility to address this problem because it was Congress that transformed the Social Security number into a national identifier. Thanks to Congress, today no American can get a job, open a bank account, get a professional license, or even get a driver's license without presenting his Social Security number. So widespread has the use of the Social Security number become that a member of my staff had to produce a Social Security number in order to get a fishing license!

One of the most disturbing abuses of the Social Security number is the congressionally-authorized rule forcing parents to get a Social Security number for their newborn children in order to claim the children as dependents. Forcing parents to register their children with the state is more like something out of the nightmares of George Orwell than the dreams of a free republic that inspired this Nation's founders.

Congressionally-mandated use of the Social Security number as an identifier facilitates the horrendous crime of identity theft. Thanks to Congress, an unscrupulous person may simply obtain someone's Social Security number in order to access that person's bank accounts, credit cards, and other financial assets. Many Americans have lost their life savings and had their credit destroyed as a result of identity theft. Yet the federal government continues to encourage such crimes by mandating use of the Social Security number as a uniform ID!

This act also forbids the federal government from creating national ID cards or establishing any identifiers for the purpose of investigating, monitoring, overseeing, or regulating private transactions among American citizens. In 2005, this body established a de facto national ID card with a provisions buried in the "intelligence" reform bill mandating federal standards for drivers' licenses, and mandating that federal agents only accept a license that conforms to these standards as a valid ID.

Nationalizing standards for drivers' licenses and birth certificates creates a national ID system pure and simple. Proponents of this scheme claim they are merely creating new standards for existing State IDs. However, imposing federal standards in a federal bill creates a federalized ID regardless of whether the ID itself is still stamped with the name of your State.

The national ID will be used to track the movements of American citizens, not just terrorists. Subjecting every citizen to surveillance

diverts resources away from tracking and apprehending terrorists in favor of needless snooping on innocent Americans. This is what happened with "suspicious activity reports" required by the Bank Secrecy Act. Thanks to BSA mandates, federal officials are forced to waste countless hours snooping through the private financial transactions of innocent Americans merely because those transactions exceeded \$10,000.

Turning State-issued drivers licenses into federally controlled national ID cards is yet another federal usurpation of State authority and another costly unfunded mandate imposed on the States. According to a report issued by the National Conference of State Legislators, turning drivers licenses into national ID cards will cost the States more than \$11 billion.

Madam Speaker, no wonder there is a groundswell of opposition to this mandate. Several State legislatures have even passed laws forbidding their States from complying with this mandate! The Identity Theft Prevention Act not only repeals those sections of the federal law creating a national ID, it forbids the federal government from using federal funds to blackmail States into adopting uniform federal identifiers. Passing the Identity Theft Prevention Act is thus an excellent way for this Congress to show renewed commitment to federalism and opposition to imposing unfunded mandates on the States.

This legislation not only repeals those sections of federal law creating the national ID, it also repeals those sections of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 that require the Department of Health and Human Services to establish a uniform standard health identifier—an identifier which could be used to create a national database containing the medical history of all Americans. As an OB/GYN with more than 30 years in private practice, I know the importance of preserving the sanctity of the physician-patient relationship. Oftentimes, effective treatment depends on a patient's ability to place absolute trust in his or her doctor. What will happen to that trust when patients know that any and all information given to their doctors will be placed in a government accessible database?

By putting an end to government-mandated uniform IDs, the Identity Theft Prevention Act will prevent millions of Americans from having their liberty, property, and privacy violated by private and public sector criminals.

Some members of Congress will claim that the federal government needs the power to monitor Americans in order to allow the government to operate more efficiently. I would remind my colleagues that, in a constitutional republic, the people are never asked to sacrifice their liberties to make the jobs of government officials easier. We are here to protect the freedom of the American people, not to make privacy invasion more efficient.

Madam Speaker, while I do not question the sincerity of those members who suggest that Congress can ensure that citizens' rights are protected through legislation restricting access to personal information, the only effective privacy protection is to forbid the federal government from mandating national identifiers. Legislative "privacy protections" are inadequate to protect the liberty of Americans for a couple of reasons.

First, it is simply common sense that repealing those federal laws that promote identity

theft is more effective in protecting the public than expanding the power of the federal police force. Federal punishment of identity thieves provides cold comfort to those who have suffered financial losses and the destruction of their good reputations as a result of identity theft.

Federal laws are not only ineffective in stopping, private criminals, but these laws have not even stopped unscrupulous government officials from accessing personal information. After all, laws purporting to restrict the use of personal information did not stop the well-publicized violations of privacy by IRS officials or the FBI abuses of the Clinton and Nixon administrations.

In one of the most infamous cases of identity theft, thousands of active-duty soldiers and veterans had their personal information stolen, putting them at risk of identity theft. Imagine the dangers if thieves are able to obtain the universal identifier, and other personal information, of millions of Americans simply by breaking, or hacking, into one government facility or one government database?

Second, the federal government has been creating proprietary interests in private information for certain state-favored special interests. Perhaps the most outrageous example of phony privacy protection is the "medical privacy" regulation, that allows medical researchers, certain business interests, and law enforcement officials access to health care information, in complete disregard of the Fifth Amendment and the wishes of individual patients! Obviously, "privacy protection" laws have proven greatly inadequate to protect personal information when the government is the one seeking the information.

Any action short of repealing laws authorizing privacy violations is insufficient primarily because the federal government lacks constitutional authority to force citizens to adopt a universal identifier for health care, employment, or any other reason. Any federal action that oversteps constitutional limitations violates liberty because it ratifies the principle that the federal government, not the Constitution, is the ultimate judge of its own jurisdiction over the people. The only effective protection of the rights of citizens is for Congress to follow Thomas Jefferson's advice and "bind (the federal government) down with the chains of the Constitution."

Madam Speaker, those members who are not persuaded by the moral and constitutional reasons for embracing the Identity Theft Prevention Act should consider the American people's opposition to national identifiers. The numerous complaints over the ever-growing uses of the Social Security number show that Americans want Congress to stop invading their privacy. Furthermore, according to a survey by the Gallup company, 91 percent of the American people oppose forcing Americans to obtain a universal health ID.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I once again call on my colleagues to join me in putting an end to the federal government's unconstitutional use of national identifiers to monitor the actions of private citizens. National identifiers threaten all Americans by exposing them to the threat of identity theft by private criminals and abuse of their liberties by public criminals, while diverting valuable law enforcement resources away from addressing real threats to public safety. In addition, national identifiers are incompatible with a limited, con-

stitutional government. I, therefore, hope my colleagues will join my efforts to protect the freedom of their constituents by supporting the Identity Theft Prevention Act.

HONORING BRIAN MICHAEL
BIRCHLER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Brian Michael Birchler of Kansas City, Missouri. Brian is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 1261, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Brian has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Brian has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Brian Michael Birchler for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TO REAUTHORIZE THE TROPICAL
FOREST CONSERVATION ACT
AND EXPAND THE PROGRAM TO
INCLUDE THE CONSERVATION OF
ALL FORESTS AND CORAL
REEFS AND ASSOCIATED COAST-
AL MARINE RESOURCES

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I introduce a bill to reauthorize and expand Rob Portman's landmark legislation, the Tropical Forest Conservation Act. This reauthorization will help developing countries reduce foreign debt and provide comprehensive environmental preservation programs to protect forests and endangered marine habitats around the world.

Since enacted in 1998, Tropical Forest Conservation Act programs have generated more than \$162 million over 10 to 25 years to help conserve 50 million acres of tropical forests in Asia, the Caribbean, Central and South America. But the rate of deforestation continues to accelerate across the globe in all types of forests.

Similarly alarming is the rapid rate of coral reef and coastal exploitation. The burden of foreign debt falls especially hard on the smallest of nations, such as island nations in the Caribbean and Pacific. With few natural resources, these nations often resort to harvesting or otherwise exploiting coral reefs and other marine habitats to earn hard currency to service foreign debt. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 60 percent of the world's coral reefs may be destroyed by the year 2050 if the present rate of destruction continues.

The Forest and Coral Conservation Act will credit qualified developing nations for each dollar spent on a comprehensive reef preservation or management program designed to protect these unique ecosystems from degradation. This legislation will make available resources for environmental stewardship that would otherwise be of the lowest priority in a developing country. It will reduce debt by investing locally in programs that will strengthen indigenous economies by creating long-term management policies that will preserve the natural resources upon which local commerce is based.

This legislation has enormous consequences for the existence of critical ecosystems, the health of our planet and the livelihoods of millions of people across the globe. I am proud to introduce the Forest and Coral Conservation Act with Representative ALCEE HASTINGS (D-FL), which will help preserve the world's most precious natural resources.

RECOGNIZING CONNIE PASQUA-
LINO OF SPRING HILL, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Connie Pasqualino of Hernando County, Florida. Connie will do something later this year that all of us strive to do, but that very few of us will ever accomplish, celebrate her 100th birthday.

Connie Pasqualino was born June 28, 1909 in Brooklyn, New York. While she was never married and has no children, Connie did make a career in advertising, attending the Pratt Institute of Design in Brooklyn. In fact, Connie said her proudest moment was the day she graduated from school. Following school she went on to work at BBD and O Advertising Company. While she did not pursue a career in design, if she had it all to do over again she would have spent her career as a fashion designer.

As someone who lived in New York for many years, Connie remembers going to see the Pope perform Mass at Shea Stadium. She said that it was raining before he came onto the stage and as he came to the stage, the rain stopped and the sun shined brightly. She described it as a little miracle.

Although she has never met her, Mother Teresa is Connie's second cousin. Once, Connie and her family were going to visit Mother Teresa in New Jersey when she was visiting relatives there, but there was a blizzard and they had to cancel their trip.

Moving with her sister Nancy to Hernando County in 1990, Connie said she made the switch because of the great Florida weather. She and Nancy also lived with their sister Margaret, who was ill and needed extra care, and her nephew Joseph.

Today Connie lives in Hernando County near her centenarian sister, Nancy. She gets the most pleasure out of taking care of and playing with her pet Quaker parrot, named Jade. Connie's advice to young people is to listen to their parents' advice and get a good education.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Connie Pasqualino for reaching her 100th birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as her.

HONORING JEFFERSON HIGH
SCHOOL OF CONCEPTION JUNC-
TION, MISSOURI

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the outstanding achievements of the students, teachers, administrators, parents, and patrons of Jefferson High School and the Jefferson C-123 School District. Jefferson High School was named a 2008 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School of the year.

Madam Speaker, in order for Jefferson High School to receive such a prestigious national distinction, they were required to score in the top 10 percent on the State of Missouri's assessment test. I would like to make a special note of Jefferson C-123 School District Superintendent Rob P. Dowis and Jefferson High School Principal Tim R. Jermain for their commitment and leadership to the students of Jefferson High School.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in applauding the outstanding achievements of Jefferson High School. It is an honor to have a high school like Jefferson in the Sixth Congressional District of Missouri that strives for educational excellence. We wish them many more years of success.

SITUATION IN GAZA

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, the State of Israel has a right to defend its territory and its people from attack, whether that attack emanates from another sovereign nation, or, as in this case, from a terrorist organization that seized control of Gaza in a bloody putsch 18 months ago.

Hamas clearly chose to escalate its conflict against Israel by unilaterally declaring an end to the ceasefire that was implemented last June and launching a large-scale rocket attack on Israeli population centers. The Israeli government exercised great forbearance in the weeks prior to the formal breakdown of the ceasefire, which Hamas was already violating repeatedly, and had the international community more strongly condemned these attacks and taken action to stop them, the current Israeli offensive may have been unnecessary. But, Hamas bears ultimate responsibility for provoking this attack and for putting 1.5 million Palestinians in harm's way—a fact that Arab leaders from Egypt to Saudi Arabia have noted.

Along with millions of Americans, I grieve the terrible loss of life of innocent Israelis and Palestinians. Hamas's decision to fire rockets from populated areas and Israeli strikes on those targets have resulted in many civilian

casualties, and our hearts go out to all the innocents who have suffered.

It is too early to tell if Israel's military actions will quell the threat of rocket attacks from Gaza and shut down smuggling routes from Egypt. The conflict in Lebanon proved how difficult this can be and a strong international effort will be necessary to avoid a recurrence of missile strikes in both theaters. This will require a level of resolution thus far not demonstrated by the international community.

Israel's long-term security can only be guaranteed by a successful peace process that leads to the creation of a Palestinian state living side-by-side and in peace with Israel. President-elect Obama has committed himself to reinvigorating the search for peace and it is my hope that a timely conclusion of the present hostilities will allow the new President to begin these efforts from the first days of his administration.

STOP THE CONGRESSIONAL PAY
RAISE ACT

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, earlier today my colleague Dr. RON PAUL and I were joined by more than 50 Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle to introduce the Stop the Congressional Pay Raise Act of 2009.

As you may recall, I introduced similar bills the last two years, seeking to prevent an automatic pay raise for Members of Congress from taking effect in 2008 and 2009. Unfortunately, despite the support of 34 cosponsors, last year's bill failed to reach the floor. As a result, every Member is now receiving \$174,000 this year, a \$4,700 increase since last year.

Madam Speaker, our economy is in a recession, hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops are fighting overseas, and our national debt exceeds \$10 trillion. Unemployment figures are on the rise, home values are falling, and markets around the world are suffering from a devastating loss of credit and consumer demand. The American people aren't getting a \$4,700 pay raise this year. I do not know how in good conscience we, as their Representatives in Congress, can accept one.

In the last year, jobless rates increased in 49 States and the District of Columbia. Unemployment was up 2 percentage point from a year before. In my home State of Arizona, unemployment rose by over 50 percent, leaving nearly 200,000 workers unemployed.

Compounding the situation, economists estimate that nearly \$7 trillion of investor stock wealth was lost in 2008, and Standard & Poor's 500 and the Dow Jones industrial average experienced their worst years since the Great Depression.

