supporters for the project 33 years ago. The
reunion laid the groundwork for an upcoming
Smithsonian exhibition on The Running Fence that will serve as a tribute to her partnership with Christo on this remarkable collaboration.

Born in Morocco, Jeanne-Claude met Christo on a skiing trip when she was 16 years old. They married on her birth date, in Paris in 1958. At that time, Christo was wrapping small objects, and they soon began collaborating on wrapping larger outdoor installations which led to the most famous—Paris’s Pont Neuf (1975–1985) and Berlin’s Reichstag (1971–1995). Many other projects included natural settings such as Surrounded Islands in Biscayne Bay, Florida; Valley Curtain in Rifle, Colorado; The Umbrellas on hillsides in both California and Japan; and The Gates in Central Park, New York.

Sponsorships were never accepted for these and other installations which were financed through sales of prints, models, drawings, photos, and other documents. The works were always a team effort, with the resulting objects signed with the joint name, “Christo and Jeanne-Claude.”

In addition to her husband, Jeanne-Claude is survived by their son, poet Cyril Christo, and a grandson.

Madam Speaker, Christo will be carrying on the couple’s work, and I am sure that memories of Jeanne-Claude’s vibrancy and love will be a comfort to him during this time. Marin and Sonoma residents will remember her glitzy red hair and her wit and charm, but it is her friendship that we will cherish the most.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHRISTOPHER P. CARNEY
OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, December 2, 2009

Mr. CARNEY. Madam Speaker, on behalf of Congress and in the memory of a true American hero, I rise today to recognize COL Hal Hoxie, his wife Kathy, to whom he’s been married for 31 years, and their four sons: Aaron, Hoxie, his wife Kathy, to whom he’s been married for 31 years, and their four sons: Aaron, Max, Austin, and Andrew. The Hoxies had been a proud Air Force family for the duration of Colonel Hoxie’s career and I salute the entire family for their continued commitment, sacrifice, and contribution to this great Nation. Again, I congratulate Colonel Hoxie on his retirement and wish him Godspeed as he transitions into his new job as president of Central Christian College in McPherson, Kansas.

The United States of America prides itself on having the finest military in the world because of the hard work, dedication, and sacrifices of its brave men and women in uniform. And yet, under the discriminatory law known as Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, the talents and contributions of our GLBT service members continue to be ignored simply because of who they are. As you know, Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell was signed into law in 1993 by former President Bill Clinton as a compromise to allow gay and lesbian service members to serve in the military. To the contrary, Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell compromises the integrity of our troops and kicks them out to boot. For more than fifteen years, Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell has had a negative impact on the lives and livelihoods of these military personnel and deprived our Armed Forces of their honorable service. This is not only a disservice to them, but to our country as a whole.

HON. KAY GRANGER
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, December 2, 2009

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, as the House considers H.R. 320, “CJ’s Home Protection Act,” I encourage my colleagues to support its passage. This important piece of this bill, I believe it is important to reflect back on why this legislation is crucial to saving lives in our communities.

In June 2007, devastating storms, tornadoes and flooding hit my district over a few days’ time and left large amounts of property damaged and displaced thousands of families. Tragically, the flooding also took the lives of 11 individuals and injured others.

At Skyline Mobile Home Estates in Haltom City, I met with Haltom City Mayor Bill Lundark after the floods to see the damage and to also meet with local residents. About 100 mobile homes were impacted by the storms because there was not enough time for residents to know what was happening and to prepare for the coming disaster.

One of the most devastating impacts to this community was the death of 4-year-old Alexandria Collins. She was torn from her mother’s grasp by the water’s current as they fled to a neighbor’s boat.

CJ’s Home Protection bill requires that NOAA weather radios be installed in new mobile homes as they are being manufactured in order for residents to receive emergency broadcasting information and alerts. This bill will help save lives during emergency situations, providing people with the time and the information they need to take care of themselves and their families.

