EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

BIPARTISAN CASE FOR NATIONAL SERVICE

HON. TODD RUSSELL PLATTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following.

[From POLITICO, Jan. 17, 2011]

BIPARTISAN CASE FOR NATIONAL SERVICE

(By Eric Tanenblatt)

You wouldn't think that new Republican Govs. Nathan Deal of Georgia and Sam Brownback of Kansas would have much in common with the Democratic governor of Massachusetts, Deval Patrick. But all three have made volunteer ''days of service'' a centerpiece of their inaugurations.

They are asking citizens to join them in feeding the hungry, assisting the jobless and helping their neighbors in a host of other ways. They join a growing number of governors and mayors who are rediscovering the untapped power of citizen service.

These inaugural service events are not ceremonial gestures. They remind us that citizen service crosses all boundaries—and has always been at the heart of what it means to be an American.

America's story is the story of volunteers. Since the early days of our nation, volunteers have helped us meet our greatest challenges: patriots who fought for our founding ideals, women who reached for the ballot, civil rights foot soldiers who risked their lives for equality, firefighters who rushed into burning towers, ordinary citizens who came to the aid of a disaster stricken coast.

Last year, in the middle of the Great Recession, approximately 63.4 million Americans volunteered in some way in their communities—the largest increase since 2003. That's 63.4 million citizens from all backgrounds and walks of life tilting toward problems instead of running away from them.

But America faces tough challenges requiring a new generation of service and service leaders.

National service, as embodied in the three major programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service—AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and Learn and Serve America—engages millions of Americans of all ages and backgrounds in addressing issues of poverty, illiteracy, disasters, public safety, independent living and more throughout the country.

One the crucial ingredient of this federal program's success has been its support across the political spectrum. In fact, in a spirit of bipartisanship rarely seen in Washington these days, it took Sen. Orrin Hatch (R–Utah) and the late Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D–Mass.), working with leaders in the House, just weeks to rally the votes and pass the Serve America Act in 2009.

I am a lifelong Republican—let me give you three reasons why this modest investment in service is consistent with conservative principles and has a powerful catalytic effect on citizen empowerment.

First, national service recognizes that the best solutions come from outside Washington. It invests in citizens to solve problems, tapping the energy and ingenuity of our greatest resource—the American people. In the long run, this is likely to reduce reliance on government.

Second, an investment in national service is a good deal for taxpayers. AmeriCorps was built to be a public-private partnership. It leverages substantial private investment—more than $375 million in non-federal funds each year—to fund such programs as Teach for America and Habitat for Humanity.

Third, while the primary purpose of national service is to get things done for people in need, it has important side benefits. One is the transforming effect it has on those who serve—exposing them to society's problems, bringing people from different races and backgrounds together, empowering them to act and often putting them onto a lifelong path of civic engagement.

The modern service movement is built on these principles, shared by people of every political persuasion and all walks of life.

We salute Deal, Brownback and Patrick for leading the way. We hope that their actions send a signal that will spread and carry forward through this year and beyond.

We can—and should—have a robust debate about the role and size of government. But in the course of that debate, we should recognize that there are important areas, like volunteer service, where we can find common ground.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to have my vote recorded on the House floor during the vote on H.R. 292 on Tuesday, January 18, 2011 because I was detained due to a flight delay caused by mechanical difficulties. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of H.R. 292, Roll No. 12.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING ARIZONA SHOOTING

SPEECH OF

HON. DOC HASTINGS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 12, 2011

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, first and foremost today, my thoughts and prayers are with Congresswoman GIFFORDS, her staff, the other victims of the shooting and their families and friends.

As Members of Congress, it is our duty and our privilege to reach out to our constituents to foster open discussions and exchanges of ideas. It's what makes this institution truly the people's House and it's one of the reasons many of us decided to run for office in the first place. GABBY was doing this work when this senseless tragedy occurred. A lone gunman interrupted a routine Congress on your Corner, killing six and wounding a dozen more, including our colleague GABBY.

At this somber time, I would like to echo the words of Speaker BOEHNER, ''An attack on one who serves is an attack on all who serve.'' We cannot let the actions of one individual challenge one of the most basic tenets of our free society—the right to peaceably assemble. It is worth noting that Congresswoman GIFFORDS read the first amendment to our Constitution here on the House floor just days before this tragic event.

I look forward to the day when Congresswoman GIFFORDS returns to the House floor to continue her work on behalf of the people of the eighth district of Arizona. In the meantime, my thoughts and prayers are with all affected by this unthinkable event.

HONORING RICHARD HOLWICK

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Richard Holwick. Dick will be receiving the 2010 Northlander of the Year award from the Northland Regional Chamber of Commerce for his service to the Kansas City area community.

Dick grew up in the Kansas City area and attended Raytown schools until his family moved north of the river before his senior year of high school. Dick graduated from Oak Park High School and graduated from the University of Missouri–Columbia with a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Accounting. Dick began working for his family's business, Kaw Transport, in 1976, leading it as President from 1982 to 1998, when the company condensed into KTTR and began focusing solely on tanker truck cleaning and maintenance. Dick also showed himself to be a leader for the business community, having served as Chairman for the Northland Redevelopment Corporation, the Clay County Economic Development Council and the Northland Regional Chamber of Commerce during times of great economic boon for the Northland. Dick was instrumental in the design and construction of the new Christopher S. Bond Bridge over the Missouri River, providing the Northland with greater and more efficient access to Downtown Kansas City. Dick, ever cognizant of his roots, has also given back to his community by serving as the President of the Liberty Sertoma Club and as a Board Member for the Northland Salvation Army.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me, his wife Annie, their children Lindsey, Angela, Evan and Bryan and their grandchildren Austin and Grace in commending Richard Holwick for his efforts to better Clay and Platte Counties and the surrounding communities.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING ARIZONA SHOOTING

SPEECH OF

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 12, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I concur in the expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the tragic shooting in Tucson, Arizona on January 8, 2011.