When Members of Congress accept this pay raise, we send the wrong message. We should be tightening our belts along with the men and women we represent. Americans are suffering and instead of feeling that pain, Congress is quietly approving pay raises to further insulate us from it. If you want to know why people hate Washington and feel that it is out of touch, it is precisely because of moves like this.

If we are going to talk the talk of fiscal discipline, I believe we need to walk the walk of self-restraint. I will be donating my 2009 pay raise to charity, just as I did with my 2008 pay raise. I encourage my colleagues to do the same, and join me in stopping the next automatic pay raise from taking effect by supporting the Stop the Congressional Pay Raise Act.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 40, THE
COMMISSION TO STUDY REPARATION
PROPOSALS FOR AFRICAN-
AMERICANS ACT

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to introduce H.R. 40, the Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act. This 111th Congress marks the 20th anniversary of this bill's introduction. Since 1989, I have believed it to be in the best interest of our Nation to formally address one of our greatest historical injustices.

As evidenced by recent events, the sin of slavery is one that continues to weigh heavily upon us. Following the lead of other churches, the Episcopal Church formally apologized for its role in slavery on October 4, 2008. Florida became the sixth state to apologize for slavery on March 26, 2008, following Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, Alabama and New Jersey. During the internationally renowned Sundance Film Festival, *Traces of the Trade*, a documentary in which descendants of the largest U.S. slave trading family confront this painful history, screened in January of 2008.

Just last Congress, the House passed a slavery apology bill on July 29, 2008, in which the House issued a formal apology for slavery. In recognition of the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade on January 1, 1808, the House and Senate passed legislation creating a commemoration commission, which was signed into law on February 5, 2008, and is currently awaiting funding. Such Federal efforts are significant steps towards proper acknowledgment and understanding of slavery and its implications, but our responsibilities on this matter are even greater.

Establishing a commission to study the institution of slavery in the United States, as well as its consequences that reach into modern day society, is our responsibility. This concept of a commission to address historical wrongs is not unprecedented. In fact, in recent Congresses, commission bills have been put forward.

In 1983, a Presidential Commission determined that the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II was racist and inhumane, and as a result, the 1988 Civil Liberties Act provided redress for those injured by the internment. However, the internment of Japanese Latin Americans in the United States during World War II was not examined by the Commission, resulting in legislation calling for a commission to examine this oversight. Legislation establishing a commission to review the injustices suffered by European Americans, European Latin Americans, and Jewish refugees during World War II has also been proposed.

H.R. 40 is no different than these other commission bills. H.R. 40 establishes a commission to examine the institution of slavery and its legacy, like racial disparities in education, housing, and healthcare. Following this examination, the commission would make recommend appropriate remedies to Congress, and as I have indicated before, remedies does not equate to monetary compensation.

In the 110th Congress, I convened the first Congressional hearing on H.R. 40. With witnesses that included Professor Charles Ogletree, Episcopal Bishop M. Thomas Shaw, and Detroit City Councilwoman JoAnn Watson, we began a formal dialogue on the legacy of the transatlantic slave trade. This Congress, I look forward to continuing this conversation so that our Nation can better understand this part of our history.

Attempts to eradicate today's racial discrimination and disparities will be successful when we understand the past's racial injustices and inequities. A commission can take us into this dark past and bring us into a brighter future. As in years past, I welcome open and constructive discourse on H.R. 40 and this commission in the 111th Congress.

HONORING STANBERRY HIGH
SCHOOL OF STANBERRY, MISSOURI

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the outstanding achievements of the students, teachers, administrators, parents, and patrons of Stanberry High School and the Stanberry R-II School District. Stanberry High School was named a 2008 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School of the year.

Madam Speaker, in order for Stanberry High School to receive such a prestigious national distinction, they were required to score in the top 10 percent on the State of Missouri's assessment test. I would like to make a special note of Stanberry R-II School District Superintendent Dr. Bruce Johnson and Stanberry High School Principal Gregory Dias for their commitment and leadership to the students of Stanberry High School.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in applauding the outstanding achievements of Stanberry High School. It is an honor to have a high school like Stanberry in the Sixth Congressional District of Missouri that strives for educational excellence. We wish them many more years of success.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
MEMORIAL BREAKFAST

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, as we celebrate the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King,

Jr. and reflect on his life and work, we are reminded of the challenges that democracy poses to us and the delicate nature of liberty. Dr. King's life, and, unfortunately, his untimely death, reminds us that we must continually work to secure and protect our freedoms. Dr. King, in his courage to act, his willingness to meet challenges, and his ability to achieve, embodied all that is good and true in the battle for liberty.

The spirit of Dr. King lives on in the citizens of communities throughout our nation. It lives on in the people whose actions reflect the spirit of resolve and achievement that will help move our country into the future. In particular, several distinguished individuals from Indiana's First Congressional District will be recognized during the 30th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Breakfast on Saturday, January 17, 2009, at the Genesis Convention Center in Gary, Indiana. The Gary Frontiers Service Club, which was founded in 1952, sponsors this annual breakfast.

This year, the Gary Frontiers Service Club will pay tribute to several local individuals who have for decades unselfishly contributed to improving the quality of life for the people of Gary. Those individuals who will be recognized as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Marchers at this year's breakfast include: Pastor W.N. Reed, Roosevelt Allen, Jr., Otho Lyles II, Willie Horne, Era Cleveland Twyman, and George Burrell. Additionally, Reverend Pharis Evans and Mr. Cleo Wesson will be honored with the prestigious Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drum Major Award, an award given out annually to outstanding individuals of the Gary community. This marks the first time two individuals have been honored with this distinguished award.

After fifty-four years of service to the Gary community, the Gary Frontiers Service Club will proudly announce its first female members: Ferba Hines, Johnnie Rogers, and Gwen Johnson-Robinson. Yokefellow Sean Jones, a Gary Police Officer, was also named the 2008 Yokefellow of the Year.

Though very different in nature, the achievement of all these individuals reflect many of the same attributes that Dr. King possessed, as well as the values he advocated. Like Dr. King, these individuals saw challenges and faced them with unwavering strength and determination. Each one of the honored guests' greatness has been found in their willingness to serve with "a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love." They set goals and work selflessly to make them a reality.

Madam Speaker, I urge you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in commending the Gary Frontiers Service Club officers: President Oliver J. Gilliam, Vice President James Piggee, Secretary Melvin Ward, Financial Secretary Sam Frazier, and Treasurer/Seventh District Director Floyd Donaldson, as well as Breakfast Chairman Clorius L. Lay, Videographer Otho Lyles, Master of Ceremony Alfred Hammonds, the honorees, and all other members of the service club for their initiative, determination, and dedication to serving the people of Northwest Indiana.

INTRODUCING THE SOCIAL SECURITY FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS ONLY ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, today I introduce the Social Security for American Citizens Only Act. This act forbids the federal government from providing Social Security benefits to noncitizens. It also ends the practice of totalization. Totalization is where the Social Security Administration takes into account the number of years an individual worked abroad, and thus was not paying payroll taxes, in determining that individual's eligibility for Social Security benefits!

Hard as it may be to believe, the United States Government already provides Social Security benefits to citizens of 17 other countries. Under current law, citizens of those countries covered by these agreements may have an easier time getting Social Security benefits than public school teachers or policemen!

Obviously, this program provides a threat to the already fragile Social Security system, and the threat is looming larger. The prior administration actually proposed a totalization agreement that would have allowed thousands of foreigners to qualify for U.S. Social Security benefits even though they came to, and worked in, the United States illegally. Adding insult to injury, this proposal could have allowed the federal government to give Social Security benefits to non-citizens who worked here for as little as 18 months. Estimates of what this totalization proposal would cost top one billion dollars per year.

Despite a major public outcry against extending Social Security benefits to those who entered this country illegally, a version of this proposal actually passed the other body in the 109th Congress. That the executive branch would propose, and part of the legislative branch would endorse, using social security monies to reward to those who have willingly and knowingly violated our own immigration laws is an insult to the millions of Americans who pay their entire working lives into the system and now face the possibility that there may be nothing left when it is their turn to retire.

While the new administration has yet to take a public position on totalization, and hopefully will be more reasonable on this issue than its predecessor, it is still imperative that Congress act. Even if the new administration repudiates all proposals to allow those who entered the country illegally to receive social security benefits, the only way to guarantee a future administration will not revive this scheme is for Congress to put an end to totalization once and for all. I therefore call upon my colleagues to stop the use of the Social Security Trust Fund as yet another vehicle for foreign aid by co-sponsoring the Social Security for American Citizens Only Act.

THE GREAT LAKES WATER
PROTECTION ACT

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to join with Congressman LIPINSKI to introduce the Great Lakes Water Protection Act. This bipartisan legislation, supported by the Alliance for the Great Lakes, National Resources Defense Council, National Wildlife Foundation, National Parks Conservation Association, Great Lakes Aquatic Network, Audubon Society and more, would set a date certain to end sewage dumping in America's largest supply of fresh water, the Great Lakes. More than thirty million Americans depend on the Great Lakes for their drinking water, food, jobs, and recreation. We need to put a stop to the poisoning of our water supply. Cities along the Great Lakes must become environmental stewards of our country's most precious freshwater ecosystem.

The Great Lakes Water Protection Act gives cities until 2029 to build the full infrastructure needed to prevent sewage dumping into the Great Lakes. Those who violate EPA sewage dumping regulations after that federal deadline will be subject to fines up to \$100,000 for every day they are in violation. These fines will be directed to a newly established Great Lakes Clean-Up Fund within the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. Penalties collected would go into this fund and be reallocated to the states surrounding the Great Lakes. From there, the funds will be spent on wastewater treatment options, with a special focus on greener solutions such as habitat protection and wetland restoration.

This legislation is sorely needed. Many major cities along the Great Lakes do not have the infrastructure needed to divert sewage overflows during times of heavy rainfall. More than twenty-four billion gallons of sewage are dumped into the Lakes each year; Detroit alone dumped over thirteen billion gallons of sewage into Lake Huron in 2005.

These disastrous practices result in thousands of annual beach closing for the region's 815 freshwater beaches. Illinois faced 793 beach closures and health advisories in 2007, up more than thirty percent from 2006. Six beaches in my district alone exceeded health standards more than 25 percent of the time. This greatly affects the health of our children and families—EPA estimates suggest that nearly 300 people could expect to contract a respiratory illness after swimming in Lake Michigan in Chicago on one summer weekend. This trend is echoed throughout the Great Lakes region and is one we need to reverse.

Protecting our Great Lakes is one of my top priorities in the Congress. As an original co-sponsor of the Great Lakes Restoration Act, I favor a broad approach to addressing needs in the region. However, we must also move forward with tailored approaches to fix specific problems as we continue to push for more comprehensive reform. I am proud to introduce this important legislation that addresses a key problem facing our Great Lakes, and hope my colleagues will support me in ensuring that these important resources become free from the threat of sewage pollution.

RECOGNIZING JOSEPHINE BOYLAN
OF SPRING HILL, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Josephine Boylan of Hernando County, Florida. Josephine has done something that all of us strive to do, but that very few of us will ever accomplish, celebrate her 100th birthday.

Josephine Boylan was born October 3, 1908 in Lebanon, New York. After attending school in Lebanon, she went to work as a seamstress and eventually married Vincent Boylan. Josephine had three children and eight grandchildren, with too many great grandchildren for her to count.

Living in Orlando until 1975, Josephine then moved to Tucson, Arizona for three years before returning to Florida in 1979. Since then she has lived in Spring Hill in Hernando County, where her grandson also lives. She is very proud of her grandson, and lists his graduation from MIT as one of the greatest moments of her life.

Still living an active lifestyle, Josephine enjoys playing bingo with her friends. She has fond memories of her son Jerry playing the organ with everyone singing during the holidays and remembers sitting on the back porch with Vincent while they were dating. As someone who loves to sing herself, Josephine has said that if she could live her life over again she would be an opera singer. If she could give advice to young people today she would tell them to have fun and work hard.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Josephine Boylan for reaching her 100th birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as her.

“STORMS ON THE HORIZON”

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I have never been more concerned about the short- and long-term budget shortfalls we face as a Nation. We must work to address these issues simultaneously in a bipartisan way.

Last October the Washington Post reported that China had replaced Japan as the United States' largest creditor, increasing its holding by 42 percent over the past year. On December 15, the U.S. Department of the Treasury released the “FY 2008 Financial Report of the Federal Government.” Not only is America facing a projected \$1 trillion in deficit spending for this fiscal year, there is now \$56 trillion in unfunded mandates through Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, a number which will only continue to grow and has increased by \$3 trillion in the last year alone. Funding the deficit means that U.S. must attract approximately \$2 billion a day from foreign countries or risk a drop in the value of the dollar.

I believe that this is an economic, moral, and generational issue. Is it right for one generation to live very well knowing that its debts will be left to be paid by their children and grandchildren?

In the past few days numerous sources have reported that the economic stimulus bill on the agenda of the soon to be Obama administration is expected to cost between \$675 billion and \$775 billion. Other reports say it could expand to as much as \$1 trillion. Whatever package is passed, Congress has a historic opportunity to work in a bipartisan way to address the Nation's looming financial crisis by including a mechanism to deal with the underlying problem of autopilot spending. The bipartisan SAFE Commission I introduced with Rep. JIM COOPER in the 110th Congress would create a national commission to review entitlements with everything—including tax policy—on the table. This idea garnered the support of over 100 members during the 110th Congress. Senate Budget Committee Chairman KENT CONRAD and ranking member JUDD GREGG introduced similar legislation, which has also gained momentum. The time is now.

I share with our colleagues a speech by Richard W. Fisher, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. “Storms on the Horizon” is a sobering account from a monetary policymaker's point of view on why deficits matter. Mr. Fisher calls the mathematics of doing nothing to change the long-term outlook for entitlements, “nothing short of catastrophic.”

The 111th Congress will have on its watch this unfolding reality. What will we do to make a difference for our country's—and our children's and grandchildren's—future?