Thank you, and I urge the House to pass this legislation.

INTRODUCING THE HONEST AND OPEN TESTIMONY ACT

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, December 2, 2009

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Honest and Open Testimony Act, a bill that helps provide for an honest and open discussion regarding Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell by allowing active-duty members of the Armed Forces, including gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) members, to openly testify in Congressional hearings without fear of retribution. The Honest and Open Testimony Act expands existing whistleblower protections between members of the Armed Forces and Members of Congress to include communications from active-duty service members who testify concerning Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell in a Congressional hearing, as well as those who do so and disclose their sexual orientation.

The United States of America prides itself on having the finest military in the world because of the hard work, dedication, and sacrifices of its brave men and women in uniform. And yet, under the discriminatory law known as Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, the talents and contributions of our GLBT service members continue to be ignored simply because of who they are. As you know, Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell was signed into law in 1993 by former President Bill Clinton as a compromise to allow gay and lesbian service members to serve in the military. To the contrary, Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell compromises the integrity of our troops and kicks them out to boot. For more than fifteen years, Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell has had a negative impact on the lives and livelihoods of these military personnel and deprived our Armed Forces of their honorable service. This is not only a disservice to them, but to our country as a whole.
Mr. BOUCHER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the End Discriminatory State Taxes for Automobile Renters Act. I am pleased to be joined by my colleague from Missouri, Todd Akin as the lead Republican cosponsor of the legislation.

Our legislation addresses a situation that most of our constituents have faced at least once and perhaps several times. An individual rents a car from a car rental company and is told the daily rate will be about $25.00. At the end of the rental, the charges from the car rental company are closer to $35.00 or $40.00 per day. Questions inevitably arise about the source of these additional charges.

A small portion of the difference between the car rental company’s daily rate and the amount charged is state or local sales taxes, which consumers pay on most goods and services they purchase. Increasingly, however, the bulk of these additional charges are state and local discriminatory excise taxes on car rental consumers—local taxes imposed to build sports stadiums, convention centers, etc. No matter what the size or scope of a local project, states or localities have sought to “export” the burden of funding these local initiatives by taxing “out-of-town” visitors renting cars in their state, city, or county.

These discriminatory excise taxes on travelers have become increasingly popular in recent years. In 1976, there was one such tax. Since 1990, more than 115 special rental car taxes have been enacted in 43 states and the District of Columbia. As a result, car rental customers have paid more than $7.5 billion in special taxes to fund projects with no direct connection to renting a car. In addition to stadiums, car rental customers are also footing the bill for performing arts centers and a culinary institute. A recent study found that the taxes fall disproportionately on minority households; the taxes raise auto insurance costs; and these taxes reduce purchases of cars by rental companies—an increase of 10% in tax relative to the base rental rate reduces rental demand, and, therefore, purchases of new cars by rental car companies, by approximately 12%.

The End Discriminatory State Taxes for Automobile Renters Act would impose a permanent moratorium on discriminatory excise taxes on car rental consumers by declaring these taxes an undue burden on interstate commerce. In the past, Congress has enacted similar protections from discriminatory state and local excise taxes for other interstate travelers such as airline, train, and bus passengers, and for the property of interstate transportation industries such as the airlines, buses, trains, and motor freight. Our measure would extend this protection to car rental consumers.

The legislation’s moratorium is prospective only. The bill “grandfathers” existing car rental excise taxes to prevent a cut-off of funding for projects financed through these taxes that are already underway, as long as the state or local authorization for the existing taxes does not expire or governments do not try to increase the rate of the tax. And the bill would not in any way restrict the ability of local governments to enact non-discriminatory, general taxes such as sales and income taxes.

Our legislation has been endorsed by a wide range of stakeholders, including the National Consumers League, UAW, and the Big Three automobile manufacturers.

I hope my colleagues will join with us in enacting into law the End Discriminatory State Taxes for Automobile Renters Act of 2009.