Like all Americans, on Saturday morning I was saddened and sick to my stomach when I watched the horrible attack against my colleague Congresswoman GIFFORDS, known as GABBY to me, her staff, her constituents and to all Americans.

We now know, on January 7, Congresswoman GIFFORDS reached out and sought ''new ways to reduce the highly partisan divisive tone that all too often dominates our public discourse.'' Today I am going to do exactly that: not in words of criticism, but thoughts of observation and desire to help.

For law makers whether federal, state or local . . . This tragic incident must make us re-evaluate our spending priorities and accept the fact that our continued failure to provide adequate funding for mental illnesses is a mistake.

For the agencies, whether they be educational, military, or private vendors/businesses . . . we must be diligent in connecting the dots, doing the extra work, taking the time to think out of the box, stop working in silos and to insist on utilizing technology for good like the real time utilization of information.

For the parents, whether your child, who will always be your child regardless of their age, should not be allowed under our own roofs to turn their rooms, garages or backyards to a private area one fails to tread.

For protectors and preservers of the law, it is not okay to tell me there is nothing wrong with someone sending a hate e-mail saying, ''I'm concerned it's time for a good old fashioned lynching/tar and feather.''

For those who debate and protest, it is not okay to spit, say racial slurs, to say reload or to arm in reference to a debate; neither is it okay to say a group other than yourself is a Neanderthal and they want people to die quickly.

For our court, even in 1919 and 1931 in the cases of Schenk v. United States and Near v. Minnesota, had the wisdom to know ''the most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theatre and causing a panic.''

Tell me how anyone, any court, or any legislative body could justify a man carrying a AR 15 rifle and a pistol, feet not miles from where our president was speaking that . . . That was not right in August 2009, last Saturday, today, or tomorrow.

And now for those of us, we turn to this resolution on the floor today, page 4, sections (7–8) the resolution references:

Right of the people peaceably to assemble,

All can participate without being silenced with intimidation,

And threats of violence.

I have watched right here in this room and on these grounds, leaders not fulfilling this words of ''peaceable assembly free of intimidation.''

We too must not just react, but now is the time to act. Not just in legislation but in what Congresswoman GIFFORDS asked us to do: ''reduce the divisive tone.'' Maybe if we start as leaders, others will follow.

I express condolences to the families of those who lost their lives, I pray for strength for those who survived and have long roads to recovery, and I commit to do work on this issue and how I work with you my colleagues. As Representative GIFFORDS' husband holds her hand as she heals, I am ready for her to return to hold her hand as we as a country heal as well.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING ARIZONA SHOOTING

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 12, 2011

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to join my colleagues in support of H. Res. 32, a resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the tragic shooting in Tucson, Arizona, on January 8, 2011. My thoughts and prayers go out to those who were lost: Christina Taylor Green, Dorothy Morris, John Roll, Phyllis Schneck, Dorwan Stoddard, and Gabriel Zimmerman, and to their friends and families and all those in the community whose lives they touched. Words can not begin to express my sorrow about their passing. I am also praying for a full and quick recovery for those 14 individuals who were injured, including my good friend and colleague, Representative GABRIELLE GIFFORDS.

On Saturday morning, GABBY was out in her community, as she often was, hosting a meeting with constituents and providing an opportunity for them to ask questions and express concerns in an open and free environment. It is this proximity to the people we represent that we most cherish as Members of the House of Representatives. My number one priority, which I'm sure is shared by all of my colleagues, is to be accessible and available to the families and communities in my district. While we may never understand the motive or reasoning behind the violent event on that day, it felt to many like an attack on all of us, our democracy, and on the freedoms that we work to protect each day as elected officials. As so many Americans have done throughout our history, bystanders became heroes and their actions prevented an even worse catastrophe. I am thankful for their quick actions and grateful to our entire nation for standing together as one community in support of the people of Tucson and speaking with one voice that this senseless act of violence has no place in a civilized democracy.

GABBY's passion for public service is unmatched, and this is clearly evident in her work ethic on the House Armed Services Committee, where we both serve. I greatly admire her ability to be a tough advocate for her district, while always looking for ways to reach across regional, partisan, or ideological boundaries to find common ground to move forward on an important issue. She is always warm, personable and professional, and she stands strongly and passionately for what she believes in and what she believes is best for her constituents in Arizona. Last week, when we spoke on the House floor, she discussed her desire for the House to quickly consider legislation to create more jobs in our districts. Even after an exhausting election cycle, she never broke her focus and was ready to move forward on day one to get our economy back on track.

My life changed forever at the age of 16 after an accident that left me paralyzed. I wondered what life could possibly have in store for me next. Yet as I lay in my hospital bed, I was overwhelmed with the outpouring of support from my friends, family and neighbors. Along with my faith, which pulled me through one of the darkest times in my life, it was also the generosity and concern from my community that ultimately made me want to give back through a career in public service. I want to share this strength with those who are injured now and fighting to recover, and let them know that many wonderful possibilities lie ahead.

Next week, we will continue our work, the work of the people, but I am grateful for this opportunity to pause and reflect on this national tragedy. Madam Speaker, thank you for bringing forward this resolution and for allowing all Members of the House to express their condolences to those who were lost and support to our friend, Representative GIFFORDS, her staff, and all of those in Tucson and across the nation as we begin to heal together from this tragic event.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I missed a vote yesterday, and I wish to state how I would have voted had I been present: rollcall No. 12, ''yes.''