STORMS ON THE HORIZON: REMARKS BEFORE THE COMMONWEALTH CLUB OF CALIFORNIA, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, MAY 28, 2008

(By Richard W. Fisher)

Thank you, Bruce [Ericson]. I am honored to be here this evening and am grateful for the invitation to speak to the Commonwealth Club of California.

Alan Greenspan and Paul Volcker, two of Ben Bernanke's linear ancestors as chairmen of the Federal Reserve, have been in the news quite a bit lately. Yet, we rarely hear about William McChesney Martin, a magnificent public servant who was Fed chairman during five presidencies and to this day holds the record for the longest tenure: 19 years.

Chairman Martin had a way with words. And he had a twinkle in his eye. It was Bill Martin who wisely and succinctly defined the Federal Reserve as having the unenviable task “to take away the punch-bowl just as the party gets going.” He did himself one up when he received the Alfalfa Club's nomination for the presidency of the United States. I suspect many here tonight have been to the annual Alfalfa dinner. It is one of the great institutions in Washington, D.C. Once a year, it holds a dinner devoted solely to poking fun at the political pretensions of the day. Tongue firmly in cheek, the club nominates a candidate to run for the presidency on the Alfalfa Party ticket. Of course, none of them ever win. Nominees are thenceforth known for evermore as members of the Stassen Society, named for Harold Stassen, who ran for president nine times and lost every time, then ran a tenth time on the Alfalfa ticket and lost again. The motto of the group is *Veni, Vidi, Defici*—“I came, I saw, I lost.”

Bill Martin was nominated to run and lose on the Alfalfa Party ticket in 1966, while serving as Fed chairman during Lyndon Johnson's term. In his acceptance speech, he announced that, given his proclivities as a central banker, he would take his cues from the German philosopher Goethe, “who said that people could endure anything except

continual prosperity.” Therefore, Martin declared, he would adopt a platform proclaiming that as a president he planned to “make life endurable again by stamping out prosperity.”

“I shall conduct the administration of the country,” he said, “exactly as I have so successfully conducted the affairs of the Federal Reserve. To that end, I shall assemble the best brains that can be found . . . ask their advice on all matters . . . and completely confound them by following all their conflicting counsel.”

It is true, Bruce, that as you said in your introduction, I am one of the 17 people who participate in Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) deliberations and provide Ben Bernanke with “conflicting counsel” as the committee cobbles together a monetary policy that seeks to promote America’s economic prosperity, Goethe to the contrary. But tonight I speak for neither the committee, nor the chairman, nor any of the other good people that serve the Federal Reserve System. I speak solely in my own capacity. I want to speak to you tonight about an economic problem that we must soon confront or else risk losing our primacy as the world’s most powerful and dynamic economy.

Forty-three years ago this Sunday, Bill Martin delivered a commencement address to Columbia University that was far more sober than his Alfalfa Club speech. The opening lines of that Columbia address were as follows: “When economic prospects are at their brightest, the dangers of complacency and recklessness are greatest. As our prosperity proceeds on its record-breaking path, it behooves every one of us to scan the horizon of our national and international economy for danger signals so as to be ready for any storm.”

Today, our fellow citizens and financial markets are paying the price for falling victim to the complacency and recklessness Martin warned against. Few scanned the horizon for trouble brewing as we proceeded along a path of unparalleled prosperity fueled by an unsustainable housing bubble and unbridled credit markets. Armchair or Monday morning quarterbacks will long debate whether the Fed could have/should have/would have taken away the punchbowl that lubricated that blowout party. I have given my opinion on that matter elsewhere and won’t go near that subject tonight. What counts now is what we have done more recently and where we go from here. Whatever the sins of omission or commission committed by our predecessors, the Bernanke FOMC’s objective is to use a new set of tools to calm the tempest in the credit markets to get them back to functioning in a more orderly fashion. We trust that the various term credit facilities we have recently introduced are helping restore confidence while the credit markets undertake self-corrective initiatives and lawmakers consider new regulatory schemes.

I am also not going to engage in a discussion of present monetary policy tonight, except to say that if inflationary developments and, more important, inflation expectations, continue to worsen, I would expect a change of course in monetary policy to occur sooner rather than later, even in the face of an anemic economic scenario. Inflation is the most insidious enemy of capitalism. No central banker can countenance it, not least the men and women of the Federal Reserve.

Tonight, I want to talk about a different matter. In keeping with Bill Martin’s advice, I have been scanning the horizon for danger signals even as we continue working to recover from the recent turmoil. In the distance, I see a frightful storm brewing in the form of untethered government debt. I

choose the words—“frightful storm”—deliberately to avoid hyperbole. Unless we take steps to deal with it, the long-term fiscal situation of the federal government will be unimaginably more devastating to our economic prosperity than the subprime debacle and the recent debauching of credit markets that we are now working so hard to correct.

You might wonder why a central banker would be concerned with fiscal matters. Fiscal policy is, after all, the responsibility of the Congress, not the Federal Reserve. Congress, and Congress alone, has the power to tax and spend. From this monetary policymaker’s point of view, though, deficits matter for what we do at the Fed. There are many reasons why. Economists have found that structural deficits raise long-run interest rates, complicating the Fed’s dual mandate to develop a monetary policy that promotes sustainable, noninflationary growth. The even more disturbing dark and dirty secret about deficits—especially when they careen out of control—is that they create political pressure on central bankers to adopt looser monetary policy down the road. I will return to that shortly. First, let me give you the unvarnished facts of our Nation’s fiscal predicament.

Eight years ago, our federal budget, crafted by a Democratic president and enacted by a Republican Congress, produced a fiscal surplus of \$236 billion, the first surplus in almost 40 years and the highest nominal-dollar surplus in American history. While the Fed is scrupulously nonpartisan and nonpolitical, I mention this to emphasize that the deficit/debt issue knows no party and can be solved only by both parties working together. For a brief time, with surpluses projected into the future as far as the eye could see, economists and policymakers alike began to contemplate a bucolic future in which interest payments would form an ever-declining share of federal outlays, a future where Treasury bonds and debt-ceiling legislation would become dusty relics of a long-forgotten past. The Fed even had concerns about how open market operations would be conducted in a marketplace short of Treasury debt.

That utopian scenario did not last for long. Over the next 7 years, federal spending grew at a 6.2 percent nominal annual rate while receipts grew at only 3.5 percent. Of course, certain areas of government, like national defense, had to spend more in the wake of 9/11. But nondefense discretionary spending actually rose 6.4 percent annually during this timeframe, outpacing the growth in total expenditures. Deficits soon returned, reaching an expected \$410 billion for 2008—a \$600 billion swing from where we were just 8 years ago. This \$410 billion estimate, by the way, was made before the recently passed farm bill and supplemental defense appropriation and without considering a proposed patch for the Alternative Minimum Tax—all measures that will lead to a further ballooning of government deficits.

In keeping with the tradition of rosy scenarios, official budget projections suggest this deficit will be relatively short-lived. They almost always do. According to the official calculus, following a second \$400-billion-plus deficit in 2009, the red ink should fall to \$160 billion in 2010 and \$95 billion in 2011, and then the budget swings to a \$48 billion surplus in 2012.

If you do the math, however, you might be forgiven for sensing that these felicitous projections look a tad dodgy. To reach the projected 2012 surplus, outlays are assumed to rise at a 2.4 percent nominal annual rate over the next 4 years—less than half as fast as they rose the previous 7 years. Revenue is assumed to rise at a 6.7 percent nominal annual rate over the next 4 years—almost dou-

ble the rate of the past 7 years. Using spending and revenue growth rates that have actually prevailed in recent years, the 2012 surplus quickly evaporates and becomes a deficit, potentially of several hundred billion dollars.

Doing deficit math is always a sobering exercise. It becomes an outright painful one when you apply your calculator to the long-run fiscal challenge posed by entitlement programs. Were I not a taciturn central banker, I would say the mathematics of the long-term outlook for entitlements, left unchanged, is nothing short of catastrophic.

Typically, critics ranging from the Concord Coalition to Ross Perot begin by wringing their collective hands over the unfunded liabilities of Social Security. A little history gives you a view as to why. Franklin Roosevelt originally conceived a social security system in which individuals would fund their own retirements through payroll-tax contributions. But Congress quickly realized that such a system could not put much money into the pockets of indigent elderly citizens ravaged by the Great Depression. Instead, a pay-as-you-go funding system was embraced, making each generation’s retirement the responsibility of its children.

Now, fast forward 70 or so years and ask this question: What is the mathematical predicament of Social Security today? Answer: The amount of money the Social Security system would need today to cover all unfunded liabilities from now on—what fiscal economists call the “infinite horizon discounted value” of what has already been promised recipients but has no funding mechanism currently in place—is \$13.6 trillion, an amount slightly less than the annual gross domestic product of the United States.

Demographics explain why this is so. Birthrates have fallen dramatically, reducing the worker-retiree ratio and leaving today’s workers pulling a bigger load than the system designers ever envisioned. Life spans have lengthened without a corresponding increase in the retirement age, leaving retirees in a position to receive benefits far longer than the system designers envisioned. Formulae for benefits and cost-of-living adjustments have also contributed to the growth in unfunded liabilities.

The good news is this Social Security shortfall might be manageable. While the issues regarding Social Security reform are complex, it is at least possible to imagine how Congress might find, within a \$14 trillion economy, ways to wrestle with a \$13 trillion unfunded liability. The bad news is that Social Security is the lesser of our entitlement worries. It is but the tip of the unfunded liability iceberg. The much bigger concern is Medicare, a program established in 1965, the same prosperous year that Bill Martin cautioned his Columbia University audience to be wary of complacency and storms on the horizon.

Medicare was a pay-as-you-go program from the very beginning, despite warnings from some congressional leaders—Wilbur Mills was the most credible of them before he succumbed to the pay-as-you-go wiles of Fanne Foxe, the Argentine Firecracker—who foresaw some of the long-term fiscal issues such a financing system could pose. Unfortunately, they were right.

Please sit tight while I walk you through the math of Medicare. As you may know, the program comes in three parts: Medicare Part A, which covers hospital stays; Medicare B, which covers doctor visits; and Medicare D, the drug benefit that went into effect just 29 months ago. The infinite-horizon present discounted value of the unfunded liability for Medicare A is \$34.4 trillion. The unfunded liability of Medicare B is an additional \$34 trillion. The shortfall for Medicare D adds

another \$17.2 trillion. The total? If you wanted to cover the unfunded liability of all three programs today, you would be stuck with an \$85.6 trillion bill. That is more than six times as large as the bill for Social Security. It is more than six times the annual output of the entire U.S. economy.

Why is the Medicare figure so large? There is a mix of reasons, really. In part, it is due to the same birthrate and life-expectancy issues that affect Social Security. In part, it is due to ever-costlier advances in medical technology and the willingness of Medicare to pay for them. And in part, it is due to expanded benefits—the new drug benefit program's unfunded liability is by itself one-third greater than all of Social Security's.

Add together the unfunded liabilities from Medicare and Social Security, and it comes to \$99.2 trillion over the infinite horizon. Traditional Medicare composes about 69 percent, the new drug benefit roughly 17 percent and Social Security the remaining 14 percent.

I want to remind you that I am only talking about the unfunded portions of Social Security and Medicare. It is what the current payment scheme of Social Security payroll taxes, Medicare payroll taxes, membership fees for Medicare B, copays, deductibles and all other revenue currently channeled to our entitlement system will not cover under current rules. These existing revenue streams must remain in place in perpetuity to handle the "funded" entitlement liabilities. Reduce or eliminate this income and the unfunded liability grows. Increase benefits and the liability grows as well.

Let's say you and I and Bruce Ericson and every U.S. citizen who is alive today decided to fully address this unfunded liability through lump-sum payments from our own pocketbooks, so that all of us and all future generations could be secure in the knowledge that we and they would receive promised benefits in perpetuity. How much would we have to pay if we split the tab? Again, the math is painful. With a total population of 304 million, from infants to the elderly, the per-person payment to the federal treasury would come to \$330,000. This comes to \$1.3 million per family of four—over 25 times the average household's income.

Clearly, once-and-for-all contributions would be an unbearable burden. Alternatively, we could address the entitlement shortfall through policy changes that would affect ourselves and future generations. For example, a permanent 68 percent increase in federal income tax revenue—from individual and corporate taxpayers—would suffice to fully fund our entitlement programs. Or we could instead divert 68 percent of current income-tax revenues from their intended uses to the entitlement system, which would accomplish the same thing.

Suppose we decided to tackle the issue solely on the spending side. It turns out that total discretionary spending in the federal budget, if maintained at its current share of GDP in perpetuity, is 3 percent larger than the entitlement shortfall. So all we would have to do to fully fund our Nation's entitlement programs would be to cut discretionary spending by 97 percent. But hold on. That discretionary spending includes defense and national security, education, the environment and many other areas, not just those controversial earmarks that make the evening news. All of them would have to be cut—almost eliminated, really—to tackle this problem through discretionary spending.

I hope that gives you some idea of just how large the problem is. And just to drive an important point home, these spending cuts or tax increases would need to be made immediately and maintained in perpetuity to solve the entitlement deficit problem. Dis-

cretionary spending would have to be reduced by 97 percent not only for our generation, but for our children and their children and every generation of children to come. And similarly on the taxation side, income tax revenue would have to rise 68 percent and remain that high forever. Remember, though, I said tax revenue, not tax rates. Who knows how much individual and corporate tax rates would have to change to increase revenue by 68 percent?

If these possible solutions to the unfunded-liability problem seem draconian, it's because they are draconian. But they do serve to give you a sense of the severity of the problem. To be sure, there are ways to lessen the reliance on any single policy and the burden borne by any particular set of citizens. Most proposals to address long-term entitlement debt, for example, rely on a combination of tax increases, benefit reductions and eligibility changes to find the trillions necessary to safeguard the system over the long term.

