

opportunity to capture an accurate, vibrant history of a tumultuous, formative era with someone who not only lived through it but actually helped to make that history.

Roberto Maestas was born in New Mexico, but he has called Seattle, Washington, his home since the early 1950s. As a young man, Mr. Maestas taught at Franklin High School before pursuing a graduate degree at the University of Washington in 1968, where he became one of the University's first Chicano graduates.

In the early 1970s, as part of the United States War on Poverty, Mr. Maestas helped form an Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language (ESL) program at South Seattle Community College to serve the city's growing Latino community. But, in 1972, funding was abruptly cut, and the program needed a new home. Mr. Maestas, along with fellow teachers, students, and a number of community activists, peaceably occupied the abandoned Beacon Hill School, and negotiated its conversion into a new community center, El Centro de la Raza.

Under his leadership, El Centro has become a voice and hub for Latinos seeking services, advocacy, and social justice. It has grown from a provider of ESL classes to a multi-million dollar Community Action Agency offering a wide array of services to thousands of low-income people of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Its programs include a bilingual child care center, a Basic Healthcare enrollment program, a food bank, senior services, and a home ownership program.

In addition, Mr. Maestas and El Centro de la Raza have been at the forefront of multicultural and international initiatives. El Centro played a prominent role in local solidarity campaigns with Central American social justice activists, and it continues to host art exhibitions, cross-cultural exchanges, and international speakers. Mr. Maestas, along with Bernie Whitebear, Larry Gossett, and Bob Santos co-founded the Minority Executive Directors' Coalition; his extraordinary work over three decades to build the strongest municipal multi-racial coalition in the United States is widely acknowledged and justly acclaimed. Although the founding of El Centro de la Raza was sparked by Latinos and distinguished with a Spanish name, that name translates in English to: "The Center for the People of All Races." Through the years, Mr. Maestas has worked with diligence and determination to ensure that El Centro is "home" for all people interested in advancing the struggle for a better world by serving, educating, defending, and organizing each other to build the "beloved community" envisioned by Martin Luther King, Jr.

Appropriately, El Centro de la Raza and Mr. Maestas have received countless international, national, state, and local awards, including the "Thousand Points of Light" award in 1991 from the President George Bush, Sr.

Madam Speaker, Roberto Maestas is an invaluable asset to the Seattle community. His contributions and his commitment to better the lives of all people deserve our gratitude, our deep respect, and our keen approbation. The people of Seattle, including the thousands who have been served at El Centro de la Raza and the countless students, volunteers, and staff whom he has touched, are grateful for his kind guidance and his visionary leadership. I join them in thanking Mr. Maestas for his service, and in wishing him all the best in his future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, on October 13, 2009, I was unavoidably detained and was unable to record my vote for rollcall No. 773. Had I been present I would have voted:

Rollcall No. 773: "yea"—to reauthorize the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Citizen Advisory Commission.

IRAN SANCTIONS ENABLING ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 13, 2009

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Iran Sanctions Enabling Act, which helps State and local governments do their part to divest from Iran.

The Iranian regime represents a threat to us, to Israel, and to our allies throughout the Middle East and beyond. Their president has threatened to destroy Israel and has repeatedly denied the Holocaust. Iran's leaders have sought to destabilize the entire Middle East and are sparking an arms race in that region. In the last few weeks, we have seen just how far the Iranians are willing to go to conceal their weapons programs, and only time will tell how many more hidden nuclear sites we will find there.

With this bill today, we help our States and local governments to play a role in the international effort to halt Iran's march toward nuclear weapons. As is so often the case, they have not waited for us to act. I am proud that, in June of this year, my home State of Nevada passed a law to help make sure our State Public Employee Retirement System does not invest in Iran, or in companies that do a large amount of business with Iran. Steps like this will help to show just how determined we are—on every level—to stopping Iran's nuclear threat.

We must do everything we can to stop Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. The UN Security Council must act now, and place further sanctions on Iran. UN member states must do their part to enforce the already-existing sanctions. We in Congress will soon pass our own further sanctions, and I hope we will continue to give our government the tools it needs to further tighten the screws on Iran's financial sector. We must use every tool available to us before it is too late.

I urge support for this bill.

HONORING CHARLES JOSEPH WATSON BRYAN HUCKE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Charles Joseph Watson

Bryan Hucke, 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 374, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

CJ has been very active with his troop participating in many scout activities. Over the many years CJ 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 Charles Joseph Watson Bryan Hucke for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH 2009

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the observance of National Hispanic Heritage Month 2009.

Since the birth of this country, Hispanics have played a tremendous role in the nation's social, economic, and political movements. Today, more than 47 million people of Hispanic origin live in the United States and represent the nation's fastest growing ethnic population. At this time, more than half a million Hispanic men and women reside in my home state of New York.

During National Hispanic Heritage Month, we celebrate the rich history and culture of Hispanic Americans. Hispanic Americans from all 50 states and territories are honored for their contributions to our society, which make up a critical part of America's identity and background. Hispanic Americans continue to share in the sacrifice and civic duties of their fellow U.S. citizens, and in fact, the Puerto Rican military participation rate is the second highest in the country.

Last month, I was joined by Representatives PIERLUISI, WASSERMAN SHULTZ and MICA in co-sponsoring legislation, H.R. 3718, to make residents of Puerto Rico fully eligible for the refundable portion of the child tax credit. The bill broadens the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 that currently excludes from the child tax credit Puerto Rican families with less than three children. At this time, the child tax credit is available to U.S. citizens in the 50 states, including residents of Puerto Rico who move to a state.

Expanding the child tax credit to Puerto Rican families with one child or more will inject critical funds into Puerto Rico's economy by directly boosting the incomes of the island's working families. Puerto Rico has been in an official recession for over three years, and its unemployment rate is 15.1 percent, which is significantly higher than the national average of 9.8 percent. Denying Puerto Rican families' access to proven United States economic recovery measures is unproductive and unjust, and it is time to afford U.S. citizens who are living in Puerto Rico the benefits of the child tax credit.

In conclusion, National Hispanic Heritage Month 2009 is marked by President Obama's