HONORING GALVESTON BUSINESSES

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, on February 3, the Galveston Chamber of Commerce will hold its 165th annual meeting. Established by the Ninth Congress of the Republic of Texas in 1845, making it the oldest chamber of commerce in Texas, the Galveston Chamber of Commerce works to promote and advocate for the business community of Galveston.

At the February 3rd meeting, the Galveston Chamber of Commerce will honor several dedicated volunteers for their years of service to the Galveston community. Among their other accomplishments, all of this year's honorees' are past Chairs of the Galveston Chamber of Commerce. These honorees all remain involved with the Galveston Chamber of Commerce by, among other activities, serving on a new committee of Past Chairs.

Galveston Chamber of Commerce President Gina Spagnola, said the Past Chairs Committee was created because ''The Past Chairs

are such an integral part of the Chamber's history. The purpose in forming this committee was to sustain a strong partnership with the Past Chairs by engaging in dialog about the Chamber's history and its future.''

Mr. Speaker, it is a tremendous pleasure to join my friends at the Galveston Chamber of Commerce in saluting these past chairs for their years of service to the people of Galveston. I am truly honored to serve as their representative and hope all my colleagues all join me in congratulating these outstanding leaders. Those being honored on February 3 include: Vandy Anderson, Armin Cantini, Carolyn Clyburn, Gene Curry, Henry Freudenburg, Don Gartman, Greg Harrington, Garry Kaufman, Betty Massey, Jerry Mohn, Richard Moore, Roger ''Bo'' Quiroga, Dr. Ben Raimer, Bix Rathburn, Betty Schocke, Johnny Smecca, Marshall Stein, John Tindel, Lee Otis ''Otie'' Zapp, Jr.

BLACK JANUARY

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, as the co-chairman of the Congressional Azerbaijan Caucus, I rise today to join with the people of Azerbaijan to commemorate the tragic events of ''Black January.''

On January 19, 1990, approximately 26,000 Soviet troops stormed Azerbaijan's capital city of Baku in tanks and armored vehicles. That night, the Soviet military bulldozed innocent Azeris and opened indiscriminate fire on peaceful demonstrators, including women and children. According to Azerbaijani sources, as a result of these merciless acts 131 people were killed, 611 were injured, 841 were arrested, and 5 went missing.

The Human Rights Watch report ''Black January in Azerbaijan'' states that ''among the most heinous violations of human rights during the Baku incursion were the numerous attacks on medical personnel, ambulances, and even hospitals.'' The report concludes that the violence used by the Soviet Army constituted an exercise in collective punishment and that the punishment inflicted on Baku by Soviet soldiers may have been intended as a warning to nationalists, not only in Azerbaijan, but in other Republics of the Soviet Union.

Far from crushing the spirit of Azeris, the atrocities of Black January instead consolidated the rising independence movements in the country and united the Azerbaijani nation in its quest for freedom. Today, Azerbaijan is a critical and strategic ally of the United States and is preparing to celebrate 20 years of independence from the Soviet Union.

It is my honor to thank the Azerbaijani people for their friendship and to offer my thoughts and prayers to the families of those who gave their lives for the independence of Azerbaijan. I encourage my colleagues to visit the very moving memorial to Black January in Baku that honors the memories of those killed in these attacks by the Soviet military and to join with me today in standing with Azerbaijanis as they commemorate this tragedy.

HONORING CALIFORNIA STATE SENATOR PATRICIA WIGGINS

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my long-time friend, California State Senator Patricia Wiggins, who recently retired after a long and effective career in public service. From her first years in Sonoma County politics in the 1980s through her terms in the California legislature as an Assemblymember and a Senator, Pat Wiggins was a leader of vision and compassion.

Born and raised in Southern California, Pat grew up in a labor household and, with her father's training, was an accomplished parachutist. At the age of 38, she became the first in her family to graduate from college, earning an English degree with honors from UCLA. She worked as a systems analyst and, in 1979, met a software engineer, Guy Conner, her future husband. They have two stepsons, Jim and Steve Silverman, and four grandchildren.

Wiggins' first political job was with the Nuclear Freeze in 1982. After the couple moved to Santa Rosa, California, in 1984, she worked on several political campaigns and eventually became involved in local land use issues when trail access to Annadel State Park was threatened by development. She was a leader in Santa Rosa's growing liberal environmentalism, and an activist in supporting women and women's issues. In 1994, she was elected to the Santa Rosa City Council.

In 1998, she was elected to the California Assembly and in 2006 to the California Senate. As a State legislator, Pat continued to demonstrate leadership in environmental and social issues. In the Assembly she founded the legislature's Smart Growth Caucus and authored laws on land use planning and compact development (including social equity). In the Senate, she focused on a broad range of issues including agriculture, youth employment, land use, political reform, health care, veterans' affairs, waste reduction, working families, and education. In 2008, she had the most bills approved by the legislature and the most signed into law of anyone in the California legislature.

Guy Conner, her husband and political partner for many years, describes Pat Wiggins as ''the finest grass roots politician'' he has ever known. She inspired many of us in Sonoma County by demonstrating how a leader works collaboratively for an impressive record of accomplishments while maintaining a commitment to progressive values.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Senator Patricia Wiggins on her many successful years in public service and wish her luck in her retirement. Her voice will be missed in Sacramento.

HONORING JEREMY PHILLIP THON

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jeremy Phillip Thon. Jeremy 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 376, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jeremy has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jeremy has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, Jeremy has earned the rank of Firebuilder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say and became an Ordeal Member of the Order of the Arrow. Jeremy has also contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project. Jeremy designed and supervised the construction of a handicap-accessible deer blind and nature viewing stand at Smithville Lake, Missouri.