No combination of tax hikes and spending cuts, though, will change the total burden borne by current and future generations. For the existing unfunded liabilities to be covered in the end, someone must pay \$99.2 trillion more or receive \$99.2 trillion less than they have been currently promised. This is a cold, hard fact. The decision we must make is whether to shoulder a substantial portion of that burden today or compel future generations to bear its full weight.

Now that you are all thoroughly depressed, let me come back to monetary policy and the Fed.

It is only natural to cast about for a solution—any solution—to avoid the fiscal pain we know is necessary because we succumbed to complacency and put off dealing with this looming fiscal disaster. Throughout history, many nations, when confronted by sizable debts they were unable or unwilling to repay, have seized upon an apparently painless solution to this dilemma: monetization. Just have the monetary authority run cash off the printing presses until the debt is repaid, the story goes, then promise to be responsible from that point on and hope your sins will be forgiven by God and Milton Friedman and everyone else.

We know from centuries of evidence in countless economies, from ancient Rome to today's Zimbabwe, that running the printing press to pay off today's bills leads to much worse problems later on. The inflation that results from the flood of money into the economy turns out to be far worse than the fiscal pain those countries hoped to avoid.

Earlier I mentioned the Fed's dual mandate to manage growth and inflation. In the long run, growth cannot be sustained if markets are undermined by inflation. Stable prices go hand in hand with achieving sustainable economic growth. I have said many, many times that inflation is a sinister beast that, if uncaged, devours savings, erodes consumers' purchasing power, decimates returns on capital, undermines the reliability of financial accounting, distracts the attention of corporate management, undercuts employment growth and real wages, and debases the currency.

Purging rampant inflation and a debased currency requires administering a harsh medicine. We have been there, and we know the cure that was wrought by the FOMC under Paul Volcker. Even the perception that the Fed is pursuing a cheap-money strategy to accommodate fiscal burdens, should it take root, is a paramount risk to the long-term welfare of the U.S. economy. The Federal Reserve will never let this happen. It is not an option. Ever. Period.

The way we resolve these liabilities—and resolve them we must—will affect our own

well-being as well as the prospects of future generations and the global economy. Failing to face up to our responsibility will produce the mother of all financial storms. The warning signals have been flashing for years, but we find it easier to ignore them than to take action. Will we take the painful fiscal steps necessary to prevent the storm by reducing and eventually eliminating our fiscal imbalances? That depends on you.

I mean "you" literally. This situation is of your own creation. When you berate your representatives or senators or presidents for the mess we are in, you are really berating yourself. You elect them. You are the ones who let them get away with burdening your children and grandchildren rather than yourselves with the bill for your entitlement programs.

This issue transcends political affiliation. When George Shultz, one of San Francisco's greatest Republican public servants, was director of President Nixon's Office of Management and Budget, he became worried about the amount of money Congress was proposing to spend. After some nights of tossing and turning, he called legendary staffer Sam Cohen into his office. Cohen had a long memory of budget matters and knew every zig and zag of budget history. "Sam," Shultz asked, "tell me something just between you and me. Is there any difference between Republicans and Democrats when it comes to spending money?" Cohen looked at him, furrowed his brow and, after thinking about it, replied, "Mr. Shultz, there is only one difference: Democrats enjoy it more."

Yet no one, Democrat or Republican, enjoys placing our children and grandchildren and their children and grandchildren in harm's way. No one wants to see the frightful storm of unfunded long-term liabilities destroy our economy or threaten the independence and authority of our central bank or tear our currency asunder.

Of late, we have heard many complaints about the weakness of the dollar against the euro and other currencies. It was recently argued in the op-ed pages of the *Financial Times* that one reason for the demise of the British pound was the need to liquidate England's international reserves to pay off the costs of the Great Wars. In the end, the pound, it was essentially argued, was sunk by the kaiser's army and Hitler's bombs. Right now, we—you and I—are launching fiscal bombs against ourselves. You have it in your power as the electors of our fiscal authorities to prevent this destruction. Please do so.

CONDEMNING HAMAS ATTACKS

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to strongly condemn attacks against Israel in recent weeks. I deeply regret the loss of innocent civilian life in Israel and Gaza and urge Hamas, for the sake of its own people and those in the region, to immediately cease the attacks and agree to a lasting truce with its democratic neighbor.

As our strongest ally in the Middle East, I believe Israel has the right to defend its citizens from the constant barrage of Hamas rocket attacks from inside Gaza. For too long, Hamas has used terrorism against Israel to destabilize the region and prevent peace for the people of Israel and the Palestinian territories. As long as Hamas continues to attack

innocent Israelis and use ordinary Palestinians as human shields, I will continue to support Israel's right to self-defense and its stated goal of preventing Hamas from firing rockets into Israel.

I remain hopeful that the United States and its allies can help bring a sustainable ceasefire to the region through diplomacy and create the conditions necessary for a durable peace.

HONORING DENNIS MCCARTHY

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to my friend, Dennis McCarthy, a renowned journalist, veteran, and the first Grand Marshal of the annual San Fernando Valley Veterans' Day Parade. Dennis is being honored by the Los Angeles Valley College for his many good works.

An award winning columnist for the Los Angeles Daily News, Dennis is a diligent crusader who tirelessly works to protect the rights of veterans and their families. His popular column is widely read in the San Fernando Valley and neighboring suburbs. It is not only well written, but it is often so compelling that it stirs people to take action.

Dennis obtained his degree in Journalism from California State University at Northridge. In addition to writing for the Los Angeles Daily News, Dennis has written for the Glendale News Press and South Bay Daily Breeze. He is extremely prolific; he has written nearly 3,000 columns in his 25-year-career including many columns about Los Angeles Valley College and its vital role in meeting the educational needs of our community.

He has demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to issues involving senior citizens, veterans, and the disabled. He uses wit, humor and solid reporting to spark the interest of community leaders.

I am grateful to Dennis for serving as the first Grand Marshal of the annual San Fernando Valley Veterans' Day Parade—a parade I helped put together and care deeply about. Dennis not only took on the Grand Marshal role with his customary great dignity, but he helped communicate the spirit of the parade through his columns. He has also used his column to help prompt other projects I have undertaken to help improve the lives and the health of our veterans.

Madam Speaker and distinguished colleagues, I ask you to join me in saluting Dennis McCarthy for his impressive career and dedication to the people of the San Fernando Valley, and to congratulate him on being honored at the Los Angeles Valley College President's Annual Gala.

SAN GABRIEL BASIN
RESTORATION FUND

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will continue to

provide safe drinking water to Southern California. Identical legislation was approved by the House in 2007 but was still awaiting consideration in the Senate when the 110th Congress adjourned. It is my sincere hope that we can move quickly to see this bill enacted.

In 2000, Congress created the San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund after the discovery of perchlorate and other harmful contaminants in the basin's groundwater. The San Gabriel Groundwater Basin covers more than 160 square miles in Los Angeles County and is the primary source of drinking water for over 1.2 million people.

The fund initially authorized \$85 million in Federal funding to assist the state and local government agencies as well as the private companies found responsible for the contamination to effectively implement a comprehensive clean up plan that would protect the safety of our region's drinking water supply. After evaluation, it is evident that an increase in this authorization is necessary. That is why this bill extends the current authorization of the San Gabriel Basin Restoration Fund by a total of \$61.2 million—\$50 million for the San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority, WQA, and \$11.2 million for the Central Basin Municipal Water District (Central Basin).

The San Gabriel Basin Water Quality Authority, has done a tremendous job in administering the clean up program. In 1999, the WQA projected the cost of cleaning up the San Gabriel Basin at a total of \$320 million based on the level of contamination of the five original Operable Units of Baldwin Park, El Monte, South El Monte, Whittier Narrows and Puente Valley. Since the initial authorization by Congress in 2000, dramatically increased contamination levels have been identified in the South El Monte and Puente Valley Operable Units. This discovery has significantly increased both the capital and operation and maintenance costs of the projects. With the cost of inflation, increased energy costs and the higher contamination levels found, the total cost is now estimated at \$1 billion. Significantly, the WQA has a number of treatment plants that are already operating at full capacity with more coming on line in the near future. I am proud to say that this partnership is an example of good stewardship of taxpayer money. Congress created the Restoration Fund in 2000, with an initial authorization of \$85 million, or a 25 percent investment. To date, over \$70 million has been appropriated, with approximately 83 percent of the clean-up provided by local sources and responsible parties, with about 12 percent federal funding. With this modest increase of \$61.2 million, bringing the total federal investment to \$146.2 million, or approximately 14 percent, the WQA and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation can continue jointly administering this clean-up program.

In working with the WQA and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation over the past decade on this regional solution, there is no doubt that this increase is warranted and will be utilized in the most effective way to continue to provide safe drinking water. The cost-effectiveness of the original authorization of the Restoration Fund is clear. And without a doubt, that cost-effective use of the Federal investment will be continued in this new authorization. The Federal partnership will continue to hold the coalition of local water agencies and private parties together to finish the job that we started a decade ago.

I look forward to working closely with the House Resources Committee, and with the Water and Power Subcommittee Chairwoman GRACE NAPOLITANO, who is a cosponsor of this bill and has been a champion of regional water solutions. I am also pleased to have the support of Representatives GARY MILLER, LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, and ADAM SCHIFF who are also cosponsors of this legislation and have long supported the safety of our regional groundwater supply.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CAPTIVE
PRIMATE SAFETY ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to prohibit interstate commerce in nonhuman primates as pets. The Captive Primate Safety Act, CPSA, would amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to treat nonhuman primates as prohibited wildlife species under that Act and to make corrections in the provisions relating to captive wildlife offenses under that Act.

Nonhuman primates kept as pets pose serious risks to public health and safety. They can transmit diseases and inflict serious physical harm. These risks are increased by interstate transport of the animals. Currently, twenty states prohibit keeping primates as pets, and many others require a permit. Even in states where it is legal to keep primates, most people cannot provide the special care, housing, and social structure these animals require.

Although the importation of nonhuman primates into the United States for the pet trade has been banned by Federal regulation since 1975, these animals are bred in the United States and are readily available for purchase from exotic animal dealers and even over the Internet. Because of the importation laws, there remains an active domestic trade in these animals.

The CPSA would amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to add nonhuman primates to the list of animals that cannot be transported across state lines. It would prohibit the import, export, transportation, sale, receipt, acquisition, or purchase in interstate or foreign commerce of nonhuman primates in order to safeguard public health and safety and protect the welfare of monkeys, apes (which include chimpanzees and orangutans), marmosets and lemurs. The bill is similar to the Captive Wildlife Safety Act, CWSA, which Congress passed in 2003 to ban interstate commerce in lions, tigers, and other big cats for the pet trade.

The CPSA would not affect trade or transportation of animals for zoos, research facilities, or other federally licensed and regulated entities. In the 110th Congress, the CPSA received strong support in the 110th Congress from Dr. Jane Goodall, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, and The Humane Society of the United States. It easily passed the House of Representatives.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to advance this bi-partisan legislation.

THE SENIORS' HEALTH CARE
FREEDOM ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Seniors' Health Care Freedom Act. This act protects seniors' fundamental right to make their own health care decisions by repealing federal laws that interfere with seniors' ability to form private contracts for medical services. This bill also repeals laws which force seniors into the Medicare program against their will. When Medicare was first established, seniors were promised that the program would be voluntary. In fact, the original Medicare legislation explicitly protected a senior's right to seek out other forms of medical insurance. However, the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 prohibits any physician who forms a private contract with a senior from filing any Medicare reimbursement claims for two years. As a practical matter, this means that seniors cannot form private contracts for health care services.

Seniors may wish to use their own resources to pay for procedures or treatments not covered by Medicare, or to simply avoid the bureaucracy and uncertainty that comes when seniors must wait for the judgment of a Center from Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) bureaucrat before finding out if a desired treatment is covered.

Seniors' right to control their own health care is also being denied due to the Social Security Administration's refusal to give seniors who object to enrolling Medicare Part A Social Security benefits. This not only distorts the intent of the creators of the Medicare system; it also violates the promise represented by Social Security. Americans pay taxes into the Social Security Trust Fund their whole working lives and are promised that Social Security will be there for them when they retire. Yet, today, seniors are told that they cannot receive these benefits unless they agree to join an additional government program!

At a time when the fiscal solvency of Medicare is questionable, to say the least, it seems foolish to waste scarce Medicare funds on those who would prefer to do without Medicare. Allowing seniors who neither want nor need to participate in the program to refrain from doing so will also strengthen the Medicare program for those seniors who do wish to participate in it. Of course, my bill does not take away Medicare benefits from any senior. It simply allows each senior to choose voluntarily whether or not to accept Medicare benefits or to use his own resources to obtain health care.

Forcing seniors into government programs and restricting their ability to seek medical care free from government interference infringes on the freedom of seniors to control their own resources and make their own health care decisions. A woman who was forced into Medicare against her wishes summed it up best in a letter to my office, ". . . I should be able to choose the medical arrangements I prefer without suffering the penalty that is being imposed." I urge my colleagues to protect the right of seniors to make the medical arrangements that best suit their own needs by cosponsoring the Seniors' Health Care Freedom Act.

THE CREATING OPPORTUNITIES
TO MOTIVATE MASS-TRANSIT
UTILIZATION TO ENCOURAGE
RIDERSHIP

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, as our economy continues to struggle, an immediate and cost-effective way to offer relief to consumers is to provide incentives for mass transit use. According to a study published by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), public transportation use in the U.S. saves an annual 1.4 billion gallons of gasoline. Factoring in the current average gasoline price of \$1.65 per gallon, public transit saves consumers more than \$2 billion in gas costs per year.

Greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicles also pose a severe threat to our environment, as emissions from our transportation sector account for nearly a third of all U.S. emissions. Public transit, however, reduces CO2 emissions by 37 million metric tons annually. This is equivalent to the electricity used by nearly five million homes. If we want to get serious about emissions reductions, we must get serious about investing in public transit.

