

I commend Royal Caribbean for their rapid response to this tragedy and the much-needed assistance and aid they have provided. Furthermore, I would like to express my support for their dedication to long-term rebuilding of Haiti.

Although many found it controversial, I believe that Royal Caribbean's decision to continue to dock at Labadee was the right decision. If the cruise line had bypassed Haiti, it would have worsened an already devastating situation. By continuing to bring guests to Labadee, Royal Caribbean kept Haitians working and brought tourist dollars to the country at a time when Haiti's already struggling economy was at a complete stand-still. This commitment to keeping the Haitian economy going is truly admirable.

I thank Royal Caribbean for their exemplary service to the people of Haiti, not simply in providing emergency aid in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, but in their 30 years of work in Haiti and in their commitment to ensuring a sustainable recovery.

#### HONORING CHARLTON BOYD

### HON. JOHN FLEMING

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, March 12, 2010*

Mr. FLEMING. Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate and honor a young student from my district who has achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in his community. Charlton Boyd of Shreveport is today being named one of the top two youth volunteers in Louisiana for 2010, in the 15th annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. This is an extraordinary honor; more than 21,000 young people across the country were considered for state-level recognition in this year's program.

Mr. Charlton Boyd of Shreveport is being recognized for being one of the top two youth volunteers for 2010 by The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, a nationwide program honoring young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism. The awards program, now in its 15th year, is conducted by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals, NASSP.

In light of numerous statistics that indicate Americans today are less involved in their communities than they once were, it's vital that we encourage and support the kind of selfless contribution this young citizen has made. People of all ages need to think more about how we, as individual citizens, can work together at the local level to ensure the health and vitality of our towns and neighborhoods. Young volunteers like Mr. Charlton Boyd are inspiring examples to all of us, and are among our brightest hopes for a better tomorrow.

The program that brought this young role model to our attention—The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards—was created by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals in 1995 to impress upon all youth volunteers that their contributions will inspire other young people to follow their example. Over the past 15 years, the program has become the nation's largest youth recognition effort based solely on community service, and has honored nearly 100,000 young volunteers at the local, state and national level.

Mr. Charlton Boyd should be extremely proud to have been singled out from the thousands of dedicated volunteers who participated in this year's program. I heartily applaud Mr. Charlton Boyd for his initiative in seeking to make his community a better place to live, and for the positive impact he has had on the lives of others. He has demonstrated a level of commitment and accomplishment that is truly extraordinary in today's world, and deserves our sincere admiration and respect. His actions show that young Americans can—and do—play important roles in our communities, and that America's community spirit continues to hold tremendous promise for the future.

#### PERSONAL STATEMENT ON REMOVAL AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2499

### HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, March 12, 2010*

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, I would like the RECORD to reflect my desire to be removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 2499, the Puerto Rico Democracy Act of 2009. Due to H.R. 2499's placement on the Union Calendar, I am unable to officially remove myself from this legislation according to the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives.

#### RECOGNIZING THE 189TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

SPEECH OF

### HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 9, 2010*

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, as a member of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Affairs, I am proud to congratulate the nation of Greece on its upcoming celebration of the 189th anniversary of independence. It's been one hundred and eighty-nine years since Greece obtained freedom from the oppressive Ottoman Empire.

On March 25, 1821, the Greek people rose up against Ottoman oppression and declared their independence. The Greeks had been under occupied rule by the Ottoman Turks for over 400 years. After years of war and negotiations, Greece was finally recognized as an independent nation in 1832.

As the birthplace of democracy, Greece has shared numerous self-government efforts across the world, including here in the United States. America's Founding Fathers were inspired by the political experiences and philosophies of ancient Greece in writing our Constitution and founding our representative democracy. Today, Greece is again a thriving democracy and an example of self-determination for other nations.

Greece has long been one of the United States' closest allies. Greece fought alongside America in every war of the 20th Century and continues to offer strong support in the current war on terrorism.

I am honored to cosponsor H. Res. 1107 which recognizes the 189th anniversary of the independence of Greece and am pleased that

this bill is being considered by the House of Representatives today.

I would again like to congratulate Greece for celebrating such a momentous occasion. This anniversary is a time to remember the sacrifices of the past, to take pride in your nation, and to look ahead to a future of promise.

#### INTRODUCING A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES REGARDING THE POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES ON WILD ANIMALS AT THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA

### HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, March 12, 2010*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the policy of the United States on wild animals at the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

CITES was created in 1973 to regulate international trade in endangered species to ensure that it does not threaten their survival. Launched with a few signatory nations, CITES has now 175 parties that have an international obligation and responsibility to protect our planet's endangered animals and plants. Adherence to these protective measures has proven to have benefited the conservation of animals and plants worldwide.

Unfortunately, more and more species are at risk of extinction and international trade, both legal and illegal, has exacerbated the dangers. International wildlife trade is estimated to be worth billions of dollars a year and to include hundreds of millions of live plants and animals and derived products such as food, leather, fur, ivory, and timber. Such high levels of exploitation of and trade in wild animals and plants, together with other factors such as habitat loss, are capable of bringing some species close to extinction.

Between 1979 and 1989 more than 600,000 African elephants were killed for their ivory, cutting the continent's population in half. Nevertheless, poaching has continued with an estimated 38,000 elephants killed annually and 23.2 tons of poached ivory seized since 2007. As sea ice declines, polar bears will not be able to adapt to a terrestrial-based life resulting in increased mortality, reduced reproduction, increased human-bear conflicts, and overall drastic decline of populations. Bobcats keep being poached for their skins. Several sharks are being severely depleted with declines as high as 99 percent in some areas as a result of the high demand for their fins and meat. Overfishing, increased consumer demand and inadequate enforcement of infractions have led to historically low populations of bluefin tuna.

This month, CITES' signatory nations will meet for the 15th Conference of the Parties to review the status of species in danger of extinction and establish trade restrictions. The