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

HONORING THE YAHRZEIT OF BETH SHARON SAMUELS

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the fourth anniversary of the passing of Beth Sharon Samuels, an extraordinary Angeleno who lost her life to cancer in January 2007 at the age of 31.

Beth grew up in Los Angeles, attending the Yeshiva University High School of Los Angeles and graduating as valedictorian. She went on to study at a women's seminary in Israel before graduating from Columbia University with a degree in mathematics. She then completed a three-year program at the Drisha Institute in Bible and Talmud, a Ph.D. in math at Yale, and earned an assistant professorship at the University of California, Berkeley. In the meantime, she gave birth to a daughter, Danelle, and later to daughter Natalia while undergoing intensive chemotherapy treatments.

Beth remains with us, even with increasing distance from her passing. Last year, Beth's friends and family published The Wisdom of Bat Sheva: The Dr. Beth Samuels Memorial Volume, a series of lectures and discussions on Torah learning, including an essay by Beth. The book highlights that Beth's spirit continues to teach and inspire. Beth was such a powerful force of spirituality, learning, and divine presence, and her memory will continue to serve as a powerful blessing.

My condolences go out to her parents, Elana and Zachary, her husband, Ari, her daughters Danelle and Natalia and her extended friends and family on this solemn occasion.

HONORING GROUND ZERO FIRST RESPONDER AND FIREFIGHTER WILLIAM QUICK

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Mr. William Henry Quick, a retired firefighter who worked for two months at Ground Zero and who passed away of lung disease on Tuesday, January 18, 2011 at the age of 55. Mr. Quick worked for Ladder 134 in Far Rockaway, Queens, and lived on Long Island.

Mr. Quick worked for the FDNY for almost half of his life and did not hesitate to leave his vacation and rush to Ground Zero after the 9/11 attacks. He worked there from September 12, 2001 and only stopped two months later when he hurt his knee while working through the rubble. He returned to work in January of 2002 but developed a series of lung infections, which ultimately forced his retirement in January of 2003.

Mr. Quick is a hero in every sense of the word. He worked at Ground Zero without questioning the risks to his own health. He spent his whole adult life in public service working for the FDNY. He leaves behind his wife, Lisa, and twin 17-year-olds Ryan Mary and William Henry II. I grieve for them and want them to know that their sacrifice will not be forgotten.

RECOGNIZING THE UC DAVIS LEED PLATINUM-CERTIFIED RESEARCH AND TEACHING WINERY AND THE AUGUST A. BUSCH III BREWING AND FOOD SCIENCE LABORATORY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the University of California, Davis, on the occasion of the grand opening of its world-class, LEED Platinum-certified research and teaching facility focused on food science, wine, and brewing.

Among its distinctions, UC Davis is the world's leading research and teaching center for agriculture, food science, and viticulture and enology. UC Davis research and teaching has developed an international reputation and strength in agriculture, and food, dairy, and wine production.

With the LEED Platinum brewery, winery, and food-processing laboratories, the Robert Mondavi Institute for Wine and Food Science at UC Davis fosters a new era of opportunity and environmentally sustainable economic development. This new complex will be self-sufficient in energy and water use, and contains numerous environmentally friendly features such as onsite solar power generation, and carbon dioxide capture. New food-processing, wine-making, and brewing laboratories will test production processes that conserve water, energy, and other natural resources.

Two of the Nation's leading academic departments related to food and beverage science are situated at the Robert Mondavi Institute at UC Davis. The Department of Viticulture and Enology and the Department of Food Science and Technology will utilize the new state-of-the-art research and teaching facility.

Within the UC Davis College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, the Department of Viticulture and Enology has been the creator of grape-growing and wine-making knowledge that enabled the growth and success of today's wine industry, and has placed California and the Nation among the global leaders in wine production and quality. Wine industry leaders rely upon the department's research, expertise, and counsel.

Likewise, the Department of Food Science and Technology is internationally recognized for its advances in making food and beverages more nutritious, appealing, affordable, and safe. It is the only such department within the University of California and is the state of California's principal academic food science research group.

Technologies developed at UC Davis have been instrumental in making high-quality food and beverage products that feed the nation—including dairy, seafood, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and beer. Food safety research has helped identify and eliminate contamination in handling and processing. Research on nutrients, antioxidants, and other food components are helping create more healthful foods for California and the world. Graduates of the university's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences are highly sought after nationally in the food processing, wine-making, and brewing industries. Its graduates form the foundation on which food and agricultural industries have developed, grown, and flourished.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, on the occasion of the grand opening of the UC Davis Research and Teaching Winery and the Anhenser A. Busch III Brewing and Food Science Laboratory, let us recognize UC Davis for its leadership and dedication to excellence in the area of the food, wine and brewing sciences. Please join me in commending the University of California, Davis, for its service to the people of California and the Nation.

HONORING THE BANGOR REGION CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce as it celebrates its Centennial.

Founded in 1911, the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce is one of the oldest such groups in the State of Maine. Originally founded as a merchant's association, the chamber assisted in developing trade relationships within the city. In the late 1980s, the merchant's association became regionally focused on the business interests of its increasingly diverse membership body. The organization today has continued to grow into one of the largest in the State, representing businesses from 21 communities in the greater Bangor area.

As a cornerstone of the Bangor community, the chamber is active in business development, advocacy efforts and community betterment programs. These programs seek out emerging business leaders, helping them foster networks to promote growth and working to empower entrepreneurs to create opportunities in these tough economic times. Additionally, the chamber sponsored seminars and leadership development trainings continue to have a major positive impact in the community.