Current law allows businesses, governments, non-profits and employees to purchase tax-free transit benefits. However, there is no tax incentive for employers to directly subsidize their workers' transportation costs. The bipartisan Creating Opportunities to Motivate Mass-transit Utilization To Encourage Ridership (COMMUTER) Act of 2008 offers employers a 50 percent tax credit for all transit benefits provided to employees, up to \$115 per employee per month. Under the COMMUTER Act, employees could receive up to \$1,380 in free mass transit funds each year, with the employer receiving \$690 in tax credits per employee. As family budgets continue to tighten, an extra \$1,400 to \$2,800 could help ease the burdens of health care and education or help bolster retirement savings.

A study recently conducted by BusinessWeek Research Services estimates that 53 percent of employees in Chicago, San Francisco and New York would take public transportation if their employer provided access to current transit benefits. Out of the respondents, 60 percent said their company does not provide tax-free commuter benefits.

I believe we must work to provide long-term solutions to our energy crisis, such as passing long-term tax incentives for research and development of renewable and alternative energy, fuels and vehicles; eliminating the so-called boutique fuels and offering the nation one clean burning fuel; financing energy development projects in China, central Asia and the Gulf to meet Chinese energy needs apart from oil; and increasing fuel economy standards.

But our economy, environment and national security cannot wait ten, twenty or thirty years for the entire restructuring of our energy policy—we need to take action now. I am proud to offer the COMMUTER Act with Representatives DAN LIPINSKI (D-IL) JUDY BIGGERT (R-IL) and PETER ROSKAM (R-IL) and to help provide that immediate relief. I hope Congress will act swiftly and in a bipartisan manner to pass this important legislation.

RECOGNIZING TEKLA HAMPUS OF
SPRING HILL, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Tekla Hampus of Hernando County, Florida. Tekla has done something that all of us strive to do, but that very few of us will ever accomplish, celebrate her 102nd birthday.

Tekla Hampus was born September 24, 1906 in Stockholm, Sweden. After she finished school in Stockholm, Tekla married but was widowed in 1979. She and her husband had two children, one of whom is now deceased. Tekla is proud of her one grandchild, two great-grandchildren and three great-great grandchildren.

As someone who has lived for more than a century, Tekla is proudest of the births of her children and grandchildren. She has many fond memories of family outings with her parents and their picnics together back home in Europe.

Following her move to Hernando County in 1968 to be closer to her children, Tekla today gets pleasure from visits with her son and enjoys the cost of living in Hernando County.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Tekla Hampus for reaching her 102nd birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as her.

TRIBUTE TO NANCY RUSSELL

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. WU. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember a courageous and pioneering Oregonian who we lost on September 19, 2008, Nancy Russell. Her love of the outdoors and of Oregon history led her to co-found an organization that assisted in obtaining Federal protection for the Columbia River Gorge—"Friends of the Columbia River Gorge."

Madam Speaker, and my fellow colleagues, if you have never seen the Columbia River Gorge, let me explain to you: It is Oregon's Grand Canyon, our Yellowstone, the crown jewel of Oregon's natural heritage, a spectacular and unique 80-mile-long, 4,000-foot-deep sea level cut through the Cascade Mountain Range. The Gorge is home to more than 800 species of wildflowers, six endangered and threatened animal species, and more than 40 other sensitive species.

As a self-taught wildflower expert, Nancy shared her love of wildflowers by developing the Wildflower Walkers program for the Portland Garden Club, which helped others understand and love the Gorge the way Nancy did.

In the late 1970s, development in the Portland area was threatening to spill into the Gorge, and a group of prominent conservationists recruited Nancy to lead the effort for Federal protection. In the face of pressure from opponents of scenic area designation, and even bumper stickers that read "Save the Gorge from Nancy Russell," she and her fellow supporters persevered in 1986, when

President Reagan signed into law the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Act. This act, quite notably, was the only stand-alone environmental legislation passed during the Reagan administration, and was the first such designation.

After a tremendous accomplishment such as this, most people would claim victory and rest on their laurels. However, Nancy proved tireless and continued to pursue further Gorge protection. She successfully advocated for the purchase of 40,000 acres that were passed into public ownership, and personally purchased more than 30 properties to ensure their protection from development.

Sadly, in 2004 she was diagnosed with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, but like any true champion, her dedication did not fade. Nancy made one final trip to the Gorge in August with close friends. I am sure that she was thinking that no matter how much you do in your lifetime you always want it to carry on for others to learn from and enjoy.

Madam Speaker, the Columbia River Gorge continues to see threats from unwanted development, but I know that the organization she founded, and the strength and spirit that Nancy Russell left us all with is the strength and spirit to not budge an inch on our commitment to the protection of the crown jewel of Oregon's natural heritage. That commitment is what I want to commemorate today, Madam Speaker, and that commitment is what I will continue to draw strength from in my fight to protect the Columbia River Gorge.

INTRODUCING HAITIAN PROTECTION ACT OF 2009

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Haitian Protection Act of 2009. This important piece of legislation would designate Haitian nationals as eligible for Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

The creation of TPS was intended to serve as the statutory embodiment of safe haven for those who are fleeing—or reluctant to return to—a potentially dangerous situation in their country of origin.

According to section 244(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1990, TPS may be granted when: there is ongoing armed conflict posing a serious threat to personal safety; it is requested by a foreign state that temporarily cannot handle the return of nationals due to environmental disaster; or extraordinary and temporary conditions in a foreign state exist which prevent aliens from returning.

Haiti has continued to meet all three of these requirements, and yet, not once have Haitian nationals been granted TPS.

Last year, I, along with several of my colleagues, wrote on several occasions to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the President of the United States urging them to grant Haiti TPS.

Sadly, just today, the Miami Herald reported that Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff recently wrote to Haitian President René Préval formally denying his request for TPS. In his letter, Secretary Chertoff stated that "After very careful consideration, I have

concluded that Haiti does not currently warrant a TPS designation."

Madam Speaker, this response came as an utter shock. This past summer, only a few months after deadly food riots led to the removal of the country's Prime Minister, Haiti was ravaged by four back-to-back natural disasters. Thousands lost their homes, many were left starving and isolated from humanitarian assistance, nearly 800 lives were taken, and as of last month, over 300 people remain missing.

Though recovery efforts have slowly commenced, much of Haiti remains in a state of destruction. Up to 40,000 people are in shelters, and severe malnutrition concerns have arisen throughout rural areas.

How dire must the situation in Haiti become before the United States is willing to extend this helping hand to Haiti as it has done for other nations under similar circumstances?

The Haitian government's ability to provide basic governmental services—clean water, education, passable roads and basic healthcare—remains severely compromised by these natural disasters. Repatriating Haitians at this time imposes an additional burden on government resources that are already stretched too thin and poses a serious danger to deportees' personal safety.

Concerning stability and overall safety, Haiti is still in dire need of an adequate policing force to maintain order and halt the escalation in kidnappings that are plaguing the nation.

As of April 2008, the Department of State's current travel warning advises Americans that current conditions in Haiti make it unsafe to travel due to the potential for looting, the possibility of random violent crime, and the serious threat of kidnapping for ransom.

Madam Speaker, if it is unsafe for our citizens to travel to Haiti, then those same conditions should make it much too dangerous and inappropriate to forcibly repatriate Haitians at this time. It is unfortunate and appalling that our current immigration policies hold such harmful double standards.

I want to make it very clear that I acknowledge and heartily congratulate Haiti's efforts toward recovery and to a stable democratic government. However, President Préval's nascent democratic government still faces immense challenges with regards to rebuilding Haiti's police and judicial institutions to achieve the fair and prompt tackling of the ongoing political and criminal violence.

In addition to safety and human rights considerations, halting the deportation of Haitians is also an economic matter.

Under the law, TPS beneficiaries are eligible to obtain work authorization permits. The ability for Haitian nationals to legally work in the United States puts them in a position to contribute to their country's recovery and development until such time when it is safe for them to return to Haiti.

Madam Speaker, the Haitian Diaspora has always played a pivotal role in assisting Haiti. It is widely known that Haitians residing in the United States often work three jobs to send money back to Haiti each month. Many Haitians in the United States often send remittances to support family members, and others travel home to lend their expertise toward rebuilding and humanitarian efforts.

Designating Haiti under TPS status would preserve and increase remittances—totaling approximately a third of Haiti's GDP—from the

Haitian Diaspora to relatives and communities in Haiti that are key for welfare, survival, and recovery.

Haiti is more dependent than any other country on remittances with nearly a billion dollars a year sent home by Haitians in the United States. In fact, remittances to Haiti far exceed foreign aid.

Now, many Haitian nationals in the United States who previously sustained relatives in Haiti through remittances are being deported, further depriving Haiti of an important source of financial aid that is well-positioned to assist when based here in the United States.

Madam Speaker, there are currently six countries that are protected under the TPS provision: Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Burundi, Somalia, and Sudan. By refusing to give Haiti the TPS designation, our inequitable immigration policies continue to send the message that the safety of Haitian lives is not a priority compared to that of Salvadoran, Honduran, or Sudanese lives.

We must act to change this perception. Our immigration policies have to change. They must reflect fairness and treat Haitians equally to Nicaraguans, Hondurans, and Salvadorans whose deportations are suspended and who are allowed to work and support their families back home.

The Haitian Protection Act of 2009 is necessary to achieve fundamental fairness in our treatment of Haitian immigrants and remedy the accurate and widespread perception that U.S. policy has discriminated against them.

Madam Speaker, we cannot deny Haiti this opportunity to help stabilize its economy, recover from devastating natural disasters, rebuild its political and economic institutions, and provide a future of hope for Haiti's people.

I ask my colleagues to support this legislation and urge the House Leadership to bring it swiftly to the House floor for consideration.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. ADA MCKINNEY DEVEAUX

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the life and legacy of the late Mrs. Ada McKinney DeVeaux, a Miami native who was known for her contagious spiritual, humorous, and endearing personality. It is with both profound sadness, but also an enduring sense of gratitude for the tremendous inspiration she provided to the South Florida community.

Mrs. McKinney DeVeaux was born to Edmund Sr. and Mary Edwards McKinney on September 2, 1931 in Miami, Florida. One of the distinguished members of Booker T. Washington Senior High's Class of 1949 or the "fantastic 49-ers", she went on to obtain her Bachelor of Science degree and a degree in Registered Nursing from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University. Mrs. McKinney DeVeaux was united in Holy Matrimony to the late Father Richard DeVeaux.

A dedicated registered nurse for 42 years, Mrs. McKinney DeVeaux distinguished herself in a number of professional appointments throughout her nursing career. She served the community at the Dade County Health Department's Overtown office, Jackson Memorial

Hospital, University of Miami Medical School, and retired from the Miami-Dade County Health Department as supervisor of nursing in 1997.

While she was a devoted member of numerous community organizations, Mrs. McKinney DeVeaux had a special love and dedication to Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. Throughout her 57 years of membership, some of the leadership roles she assumed were: multi-term chairperson of the Gamma Zeta Omega Chapter's annual Ebony Fashion Fair event, advisor to the undergraduate Iota Nu Chapter at University of Miami, chairperson of the health committee and founding member of the AKA WISH Foundation. In recognition of her 50 years of committed membership, she was crowned a "Golden Soror" in 2004.

In homage to her profession and the community where she was raised (Overtown), she proudly served for 14 years as the recording secretary of the Board of Directors, Jefferson Reaves Sr. Health Center, Inc. Also, always the consummate "Rattler", she was a life member of the Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University Alumni Association.

Mrs. McKinney DeVeaux remained devoted to her family, and will be missed by all who knew her. I offer my heartfelt condolences to her family—her children, Jennifer DeVeaux Robinson (Rodney) and Pierre Rutledge; sister, Barbara McKinney; brother, Robert L. McKinney, Esq.; special brother, Reverend Canon J. Kenneth Major; four grandchildren, as well as her nieces, nephews, Godchildren, and vast array of friends and colleagues.

Madam Speaker, in the words of her Sorority's mission to provide "service to all mankind", Mrs. McKinney DeVeaux has embodied and wholeheartedly embraced this throughout her life. While she will indeed be missed, her legacy will live on and the outstanding contributions and service she made to the betterment of Miami-Dade County and South Florida will never be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING VERA BRYANT OF
BROOKSVILLE, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Vera Bryant of Hernando County, Florida. Vera will do something later this year that all of us strive to do, but that very few of us will ever accomplish, celebrate her 100th birthday.

Vera Bryant was born May 7, 1909, in Twin Lakes, Florida. A native Floridian, she married her sweetheart Robert Bryant and together they had two beautiful children, both girls. After finishing school, Vera worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant for 33 years while raising her two children.

A dedicated church member that gives her much happiness in life, Vera attends the Bethlehem Progressive Baptist Church where she is the oldest member. Today she spends much of her time visiting with her family and her church. At one time, Vera enjoyed delivering the Tampa Tribune, where she had her own paper route. Vera said she did a lot of volunteer work and was a Lilly White Convention Member and sang in the Church Choir.

Vera's proudest moments now are having time to spend with all of her grand, great- and great-great-grandchildren. She also has many wonderful memories of riding her father's horses. Vera's advice to young people today is to be sure to get a good education and make something of their lives.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Vera Bryant for reaching her 100th birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as her.

INTRODUCTION OF THE COMMISSION ON WARTIME RELOCATION AND INTERNMENT OF LATIN AMERICANS OF JAPANESE DESCENT ACT

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. BECERRA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act. This bill would create a commission to review and determine facts surrounding the relocation, internment, and deportation of Japanese Latin Americans during World War II.

Almost 30 years ago, Congress established the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians to study the circumstances which led to the detention of 110,000 Japanese Americans during World War II. After twenty days of hearings, testimony from 750 witnesses, and review of thousands of government and military documents, the Commission concluded that internment of Japanese Americans was the result of racism and wartime hysteria. In its report to Congress titled *Personal Justice Denied*, the Commission stated "not a single documented act of espionage, sabotage or fifth column activity was committed by an American citizen of Japanese ancestry or by Japanese alien . . ." The Commission's findings vindicated these loyal Americans and President Ronald Reagan's signature of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 brought closure to thousands who suffered unspeakable indignities and tremendous losses. However, there remains a group who has not yet experienced the closure they deserve or obtained the justice to which they are entitled.