As Americans continue working to get back up on their feet after the worst economic recession since the 1930s, the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce stands as a shining example of what community members coming together can accomplish. For 100 years they have led the greater Bangor community in promoting a favorable business environment conducive to generating economic growth and prosperity. I wish them the very best as they continue serving Bangor, the State of Maine and the United States of America .

Mr. Speaker, please join me again in congratulating the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce on this joyous occasion.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, due to weather-related travel delays, I was absent from the House Floor during last night's rollcall vote on H.R. 292.

Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of that legislation.

IN COMMEMORATION OF USAT ''DORCHESTER''

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the brave individuals of the United States Army Transport *Dorchester.* While participating in a naval transport, on February 3, 1943, USAT *Dorchester* was attacked, sending 676 men to their graves in the icy waters of the Atlantic Ocean. On January 23, 2011, the Middletown VFW Post #2179 and Ladies Auxiliary will gather to commemorate the brave individuals who lost their lives on this tragic day. The honorable actions of the World War II soldiers are undoubtedly deserving of this body's recognition.

Previously a luxury coastal liner, the USAT *Dorchester* was converted into an Army transport ship and immediately called up for service in World War II. Departing from St. John's, Newfoundland on February 2, 1943, the *Dorchester* was filled to capacity, carrying 902 service men, merchant seamen and civilian workers on their way to an American base in Greenland. The ship's captain, Hans J. Danielson, was aware of the dangerous mission as he instructed the ship's crew to sleep in their clothing and life jackets. Traveling through the treacherous and chilly Atlantic Ocean waters, the USAT *Dorchester* was spotted on the morning of February 3, 1943 by a German submarine. Torpedoes were soon fired, striking the starboard side of the ship. The attack

quickly eliminated all power and radio contact with nearby coast guard escort ships. The attack violently awoke soldiers, killing scores of men and injuring many others. Despite the panic and chaos, four chaplains, George Fox, Alexander Goode, Clark Poling and John Washington, immediately jumped into action, calming frantic soldiers and tending to the wounded. They swiftly began opening storage lockers, distributing life jackets. With an insufficient amount of supplies, the four chaplains removed their lifejackets and distributed them to others. Their decisive and heroic actions assisted in the swift survival of 229 men. Along with 672 other men, the four chaplains tragically lost their lives while assisting others as the USAT *Dorchester* slowly sank into the Atlantic Ocean.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in commemorating the USAT *Dorchester*, as the members of the Middletown VFW Post #2179 and Ladies Auxiliary honor the lives of the four heroic chaplains and the other 672 men who lost their lives aboard this transport ship on February 3, 1943. The soldier's gallant actions and resilient efforts aboard the USAT *Dorchester* are positive examples of what dedication and commitment to their comrades and their love for their country can accomplish.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2011 12TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, every year, more high school seniors from the 11th Congressional District trade in varsity jackets for Navy pea coats, Air Force flight suits, and Army brass buckles than most other districts in the country. But this is nothing new—our area has repeatedly sent an above average portion of its sons and daughters to our nation's military academies for decades.

This fact should not come as a surprise. The educational excellence of area schools is well known and has long been a magnet for families looking for the best environment in which to raise their children. Our graduates are skilled not only in mathematics, science, and social studies, but also have solid backgrounds in sports, debate teams, and other extracurricular activities. This diverse upbringing makes military academy recruiters sit up and take note—indeed, many recruiters know our towns and schools by name.

Since the 1830's, Members of Congress have enjoyed meeting, talking with, and nominating these superb young people to our military academies. But how did this process evolve? In 1843, when West Point was the sole academy, Congress ratified the nominating process and became directly involved in the makeup of our military's leadership. This was not an act of an imperial Congress bent on controlling every aspect of Government. Rather, the procedure still used today was, and is, a further check and balance in our democracy. It was originally designed to weaken and divide political coloration in the officer corps, provide geographical balance to our armed services, and to make the officer corps more resilient to unfettered nepotism and handicapped European armies.

In 1854, Representative Gerritt Smith of New York added a new component to the academy nomination process—the academy review board. This was the first time a Member of Congress appointed prominent citizens from his district to screen applicants and assist with the serious duty of nominating candidates for academy admission. Today, I am honored to continue this wise tradition in my service to the 11th Congressional District.

My Academy Review Board is composed of six local citizens who have shown exemplary service to New Jersey, to their communities, and to the continued excellence of education in our area-many are veterans. Though from diverse backgrounds and professions, they all share a common dedication that the best qualified and motivated graduates attend our academies. And, as true for most volunteer panels, their service goes largely unnoticed.

I would like to take a moment to recognize these men and women and thank them publicly for participating in this important panel. Being on the board requires hard work and an objective mind. Members have the responsibility of interviewing upwards of 50 outstanding high school seniors every year in the academy review process.

The nomination process follows a general timetable. High school seniors mail personal information directly to the Military Academy, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, and the Merchant Marine Academy once they become interested in attending. Information includes academic achievement, college entry test scores, and other activities. At this time, they also inform my office of their desire to be nominated.

The academies then assess the applicants, rank them based on the data supplied, and return the files to my office with their notations. In late November, our Academy Review Board interviews all of the applicants over the course of 2 days. They assess a student's qualifications and analyze character, desire to serve, and other talents that may be hidden on paper.

As these highly motivated and talented young men and women go through the academy nominating process, never let us forget the sacrifice they are preparing to make: to defend our country and protect our citizens. This holds especially true at a time when our nation is fighting the war against terrorism. Whether it is in Afghanistan, Iraq, or other hot spots around the world, no doubt we are constantly reminded that wars are fought by the young. And, while our military missions are both important and dangerous, it is reassuring to know that we continue to put America's best and brightest in command.

ACADEMY NOMINEES FOR 2011 12TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT NEW JERSEY

AIR FORCE ACADEMY

Erin Crow, Livingston, Tabb H.S., Yorktown, VA

Beau Langdon, Livingston, Livingston H.S.

Brian Moscioni, Mendham, Gill St. Bernard's School

Alexander Gilbert, Long Valley, West Morris Central H.S.

Menachem Felzenberg, Morristown, Homeschooled, West Point, NY

Alan Sayil, East Hanover, Hanover Park H.S.

Nicholas Longhi, Succasunna, Seton Hall Prep

MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY

Michael Francis, Somerville, Immaculata H.S.

Sean Ryan, Madison, St. Peter's Prep

David DelCorso, Bridgewater, Seton Hall Prep

Jason Kratsch, Caldwell, James Caldwell H.S.

Thomas Healy, Byram, Pope John XXIII H.S.

Michael O'Rourke, Boonton, Boonton H.S.

Caitlyn Hughes, Randolph, Randolph H.S.

Antonio Amavisca, Bridgewater, Bridgewater-Raritan H.S.

Alexander Rodgers, Hopatcong, Jefferson H.S.

Sean Kenney, Boonton, Pope John XXIII H.S.

MILITARY ACADEMY

Delphine Slotten, Mendham, Newark Academy

Benjamin Minden, Roseland, West Essex H.S.

Swatii Amin, Dover, Morris Knolls H.S.

Jared Percevault, Landing, Roxbury H.S.

Joseph Boyland, Chester, West Morris Mendham H.S.

William Boccard, East Hanover, Regis H.S.

Julianne Steurer, Morris Plains, Parsippany Hills H.S.

Benjamin Reibman, Chatham, Chatham H.S.

Kera Pezzuti, Montville, Montville H.S.

Michael Lami, Madison, Madison H.S.

Sergio Jimenez, Hopatcong, MAPS

NAVAL ACADEMY

Charles Boles, Chatham, Chatham H.S.

Maria Minor, Kinnelon, Kinnelon H.S.

Clayton Petty, Mendham, West Morris Mendham H.S.

Matthew Infante, Chester, Delbarton School

Benjamin Drill, West Caldwell, Solomon Schechter Day School

Daren Schenk, Pine Brook, Montville H.S.

Caleb DeMoss, Chester, West Morris Mendham H.S.

Connor Maguire, Budd Lake, Mt. Olive H.S.

Thomas Morreale, Short Hills, Millburn H.S.

Patrick Ennis, Chatham, Chatham H.S.

Thomas Mahala, Bernards, Seton Hall Prep

HONORING PAT O'BRIEN

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleagues Congressman JOHN GARAMENDI, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, Congressman JERRY MCNERNEY, and Congressman PETE STARK to recognize East Bay Regional Park District General Manager Pat O'Brien and congratulate him as he approaches his well-earned retirement.

Mr. O'Brien's career in public service demonstrates his lifelong commitment to the citizens and communities of the East Bay. We are grateful to him for his service to our constituents.

Mr. O'Brien held his first park and recreation job at the age of 13, giving swimming lessons and performing maintenance at a local salt water swimming club. After serving in the U.S. Army, he came back to California where he worked at Southgate Recreation and Park District in the Sacramento area. From 1980 to 1988, he served as Southgate's general manager prior to taking on the same position with the East Bay Regional Park District.

For the past 22 years, he has guided the largest regional park agency in the United

States, with nearly 108,000 acres of parklands spread across 65 regional parks and over 1,100 miles of trails in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Approximately 14 million visitors a year from throughout the San Francisco Bay area and beyond take advantage of the vast and diverse District parklands and trails.

During his tenure, the district has acquired over 40,000 acres of new parklands, adding 17 new parks, doubling the size of 12 existing regional parks, and adding more than 200 miles of new regional trails. He has attracted more than $105 million in matching funds—including this year's historic $10.2 million Tiger II award. He has successfully secured stable funding through ballot measures and by creating assessment districts, and refinanced existing district bonds at lower rates, saving taxpayers over $14 million. Every community in the East Bay has received at least one park, recreation or community center project funded through his efforts.

His dedication to serving the public through the parks and recreation procession is the legacy he will leave behind. His career has been guided by the desire to make substantive contributions to society and to people's lives. His firm leadership has helped to preserve the priceless heritage of our region's natural and cultural resources—open space, parks and trails—and to set aside park areas for enjoyment and healthful recreation for current and future generations.

Mr. Speaker, we invite our colleagues to join us in honoring General Manager Pat O'Brien for his dedicated service to the people of California and the Bay Area. We are pleased to join with his family, colleagues, and friends in congratulating Pat on a long and highly successful career and wish him a happy and healthy retirement.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BUDGET AUTONOMY ACT OF 2011

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, next to voting rights, the highest priority for District of Columbia residents is to achieve the right to control the funds they themselves raise to support their city, as resident in other jurisdictions do. Therefore, today I introduce a bill, the District of Columbia Budget Autonomy Act of 2011, to allow the District's local taxpayer-raised budget to take effect immediately when passed by the city, without being subject to affirmative congressional approval.