Between December 1941 and February 1948, approximately 2,300 men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry were abducted from 13 Latin American countries and deported to internment camps in the United States. The U.S. government orchestrated and financed this operation with the intention of using these individuals as hostages in exchange for Americans held by Japan. Over 800 people, many who were second or third generation Latin Americans and had no familial or linguistic ties to Japan, were used in two prisoner of war exchanges. The remaining detainees were held in U.S. internment camps until after the end of the war. In the appendix of *Personal Justice Denied*, the Commission cited the Federal government's role in kidnapping and detaining Japanese Latin Americans, but acknowledged it had not researched documents that exist in distant archives or received official testimony from government officials or survivors.

It is for these reasons that I introduce this very important legislation. The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act would create a commission to investigate and review the facts with regard to the abduction and detainment Japanese Latin Americans during World War II by the U.S. government. Composed of nine members appointed by the President, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and President pro tempore of the Senate, the commission would be charged with holding public hearings and submitting a report of its findings and recommending appropriate remedies to Congress.

I am proud to be working with Senator DANIEL K. INOUE of Hawaii, a decorated World War II veteran and a tremendous public servant, who is also introducing an identical Senate companion measure today. Additionally, I am honored to have the indispensable support of the wonderful men and women of the Campaign for Justice and the Japanese American Citizens League. Without them this effort would lack the heart and soul essential to cross the finish line.

Madam Speaker, now is the time to reconcile our past and complete the official narrative on a troubling period in our Nation's history. As we commit ourselves to building a better America for our daughters and sons, I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act.

TRIBUTE TO MURRELL MITCHELL,
SR.

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Murrell Mitchell, Sr., a pillar of the community in Corbin, Kentucky, who sadly passed away on November 18, 2008 at the age of 91.

Murrell's life was a testament to his love for his community, the Commonwealth of Kentucky, his country, and the Lord. A hard worker and small business owner, Murrell was a fixture of southeastern Kentucky. In addition to his entrepreneurial efforts, Murrell also served as a member of the Knox County Kentucky School Board, as well as three terms as a Knox County Magistrate.

Murrell was also devoted to serving the Lord and working in his church, the Grace Baptist Church in Corbin Kentucky, where he was a deacon for many years. As a faithful member of the congregation for most of his life, Murrell also served as Sunday school director as well as church treasurer.

Through all of his successes, Murrell had a deep abiding love for his family. He was married to his wife, Opal, for over 70 years. Together they have been the loving parents of 7 children, 15 grandchildren and 32 great-grandchildren. Murrell's presence as father, grandfather, deacon, and rock of the community will be sorely missed.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in honoring the memory of Murrell Mitchell. Although he has departed from us in body, his memory will live on in each of us

who were honored to know him. While we will miss him in this life, we know that his residence today is far better than ours is here. And we will be satisfied in that knowledge until we meet again.

HONORING BISHOP ROBERT J.
CARLSON

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bishop Robert J. Carlson, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Saginaw, as he celebrates the 25th anniversary of his Episcopal Ordination. The Diocese is celebrating this event in honor of Bishop Carlson at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church in Bay City, Michigan, on January 11.

Bishop Carlson is a native of Minneapolis. He was ordained to the priesthood on May 23, 1970, for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy and his Master of Divinity degree from Saint Paul Seminary. He continued his studies at Catholic University of America, receiving his Licentiate in Canon Law in 1979.

On January 11, 1984, Bishop Carlson was ordained as an auxiliary bishop for his home archdiocese. In 1994 he was appointed the Bishop of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He served at this post until Pope John Paul II directed he become the Bishop of the Diocese of Saginaw. He was installed as the fifth Bishop of the Saginaw Diocese on February 24, 2005.

Currently Bishop Carlson serves as co-chair of the Mission Advisory Committee of the Institute for Priestly Formation, as a member of the Canon Law Society of America, a member of the Board of the International Dominican Foundation, as a member of Board of Sacred Heart Seminary, a member of the Board of Los Cabos Children's Foundation, a member of the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors. In 2004 he founded the Messengers of Peace Religious Community in Colombia.

Bishop Carlson's pastoral letters, speeches and publications reflect his commitment to the Catholic Church, priestly formation, the sanctity of human life, and evangelizing. He has written on the Sacraments and the role of Bishops in the Church.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me and applaud the work of Bishop Robert J. Carlson. His motto is, "Before the Cross there is no Defense," and expresses his deep faith in Our Lord, Jesus Christ. The cross on his coat of arms represents his commitment and mission to the faithful entrusted to his custody. Bishop Carlson has devoted his life to the care and nurturing of people of the Catholic Church and all humanity. The best testament to his life's achievement is the love, respect and spiritual growth they reflect back to him.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIS "SNAKE"
MURRAY

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the life and legacy of the late Willis "Snake" Murray, an outstanding Floridian who is one of the most unsung leaders of our Miami-Dade County community and Florida.

A native of Miami, Mr. Murray was born to Willis and Mazie Murray on October 9, 1923, in Sanford, Florida. One of the distinguished members of Booker T. Washington's Class of 1943, he went on to obtain his bachelor's and master's degree from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University, and attended post-graduate studies at Barry University and University of Miami.

An avid football fan, Mr. Murray especially enjoyed attending Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University and Miami Dolphins football games throughout football season.

Mr. Murray was a volunteer for the Alliance for Aging advocating for seniors, the American Cancer Society and the Miami-Dade County Public Schools Youth and Elderly Against Crimes Task Force. He was also a strong advocate for seniors. Each year he participated in the American Cancer Society Relay For Life, which raises money for cancer research and programs.

Mr. Murray was a staunch believer who abided by the dictum that those who have less in life, through no fault of their own, should be helped by the government, regardless of their race, creed, age, or gender. As a community activist, Mr. Murray had a penchant for being at the forefront of African-American and other minority struggles in their quest for justice and equality. The unabashed and exemplary service demonstrated by Mr. Murray was evident in his desire for youth academic excellence and political empowerment for disenfranchised Americans. His commendable political activism has motivated countless others from all political and philosophical persuasions throughout Florida to follow his example of unrelenting defense of the "forgotten man." Moreover, his charitable actions toward others served as the quintessential embodiment of the Judeo-Christian faith.

Throughout Mr. Murray's commitment as a community activist, he remained devoted to his family. He will be missed by all who knew him. I offer my heartfelt condolences to his family—his brother, James Murray; daughters, Barbara Walker and Karlar Arthur; and four grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing Mr. Murray's contributions to South Florida. Mr. Willis "Snake" Murray's life was a triumph. He was blessed with a loving family who took pleasure in every aspect of his life and his interests. He will be remembered as a true pioneer and community activist.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDIKIDS
HEALTH INSURANCE ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce the MediKids Health Insurance Act of 2009, legislation to provide universal health coverage to our Nation's children.

During the campaign, President-elect Obama spoke of the need to mandate coverage to ensure that every child receives needed health care services. MediKids is the simplest, most effective means of achieving that goal. While it is critical that any reform proposal meet the special needs of children, I want to be clear that I am not suggesting we start with children or stop with children. I am looking forward to working with the new Administration and Congressional colleagues on a health reform effort for which the goal is assuring comprehensive care for everyone. I am open to other proposals and believe that we have to look across the board at various options. However, I submit that MediKids contains many elements that could be useful in the upcoming debate.

Nearly 9 million children in this country still lack health insurance coverage. The majority of these children live in families with at least one full-time worker. Often, their families are not offered coverage by their employers at all or they cannot afford the premiums. These simple, but sobering, statistics speak to the need for change. Our system is fundamentally broken when a working parent cannot get health coverage for his or her children.

Rather than reinvent the wheel, I think we should build on what works. When Congress created Medicare more than 40 years ago, our Nation's seniors were more likely to be living in poverty than any other age group. Many senior citizens were unable to afford needed medical services and unable to find health insurance in the private market, even if they had the resources. Today, as a result of Medicare's success, seniors are much less likely to be shackled by the bonds of poverty or to go without needed health care.

Sadly, children are now the group who are most likely to be living in poverty. Kids in America are nearly twice as vulnerable to poverty as adults. This travesty is morally reprehensible, and it has grave consequences for the future of our country. Our future rests on our ability to provide our children with the basic conditions to thrive and become healthy, educated, and successful adults. Poor children are often malnourished and have difficulty succeeding in school. Untreated illnesses only worsen their chance to become productive members of our economy. Healthy children are the key to our economic future.

The MediKids Health Insurance Act would create a new Federal health insurance program for children. Modeled after Medicare, MediKids would provide comprehensive benefits appropriate to children, simplified cost-sharing, prescription drug coverage and mental health parity.

Every child in America would be automatically enrolled in MediKids at birth and maintain that eligibility through age 23. The cost, adjusted for income, would be applied to the family's annual tax bill, unless they opted for

other coverage and showed proof of that coverage. As such, parents would retain the choice to enroll eligible kids in private plans or other Government programs such as Medicaid or SCHIP. However, if a lapse in the other insurance coverage occurred, MediKids would automatically fill in the gap.

MediKids doesn't have complicated enrollment and eligibility hoops. Instead, it assures that families will always have access to affordable health insurance for their children, and it ensures that all children get a truly healthy start in life.

MediKids was originally written in close collaboration with the American Academy of Pediatrics. They have endorsed MediKids as the best way to provide health coverage to all our children. The bill has also been endorsed by the Children's Defense Fund, Families USA, the National Association of Children's Hospitals, and other organizations advocating for better health care for America's children. As we work on health care reform, we need to pay particular attention to the unique needs of our Nation's children. MediKids is a model that accomplishes that goal.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE
ACCESS TO REHABILITATION
ACT OF 2009

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. BECERRA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Act of 2009 with Representatives ROY BLUNT and MIKE ROSS. This important bill repeals the monetary caps that limit beneficiary access to medically necessary outpatient physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology services. Senators JOHN ENSIGN and BLANCHE LINCOLN are introducing this legislation in the Senate.

To remove all uncertainty for Medicare beneficiaries about being able to receive the appropriate therapy, the bipartisan Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Act of 2009 creates a stable payment environment so that health professionals can focus on providing quality health care. Rehabilitation services provided by physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech language pathologists are essential to assisting individuals reach their highest functional level possible and the monetary caps are inconsistent with this objective.

A March 2008 Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) study provided evidence that enforcement of the monetary caps could cause Medicare beneficiaries harm since it may require them to delay necessary medical care, force others to assume higher out-of-pocket costs, and disrupt the continuum of care for many seniors and individuals with disabilities. Specifically, the study provided data that the sickest patients who suffered from Parkinson's disease or who have multiple medical problems were most likely to exceed the monetary caps.

Since inclusion of the caps in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, both Democratic and Republican Congresses and administrations have interceded to prevent their implementation and enforcement citing the negative impact the caps would have on elderly patients' access to

necessary services. Most recently, Congress extended through 2009 the existing medical exceptions process that gives the Secretary of Health and Human Services the authority to allow patients to exceed the monetary caps if deemed medically necessary.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to continue ensuring that Americans have access to the highest quality physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language pathology services by supporting this legislation.

HONORING SUPERVISOR ED ROBEY
OF LAKE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Supervisor Ed Robey on the occasion of his retirement from the Lake County Board of Supervisors. Supervisor Robey has served the citizens of Lake County honorably for 28 years, the last 12 as a County Supervisor.

Supervisor Robey has had an illustrious career in public service. Since he was first elected to the Clearlake City Council in 1980, Supervisor Robey has consistently gone the extra mile for his constituents. The list of boards and commissions he has served on during his career is overwhelming. It includes LAFCO, the Area Planning Council, the Regional Council of Rural Counties, the California State Association of Counties, the Committee working with the Yolo County Flood Control District in regard to Clear Lake water rights issues, the Proposition 10/First Five Commission, the PEG Board of Directors, North Coast Emergency Medical Services, the Lake County Community Action Agency Board of Directors, the Area Agency on Aging Board of Directors, the North Coast Opportunities Board of Directors, the Caltrans DEAL Committee, and the County Reclassification Committee, among many others.

Supervisor Robey will be remembered for his great sense of humor and superior accessibility to his constituents. His legislative and community accomplishments are much too numerous to be noted here; however, the true test of any elected official is if his constituents are better off when he retires than when he first took office. This is unquestionably the case for Supervisor Robey. The citizens of Lake County owe him a great debt.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, it is appropriate at this time that we thank Supervisor Ed Robey for his years of dedication and service on behalf of Lake County and beyond. He has been a model of dignified and effective public service. I join his wife Beth, his son and two stepchildren in thanking Ed and wishing him a lifetime of fulfillment.

PROTECTING IMPACT AID FOR
NORTH SUBURBAN SCHOOLS

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to ensure the federal govern-

ment fulfills an important obligation to the families of service men and women in my district. In 1950, President Harry Truman established the Impact Aid program to assist school districts and communities that lose their property tax base because of the presence of the federal government. Without this federal money, the burden would fall to the remaining residents whose property taxes would continue to rise while impacting the quality of education which can be provided. The Impact Aid program helps to alleviate this problem by directly reimbursing public school districts for the loss of traditional revenue sources.

For years Impact Aid was fully funded and offered some of the strongest direct assistance to military families across the Nation. Unfortunately, over the last decade we have fallen behind on this commitment, and it is time to reverse this trend.

While I support fully funding the Impact Aid program, I believe the situation in my district warrants special attention. In order to ensure that our students most in need continue to receive necessary resources, I have introduced this bill to help North Chicago to continue to qualify for heavily impacted payments, and Glenview and Highland Park receive fair compensation.