Control over the dollars raised by local taxpayers is central to local control, the oldest American principle. Moreover, permitting the city's local budget to become law without first coming to Congress would have multiple practical benefits for both the city and Congress. For the city, a timely budget means: eliminating the uncertainty of the congressional approval process, which has a negative effect on the city's bond rating, adding unnecessary interest costs for local taxpayers; significantly increasing the District's ability to make accurate revenue forecasts; and reducing the countless operational problems that result because the city's budget cannot be implemented until Congress approves it. Of major importance, eliminating congressional approval of D.C.'s local budget would also align the District's fiscal year with the typical state and local government July 1st fiscal year instead of the congressional fiscal year, which starts in October, allowing ample time to prepare for the usual opening of schools in September. The D.C. local budget consumes valuable subcommittee, committee, and congressional floor time in both houses of Congress even though it is of interest only to those members who use it to promote their own issues, violating the principle of local self-government.

Increasing recognition of the hardships and delays caused by the annual appropriations process has led Congress to begin freeing the city. When I was last in the minority, I negotiated an agreement with the appropriators that has ensured that the city's local budget is always included in the first continuing resolution, if it is not approved by the start of the fiscal year. This approach has ended the lengthy delay of the budget of a big city until an appropriations bill is passed, often months after October 1st. As a result, the city has been able to spend its local funds at the next year's level, even though the budgets for federal agencies are often delayed for months. We hope that this process, which ended some serious problems in the functioning of the local government, will continue.

We nearly secured budget autonomy for the District in the last days of the lame duck session last Congress. I used an unusual procedure, getting subcommittee and committee authorizers to agree to place budget autonomy in the D.C. appropriations bill that was passed by the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government. Unfortunately, Congress passed a Continuing Resolution instead of regular appropriations bills.

If the District of Columbia Budget Autonomy Act is enacted, Congress would retain jurisdiction over the District of Columbia under article I, section 8, clause 17 of the U.S. Constitution. Because this authority allows Congress to make changes in the District's budget and laws at anytime, it is unnecessary to require a lengthy repetition of the District's budget process here. The time is overdue to permit the city to enact its local budget, the single most important step Congress could take to help the District better manage itself.

Members of Congress were sent here to do the business of the nation. Members have no reason to be interested in or to become knowledgeable about the local budget of a single city. In the past, the House and Senate have more often than not passed the District's budget as is. Our bill takes the Congress in the direction it is already moving. Congressional interference into one of the most vital rights to self-government should end this year with enactment of the District of Columbia Budget Autonomy Act of 2011.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 12, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

VAN WEZEL PERFORMING ARTS HALL

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the accomplishments of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall's education programs and the work of the Van Wezel Foundation in support of arts education.

I also recognize Mary Bensel, Executive Director of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall in Sarasota, Florida for her service in support of the educational programs and community engagement activities of the Van Wezel.

The mission of the Van Wezel Foundation is to enrich the Gulf Coast community, with an emphasis on children, through the performing arts while supporting the needs of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall.

The arts education and community engagement programs of the Van Wezel are celebrating their fourteenth year, are nationally known, and are a major factor in the integration of arts education within our region's schools.

Each year tens of thousands of students, educators and lifelong learners from four counties are introduced to national performing arts programming through the support of the Van Wezel Foundation.

Annually, over 23,000 students from DeSoto, Charlotte, Manatee and Sarasota County Schools attend the School-time performances conducted by the Van Wezel and supported by the Foundation.

Each year the Van Wezel, in collaboration with the Kennedy Center and local school districts provide specialized workshops to train teachers of science, math, history, social studies and literacy on ways to use the arts to enhance the presentation of their subject materials.

The Van Wezel is affiliated with the Partners in Education Program of the Kennedy Center and is one of the only projects nationally that has conducted a longitudinal study on the impact of integrative arts education on student learning and achievement. It is the only Kennedy partner in the country to have received seven national research grants on the impact of the arts and education programs within county schools.

Furthermore, the Van Wezel Education Department and the Manatee County schools are in the second year of Project Stage, a project funded through a U.S. Department of Education three year grant to increase literacy in elementary schools.

Under the leadership of Mary Bensel, the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall and the Van Wezel Foundation have made a remarkable contribution to the cultural life of our community and education of our children.

DR. WILLIAM HALE

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Dr. William Hale. Dr. Hale

began his service in the medical field as an Army medic during World War II. After leaving the Army, he studied at the University of West Virginia, the University of Florida, and then received his doctor of medicine degree from the Medical College of Virginia.

He served his patients with compassion and care in the Tampa Bay area as an internist at Mease Hospital, and after just 8 years he was elected to lead the medical staff.

Dr. Hale was a proactive practitioner, realizing and emphasizing the importance of preventative health care in the community. After retiring from active practice, Dr. Hale founded the Dunedin Hypertension Screening Program in 1975 to screen elderly patients for medical disorders. His program garnered attention from his colleagues throughout the world and took root on a state level as the Florida Geriatric Research Program.

Dr. Hale was much more than just an excellent and innovative physician. Those who know him point to his caring nature. He was quick to help those who needed it the most, be it handicapped children, someone undergoing a difficult time in life, or arming the public with information on how to be healthier. He saw the needs of others and selflessly gave of himself so that they could live better.

Mr. Speaker, the Tampa Bay area was so blessed to have Dr. Hale's talent and graces. May his spirit always live on in the hearts of those he touched.

CONGRATULATING THE SHELTON VIKINGS MIDGET AND PEE WEE CHEERLEADERS ON THEIR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to the Shelton Vikings Midget and Pee Wee Cheerleading squads who captured the National Championship titles in their divisions at the Pop Warner National Competition which was held last month in Buena Vista, Florida. This is a remarkable accomplishment for these young girls and we could not be more proud of them!