Due to a unique housing situation for the Great Lakes Naval Training Facility, Impact Aid funding should be higher in five of my school districts. This Naval base is located in North Chicago, one of the poorest school districts in my state. However, some service members and their families live in Navy housing obtained when Ft. Sheridan and Naval Air Station Glenview, located in other suburbs, were closed in the 1990's. These former bases are located within the boundaries of other school districts that now must bear the economic cost of educating children from a base, but receive none of the economic benefits a base provides. Thus, it is vitally important that we both ensure North Chicago continues to receive heavily impacted payments for the benefit of students living there, and that the surrounding communities are more fairly compensated for their loss of property taxes.

By passing this bill, the federal government will be fulfilling its responsibility to these communities, and giving our military families the support they deserve.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BALANCED
BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL
AMENDMENT

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I rise to re-introduce legislation that will amend the United States Constitution to force Congress to rein in spending by balancing the federal budget.

It is common sense to American families that they cannot spend more than they have—yet far too frequently, this fundamental principle has been lost on a Congress that is too busy spending to pay attention to the bottom line.

Our federal government must be lean, efficient and responsible with the dollars that our Nation's citizens worked so hard to earn. We

must work to both eliminate every cent of waste and squeeze every cent of value out of each dollar our citizens entrust to us. Families all across our Nation understand what it means to make tough decisions each day about what they can and cannot afford and government officials should be required to exercise similar restraint when spending the hard-earned dollars of our Nation's citizens.

Congress took a dramatic step forward during the 109th Congress when it passed the Deficit Reduction Act. This law found savings of approximately \$40 billion over five years by eliminating wasteful spending and programs. This legislation was an important first step, but it was just that—a first step. Furthermore, the legislation was passed by the Senate by a margin of just one vote and was passed by the House by a margin of two votes, which shows exactly how difficult the task of balancing the budget is—and how important it is to force Congress to do so. This is exactly why I am re-introducing this legislation today.

My legislation, which garnered 163 bipartisan cosponsors in the 110th Congress, would amend the Constitution to require that total spending for any fiscal year not exceed total receipts and require the President to propose budgets to Congress that are balanced each year. It would also provide an exception in times of war and during military conflicts that pose imminent and serious military threats to national security.

Furthermore, the legislation would make it harder to increase taxes by requiring that legislation to increase revenue be passed by a true majority of each chamber and not just a majority of those present and voting. Finally, the bill requires a 3/5 majority vote for any increases in the debt limit.

This concept is not new. 49 out of 50 states have a balanced budget requirement.

It has become clear that it is extremely difficult for Congress to agree on a budget that is fiscally responsible. By amending the Constitution to require a balanced budget, we can force Congress to control spending, paving the way for a return to surpluses and ultimately paying down the national debt, rather than allow big spenders to lead us further down the road of chronic deficits and in doing so leave our children and grandchildren saddled with debt that is not their own.

Our Nation faces many difficult decisions in the coming years, and Congress will face great pressure to spend beyond its means rather than to make difficult decisions about spending priorities. Unless Congress is forced to make the decisions necessary to create a balanced budget, it will always have the all-too-tempting option of shirking this responsibility. The Balanced Budget Constitutional amendment is a common sense approach to ensure that Congress is bound by the same fiscal principles that America's families face each day.

I urge support of this important legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE UDALL-EISENHOWER ARCTIC WILDERNESS ACT

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. MARKEY. Madam Speaker, today, I am introducing the Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wil-

derness Act, which would give permanent protection to the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This legislation also honors two great American visionaries—President Dwight Eisenhower and Representative Morris Udall—by designating this pristine wild place as wilderness in their names. President Eisenhower—a Republican—began the bipartisan legacy of fighting to protect this special place for future generations of Americans when he set aside the core of the Refuge in 1960. Twenty years later, in 1980, Representative Morris Udall—a Democrat—succeeded in doubling the size of the Refuge and protecting even more of this untrammeled wilderness.

President Eisenhower and Rep. Mo Udall had the vision to protect a remote but very special piece of pristine wilderness. I am proud to introduce legislation today that would complete the job they began by permanently protecting the coastal plain of the Arctic Refuge from oil drilling.

I am also proud to once again introduce this legislation under the bill number H.R. 39, a bill number with important historical significance in the fight to preserve the land within the Arctic Refuge. H.R. 39 was the bill number given to Mo Udall's Alaska Natural Interest Lands Conservation Act that became law in 1980. This Act expanded the area President Eisenhower had originally set aside and renamed it as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Rep. Udall later began introducing his legislation to designate the coastal plain of the Refuge as wilderness under that same bill number. Introducing the Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act under the bill number H.R. 39 offers an important reminder of the history of the fight to protect this special place.

The coastal plain is the biological heart of the Refuge and is central to the survival of many unique species of animals including polar bears, caribou, musk oxen, wolves, and over 160 species of birds. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service calls the coastal plain the "center for wildlife activity" in the Refuge. If we were to allow drilling in the Refuge it would irreparably disrupt this important ecosystem and one of our last great wild places will be forever destroyed.

We know that the Arctic is already feeling the strains of global warming. Alaska has warmed at four times the rate of the rest of the planet over the last fifty years and the impacts of a warming Arctic on iconic species such as the polar bear are disastrous. Last year, the Bush Administration listed the polar bear as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act because of melting sea ice and government scientists project that the prospects for the polar bear's survival are bleak. A team of scientists at the U.S. Geological Survey released a series of reports at the end of 2007 which concluded that by mid-century, two-thirds of all the world's polar bears could disappear and that polar bears could be gone entirely from Alaska. The USGS team also noted that based on recent observations, this dire assessment could actually be conservative.

The 111th Congress marks a time of real change for our nation's energy policy. The Bush Administration and Republicans in Congress have argued for a shortsighted energy policy of "drill, drill, drill" that would forever sacrifice our beaches and most pristine wilderness areas for a few short months worth of oil. The United States consumes 25 percent of the

world's oil but controls only 3 percent of the world's oil reserves. We cannot drill our way to energy independence. But we can enact smart, green energy policies that can simultaneously grow our economy, spur technological innovation, protect our environment, reduce global warming pollution and end our addiction to oil.

There are some places in our world that are so rare and so special that we have a responsibility to protect them. The Arctic Refuge is one of those places. Protecting the Arctic Refuge will send a strong statement of our nation's intent to preserve America's pristine wilderness areas, break our dangerous addiction to oil, and kick-start a green revolution to create jobs, grow the economy, and promote energy independence.

As Mo Udall said, "In our lifetime, we have few opportunities to shape the very Earth on which our descendants will live their lives. In each generation, we have carved up more and more of our once-great natural heritage. There ought to be a few places left in the world the way the Almighty made them." The Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act will ensure that the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is forever protected for future Americans and never carved up by the big oil companies.

IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY PROTECTION ACT

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, over the last few years we have spent considerable time on the extremely important issue of immigration and homeland security. In the 108th Congress, we passed the National Intelligence Reform Act, a landmark piece of legislation to overhaul our intelligence agencies. But, as I noted at that time, the bill unfortunately did not go far enough in addressing the major security vulnerability presented by the porous nature of our borders.

Recognizing that need, in the 109th Congress we debated immigration extensively and even passed H.R. 4437, the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005. Regrettably, the Senate failed to act on this important piece of legislation. In the 110th Congress, the House passed legislation to reauthorize the Basic Pilot, or E-Verify, employment verification program.

A tremendous amount of work remains in the effort to secure our borders. That is why I am reintroducing the Immigration Enforcement and Social Security Protection Act, which is designed to eliminate up to 98 percent of the illegal border crossings into the United States.

I believe that any effort to end illegal immigration will be viable only if it addresses the root cause of what attracts illegal immigrants to our country: the lure of economic opportunity and the ease with which illegal workers can find jobs. Under the Immigration Enforcement and Social Security Protection Act, we will dramatically increase the enforcement of laws which prohibit American businesses from employing illegal immigrants. The growing availability of counterfeit identity documents

has undermined the current system because employers find it increasingly difficult to establish the authenticity of documents presented by job applicants. As a result, too many employers have been either unable or unwilling to comply with the law.

Our legislation adds new features to the Social Security card to deter counterfeiting and make it easier for employers to determine whether a card is genuine by including a digitized photo of the cardholder on the card. The improved Social Security card will also be encoded with a unique electronic encryption code to allow employers to verify each prospective applicant's work eligibility status prior to hiring, through either an electronic card-reader or a toll-free telephone number. The Department of Homeland Security will be required to establish and maintain an Employment Eligibility Database with an individual's proof of citizenship data, work, and residency eligibility information, including expiration dates for non-citizens. This database will also include information from the Social Security Administration that the Commissioner determines necessary and appropriate for the purpose of verifying an individual's work eligibility status. Employers who hire an illegal immigrant or choose not to verify a prospective employee's work eligibility will face stiff federal fines of \$50,000 and up to 5 years in prison. The employer would also be required to reimburse the government for the cost of deporting the illegal immigrant. Moreover, this bill provides that no officer or employee of Department of Homeland Security shall have access to any information contained in the Employment Eligibility Database for any purpose other than the establishment of a system of records necessary for the effective administration of this Act, and will impose penalties of \$10,000 in fines and mandatory-minimum sentence of 5 years in prison on anyone who misuses information on the database.

With the improved Social Security card and national verification system, prospective employees will have no way of obtaining fraudulent identification documents. By improving the employment verification process, we can eliminate the supply of jobs for illegal workers and end the employment magnet that draws them here. Under this bill, legal workers will only need to update their Social Security card once to have their photo placed on the card and for other long-overdue anti-fraud measures to be applied. Moreover, a worker would only need the updated Social Security card when applying for a new job. I want to make it absolutely clear that this proposal does not represent the creation of a national identification card. This bill strictly prohibits the use of the Social Security card as a national ID card, and stipulates that the card not be required to be routinely carried on one's person. Because Social Security cards are already required to be provided to new employers, the changes proposing in this bill take us no further down the road of creating a national ID card. It should also be noted that the government already has the information that would be contained in the Employment Eligibility Database. An individual's eligibility to work under the law is dependent on whether they are a U.S. citizen, and if not, their immigration status. Finally, the Immigration Enforcement and Social Security Protection Act also puts teeth into the new enforcement procedures by calling for the addition of 10,000 new Homeland Security officers

whose sole responsibility will be to enforce employer compliance with the law. These new agents will free up the rest of the Border Patrol to exclusively focus on border enforcement and terrorism prevention.

This bill is in no way meant to send a message that we intend to limit opportunities for the American dream to be fulfilled. However, we are a Nation of laws and if individuals wish to pursue opportunities in the United States, they must play by the rules and we must make clear that there will be no economic opportunity for anyone who enters this country illegally. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues in this effort, and hope they will consider joining me as we take action on this vital national security priority.

I would like to thank the original co-sponsors of this legislation, including, Mr. REYES of Texas, who began his career in public service with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service in the U.S. Border Patrol, where he worked for 26½ years. I would also like to thank the original co-sponsors from my home state of California, including Mr. ISSA, Mr. CALVERT, the author of the Basic Pilot Program, and Mr. BILBRAY, the Chairman of the Immigration Reform Caucus.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SHARK CONSERVATION ACT OF 2009

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, today I have reintroduced a bill to amend the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to improve the conservation of sharks. In the 110th Congress, the House of Representatives passed this legislation, H.R. 5741 or the "Shark Conservation Act of 2008," by voice vote under suspension of the rules. The Senate, however, was unable to take action on the bill received by the House or on its companion bill, S. 3231, before it adjourned. I have, therefore, reintroduced this bill today given the ongoing necessity for improved shark conservation and its benefits for ocean ecosystems.

Sharks are long-lived apex predators, which breed slowly, making it difficult for them to maintain populations under fishing pressure. Sharks have been increasingly exploited in recent decades, both as bycatch in the pelagic longline fisheries from the 1960s onward, and as targets in direct fisheries that expanded rapidly in the 1980s. The rising demand for shark fins over past decades has also led to increases in the particularly exploitive practice of shark finning, where fins of sharks are removed and the carcass is discarded at sea.

According to scientists, scalloped hammerhead, white, and thresher shark populations are each estimated to have declined by over 75 percent in the past 15 years due in large part to these fishing pressures. Removing these top predators drastically changes the food web structure, marine diversity, and ecosystem health. Addressing the practice of shark finning is an imperative step toward the conservation of sharks and marine ecosystems.

Congress recognized shark finning as an inherently wasteful practice in enacting the

Shark Finning Prohibition Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-557). This Act prohibits U.S. fishermen from removing the fins of sharks and discarding the carcass at sea, and from landing or transporting shark fins without the corresponding carcass.

The Shark Conservation Act of 2009 includes several measures to strengthen the implementation and enforcement of that prohibition and would ensure that the intent of Congress is achieved. First, the bill eliminates an unexpected enforcement loophole related to the transport of shark fins by prohibiting vessels from having custody, control, or possession of shark fins which are not naturally attached to the corresponding carcass. This is intended to ensure that U.S.-flagged vessels are not traveling to the high seas and purchasing fins from fishermen engaged in shark finning and bringing them into U.S. waters in an attempt to skirt the finning prohibition. The bill further strengthens the enforcement of the existing ban on shark finning by calling for sharks to be landed with their fins naturally attached. This "fins-attached" landing strategy simplifies enforcement of the Shark Finning Prohibition Act. It is also consistent with the National Marine Fisheries Service, NMFS, final rule, which took effect on July 24, 2008, and which implements the management measures described in the final Amendment 2 to the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan and strengthens enforcement of existing law in U.S. Atlantic waters by requiring that sharks be landed with their fins attached.

Finally, the Shark Conservation Act of 2009 amends the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act to allow the Secretary of Commerce to identify and list nations that have not adopted a regulatory program for the conservation of sharks comparable to the United States. This amendment promotes the conservation of sharks internationally and in a manner that is consistent with the expectations placed on U.S. fishermen.

The bill is further consistent with the United States position in the United Nations relative to Resolution 62/177 that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 18, 2007, and which calls upon nation-states to take immediate and concerted action to improve the implementation of and compliance with national measures that regulate shark fisheries, including management efforts to require that all sharks be landed with each fin naturally attached.

The Shark Conservation Act of 2009 reestablishes the intended protections for sharks under U.S. law. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to again pass this timely and important bill in the House of Representatives. I also hope it will receive favorable action and consideration by the other body in the 111th Congress.

TERRORIST REWARDS ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2009

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Terrorist Rewards Enhancement

Act. This bill will assist in our fight against terrorism around the globe. Currently, the terrorist rewards program run by the State Department assists in our hunt for terrorists by promising a cash reward or other type of reward for information leading to the arrest of some of the world's most deadly terrorists. This program has been very successful in the past in apprehending key people including Mir Amal Kanshi, a terrorist who had murdered two CIA employees and injured three others in a 1993 shooting outside CIA headquarters in Virginia.

Under current law, the U.S. may not pay a reward to an officer or employee of another government. I have traveled to Pakistan each of the last 4 years, where I met with a number of government officials. At the strong suggestion of Pakistan's ISI and IB intelligence and police bureaus, I believe the President should be able to pay such a reward to anyone having information leading us to the greatest terrorists. If there is anyone, anywhere, even if they work for a Pakistani government agency, who has information about the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden, we should be doing all we can to elicit that information.

With the increasing number of cross-border incursions into Afghanistan coming from the Waziristan region of Pakistan, it is more important than ever to develop a complete picture of where al Qaeda and Taliban terrorists are hiding. We need to provide our State Department and intelligence officials with all the possible tools to aid in the capture of the world's number one terrorist. The Terrorist Rewards Enhancement Act will provide one more of these tools.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VETERANS
HEALTH EQUITY ACT OF 2009

HON. CAROL SHEA-PORTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, today, I introduced The Veterans Health Equity Act of 2009. This legislation requires the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that every State has a full-service veterans hospital, or access to equivalent care in-state. I have been calling for the VA to provide full-service medical care to New Hampshire's veterans since October of 2007 and introduced identical legislation in the 110th Congress.

New Hampshire has not had a full-service veterans hospital since 2001 and is the only State without a full-service VA hospital or comparable facility. While New Hampshire may be a small State, it has a veteran population over 130,000.

Because we lack a veterans hospital, New Hampshire's veterans are often forced to travel out-of-state for medical care. Veterans traveling from the most Northern parts of the State may have to travel three hours to Manchester and then may be forced to travel up to 2 hours to Boston, if they are referred there for their care.

Unfortunately, this routinely happens—each year, hundreds of patients are referred to the Boston, MA or White River Junction, VT facilities.

It is simply a matter of fairness that our veterans in New Hampshire be afforded the

same services as veterans in every other State. Though New Hampshire may be a small State, even smaller States with fewer veterans have full-service care available.

I am a realist, and a fiscal conservative. That is why my legislation does not require the VA to construct a full-service hospital in Manchester if it is not economically feasible. Instead, the Department could work with health care providers in the state to provide care through local hospitals.

The Manchester VA facility has done a great job of reaching out to local partners and getting our vets access to as much local care as possible within their current restrictions. In fact, they have submitted a business plan that would allow them to contract with more local health care providers. I urge the Department to strongly consider this business plan. Its approval would make a big difference in the quality and accessibility of care for New Hampshire's veterans.

If the VA will not consider restoring Manchester to a full-service facility or ensuring that New Hampshire veterans have access to care in New Hampshire, Congress must do so.

Our veterans, regardless of the services they need, deserve the same care their counterparts receive in every other State. It is unconscionable that we deny them this full-service care and instead offer them ad hoc services.

I will continue to work with the Director of the New Hampshire VA and with the new Obama Administration to ensure that our veterans have care in New Hampshire. Last summer's expansion of radiation services proves that the VA can work to ensure that local care is available. It is time for the VA to go further and for the government to live up to the promises we've made to those who have served so honorably.

HONORING FORMER U.S. REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES T. CANADY UPON HIS INVESTITURE AS A JUSTICE TO THE FLORIDA SUPREME COURT

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a former member of this body, Representative Charles T. Canady on the occasion of his investiture as a Justice to the Supreme Court of the State of Florida.

During his tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives, Justice Canady served this nation and the people of the 12th Congressional District, which I now represent, with honor and distinction. His steadfast commitment toward upholding the laws and principles on which our nation was founded, will serve the people of the State of Florida well through his appointment as a Justice to the Florida Supreme Court.

Born in Lakeland, Florida, Justice Canady earned his B.A. from Haverford College in 1976 and Doctorate of Jurisprudence from Yale University in 1979. Thereafter, he practiced law in Lakeland at the firm of Holland and Knight and with the Lane, Trohn, Clarke, Bertrand and Williams law firm. In 1984, he was elected to the Florida House of Representatives where he served through 1990.

In 1992, Justice Canady was elected to the 103rd Congress and served four terms in the United States House of Representatives from January 1993 to January 2001. Throughout his tenure in Congress, Justice Canady was an active member of the House Judiciary Committee. For three terms from January 1995 to January 2001, former Rep. Canady was the Chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution. In this capacity, his efforts toward protecting and defending the laws of our nation made a lasting mark not only on this body, but on the American people for whom we are called serve.

While a member of the House of Representatives, Former Rep. Canady worked with steadfast dedication and fortitude on the issues found at the core of our country's belief system. Among his contributions include passage into law of the Religious Liberty Protection Act, which protects all citizens' right to exercise their religious freedoms. He also championed the Civil Rights Act of 1997, the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act, the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, the Private Property Rights Implementation Act, Equal Opportunity Act, as well as the Family Caregiver Enumeration Act.

Appointed as a House Manager to conduct the presidential impeachment proceedings, he worked to uphold the laws of our nation through his unwavering commitment to the principles of the Constitution of the United States and the governing rules of our country.

Justice Canady kept his term limits pledge, and did not seek reelection to a fifth term in 2000. After leaving Congress, Justice Canady returned to the practice of law, serving as counsel to Governor Jeb Bush. In 2002, Governor Bush appointed him to Florida's Second District Court of Appeal. On August 27, 2008, Governor Charlie Crist nominated Justice Canady to the Florida Supreme Court. His nomination was confirmed and Justice Canady took his seat as the 82nd Associate Justice to the Florida Supreme Court on September 8, 2008, and was sworn-in through a formal investiture on December 3, 2008.

Former Congressman Charles T. Canady resided until his appointment to the Florida Supreme Court in Lakeland, Florida, and is married to wife Jennifer and has two daughters, Julia and Anna. Charles T. Canady is the son of Charles and Delores Canady.

INTRODUCTION OF THE
AMERICARE HEALTH INSURANCE
ACT OF 2009

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to reintroduce the AmeriCare Health Care Act of 2009. I have often spoken before this body about the great need to reform our health care system. For too long, we have been plagued with an inadequate patchwork system that today leaves nearly 46 million Americans uninsured. We spend more per person than any other country in the world, yet our health outcomes lag well behind that of other industrialized nations.

The failing economy is even more proof of our need to act now. Our broken health system is a tremendous financial burden on our

Nation's families and businesses alike. Since 1999, family premiums for employer-sponsored insurance have increased 119 percent, nearly 4 times the increase in wages (34 percent) and inflation (29 percent) during that same time. About one in three Americans reported a serious problem "paying for health care and health insurance" in October 2008. Half of all bankruptcies can be traced to medical bills. 49 percent of people in foreclosure named medical problems as a cause of their financial difficulties.

According to the New America Foundation, our economy lost as much as \$207 billion last year because of the poor health and shorter lifespans of those without health insurance. General Motors spends more on health care than on steel. While I'm not suggesting we import the Canadian health system, it is worth highlighting that if we paid the same amount for health care as Canada, G.M. would have accumulated an additional \$22 billion in profits over the last decade. Inadequate health coverage is crippling our economy.

The President-elect declared that health care reform should happen "this year". Chairman RANGEL and I are ready to work with him, Chairmen WAXMAN and MILLER, our leadership and the Senate to achieve this goal.

AmeriCare is a template of a way that we can achieve universal health care. AmeriCare is built on a framework that is consistent with many of the principles that President-elect Obama identified during the campaign.

Like President-elect Obama's plan, it includes a public plan option. It uses Medicare's existing administrative infrastructure, but improves upon Medicare's benefits to address some of the current gaps in coverage. A public plan option is the only way to ensure that beneficiaries have access to an option that promotes people over profit. As Medicare itself includes both public and private plan options, one could make the case that AmeriCare has an exchange, like Obama's plan as well.

Like President-elect Obama's plan, it maintains employer sponsored coverage. People can keep the coverage they have if they like it. We need to build on what works, not create an entirely new system.

Like President-elect Obama's plan, it includes a pay-or-play component to ensure that the private sector continues to play a role in providing health care.

AmeriCare meets the Health Care for America Now! reform principles. It was endorsed last year by the coalition, as well as provider groups, beneficiary advocates, and unions including: American Academy of Pediatrics, American Nurses Association, Center for Medicare Advocacy, Consumers Union, Families USA, National Association of Community Health Centers, National Association of Public Hospitals, SEIU, Universal Health Care Action Network.

AmeriCare is a practical proposal to ensure that everyone has affordable health coverage in our country. It builds on what works in today's health care system to provide simple, affordable, reliable health insurance. I look forward to working with President-elect Obama as he assumes the office of the President to

achieve a universal health care program that meets the principles that he will outline to Congress.

I will submit for the RECORD a short summary of AmeriCare. More can be found on my website at <http://www.house.gov/stark>.

AMERICARE HEALTH CARE ACT OF 2009

Overview: The AmeriCare Health Care Act ("AmeriCare") is a practical proposal to ensure that everyone has health coverage in our country. It builds on what works in today's health care system to provide simple, affordable, reliable health insurance. People would be covered under the new AmeriCare system, modeled on Medicare, or they would continue to obtain health coverage through their employer.

Using the administrative efficiencies within Medicare and building on the existing coverage people receive through their jobs today, we can create an affordable, efficient, and stable universal health care system in America—and guarantee access to medical innovation and the world's most advanced providers and facilities.

Structure and Administration: Creates a new title in the Social Security Act, "AmeriCare." Provides universal health care for all U.S. residents, with additional coverage for children (under 24), pregnant women, and individuals with limited incomes (< 300 percent FPL). Sets out standards for supplemental plans with a focus on consumer protection. Requires the Secretary to negotiate discounts for prescription drugs.

Benefits: Adults receive Medicare Part A and B benefits; preventive services, substance abuse treatment, mental health parity; and prescription drug coverage equivalent to the BC/BS Standard Option in 2008. Children receive comprehensive benefits and Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) coverage with no cost-sharing.

Cost Sharing: There is a \$350 deductible for individuals/\$500 for families (indexed over time), and 20 percent coinsurance. Total spending (premiums, deductibles, and co-insurance) is capped at out-of-pocket maximum of \$2,500 individual/\$4,000 family (indexed over time), or 5 percent of income for beneficiaries with income between 200 percent–300 percent FPL and 7.5 percent of income for beneficiaries with income between 300 percent–500 percent FPL. There is no cost sharing for children, pregnant women and low-income individuals (below 200 percent FPL). Sliding scale subsidies are in place for cost-sharing for individuals between 200 percent and 300 percent FPL.

Financing: At April 15 tax filing each year, individuals either demonstrate equivalent coverage through their employer or pay the AmeriCare premium based on cost of coverage and class of enrollment (individual, couple, unmarried individual with children, or married couple with children). Employers may either pay 80 percent of the AmeriCare premium or provide equivalent benefits through a group health plan (the contribution for part-time workers is pro-rated). AmeriCare does not affect contracts or collective bargaining agreements in effect as of the date of enactment, and employers may choose to provide additional benefits. Employers with fewer than 100 employees have until January 1, 2014 to comply (employees of small businesses would still only pay 20 percent of the premium).

TRIBUTE TO TERRY TOEDTEMEIER

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

Mr. WU. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember a man who dedicated his life to the art of photography and the history of Oregon, Terry Toedtemeier. We sadly lost Terry on December 10, 2008. Terry served as the curator of the Portland Art Museum's photography collection and was widely known as one of the Pacific Northwest's finest landscape photographers. Terry and a colleague had recently published a book, *Wild Beauty: Photographs of the Columbia River Gorge, 1867–1957*, and Terry had finished curating a show of the same name at the Portland Art Museum.

Terry Toedtemeier was a passionate explorer of the Gorge and one of its greatest interpreters. He was a trained geologist, photographer, photo historian, curator, and educator, who realized this stretch of the Columbia River is one of the natural wonders of America. Terry studied geology at Oregon State University. He had a strong desire to understand the forces of the earth that created the world around us, and it was being outdoors and experiencing Oregon's geological features that inspired him. As a student, one day Terry spied through fog-obscured sunlight a freshly plowed field and in the middle, growing serenely, a tree that he could only describe later as "scrubby" and "a wreck." Terry took a photo and when he printed the image he said that he understood "this creative possibility with the camera."

A colleague of his noted that Terry had immersed himself in the photographic history of the Northwest over the course of his career. Terry's curated show at the Portland Art Museum, *Wild Beauty*, revealed his technical expertise in describing geologic and geographic changes, as well as a photographic history of the Gorge over 90 years, ending in 1957 when the construction of The Dalles Dam submerged one of the last great Native American fishing grounds at Celilo Falls.

From the images taken by Carleton Watkins in 1867 when Americans were first establishing industry in the West, to those by Al Monner as the federal government was constructing hydroelectric dams throughout the area, the Columbia River Gorge has served as a place of meditation, wonder, and discovery for artists. It has been Terry's astute effort that has brought these artists' visions together to teach us about the vastness, power, and beauty of the Columbia River Gorge.

Madam Speaker, I commemorate the life of Terry Toedtemeier and share with you his commitment to the preservation of our knowledge and history in the Pacific Northwest and the Columbia River Gorge. I believe in his work reflects why we must act to protect and preserve the crown jewel of Oregon's natural heritage.