The Viking Midget Cheerleading squad is a group of thirteen and fourteen year old girls who have been cheering together since age seven. The Pee Wee team is made up of ten to twelve year old girls. During this past season, each of these squads have won the titles of Southern Connecticut Champions, Connecticut State Champions, New England Qualifier Champions and New England Regional Champions. In their first ever trip to the National Championships, the Midget Cheerleading squad competed against nineteen other squads from across the country to take home the title and the Pee Wee squad competed against eight other teams to do the same. These are the first ever National titles for Shelton and, for the Midget squad, it is even more meaningful because it was the last year that they will be eligible to compete in the Pop Warner Cheerleading league.

These girls are an extraordinarily talented group who have dedicated countless hours to practice and competition. Cheerleading, like so many other sports, requires perseverance, training, coordination, and above all teamwork—all skills that will continue to serve these young women well throughout their lives. Their success at the National Championships is a testament to all of their hard work.

I would also like to take a moment to extend a special note of thanks and appreciation to the coaches, parents, and volunteers whose support has enabled the girls to practice and travel for their competitions. Without their efforts, the success of the Vikings Cheerleaders would not be possible.

I am thrilled to join the Shelton community in extending my sincere congratulations and very best wishes to the Shelton Vikings Midget and Pee Wee Cheerleaders—2010 Pop Warner National Champions. You have made us all proud!

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES SUMNER, BORN JANUARY 6, 1811

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Charles Sumner and I join with many of my constituents in celebrating the bicentennial of his birth, January 6, 2011. Commemorations are sponsored by the Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters National Site, the Boston African American National Historic Site, the Museum of African American History, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and other learned societies and civic groups.

Charles Sumner was born in Boston and educated at Boston Latin School, Harvard College and Harvard Law School. Like many educated Bostonians of his time, he was interested in events in Europe, where he travelled extensively between 1837 and 1840. Later, he and his friend Henry Wadsworth Longfellow would compare slaveholders in the American south to aristocrats whose privileges were swept away by revolution on the continent. Sumner returned to help found the Free Soil Party but he did not succeed in election to this House in 1848. He was elected to the Senate two years later on the Free Soil Ticket. In 1856, Sumner, who refused to compromise on the issue of slavery, was savagely beaten on the floor of the Senate. Interests might be conciliated but about rights he was adamant. Massachusetts re-elected him, as a Republican, while his recovery was still in doubt, so that his empty seat would serve as a reproach to slave-holders. He returned to serve until his death in 1874.

I am grateful to John Stauffer, chair of the History of American Civilization and professor of English and African and African American Studies at Harvard University, for suggesting Ralph Waldo Emerson's tribute: Sumner's moral instinct and character are so exceptionally pure that he must have perpetual magnetism for honest men; his ability and working energy such, that every good friend of the Republic must stand by him.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on January 18, 2011, I missed rollcall vote 12. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" or "aye."

TRIBUTE TO ARIEL B. WALDMAN

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, for myself and Mr. GOODLATTE, as the Chair and Ranking Member respectively of the Committee on the Judiciary's Task Force on Judicial Impeachment in the previous Congress, we would like to take this opportunity to recognize Arid B. Waldman who recently left the House to take a position with the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia. Mr. Waldman served in the Office of the General Counsel for 18 months as an Assistant Counsel. We will miss him.

Mr. Waldman provided important legal advice and representation to the Committee and Task Force, particularly in connection with federal court litigation that arose out of an impeachment investigation and proceeding involving a federal judge from Louisiana. We and our respective staffs relied on his expertise and judgment to prepare legal pleadings and briefs, which ably and effectively defended the Task Force's ability to conduct its inquiry, and which resulted in rulings favorable to the Committee and Task Force in each instance.

Mr. Waldman served the House with distinction, and we know he will serve the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia with that same level of distinction. We thank him for his service to the House and extend to him our very best wishes for his continued success.

STOP THE OVERPRINTING (STOP) ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few minutes today to discuss the continued need in Congress for reduced administrative spending and increased accountability to the American people.

In a time when we are keenly aware of the need for civility and cooperation in order to improve the American quality of life, I believe there is at least one thing both Democrats and Republicans can agree on and which should be the springboard towards meaningful change.

This belief is that the federal government has an obligation to the American people to be stewards of their hard-earned taxpayer dollars by operating in an efficient manner and to reduce spending whenever possible.

For this reason, I support bills like H.R. 292, the Stop the OverPrinting Act, which will help eliminate the wasteful production of unnecessary copies of bills and resolutions in Congress.

The STOP Act will not only do its part for the environment by reducing Congress' paper consumption, but it will also take a step, even if just a small one, towards more efficient operations, increased accountability and reduced government spending. As we are all aware in this economy, every little bit helps.

The STOP Act was introduced by my colleague from across the aisle, the honorable gentleman from New York, CHRISTOPHER LEE. I am happy to stand in bipartisan support and know that there will be many opportunities in the future to find common ground and remain accountable to the hard working citizens we represent.

In fact, I would like to mention one such opportunity I offered during the 111th Congress and which I plan to reintroduce in the 112th, the Cost Recovery and Fair Value for Services Act. This legislation will help us meet our obligation to the American people by ensuring that the federal agencies within the executive branch set their user fees for services provided at rates that are both equitable and cost-effective.

This act would require the chief financial officer of every federal agency to provide a report to the director of the Office of Management and Budget which would review fees charged for services provided and make recommendations based on equitability with consideration to a user's ability to pay and the extent to which the use of the service provides a public benefit.

By setting appropriate user fee rates, agencies can contribute to the shared fiscal responsibility that our current economic situation demands without overburdening the public or inhibiting public engagement.

It is my hope that when this legislation arrives on the House floor, colleagues from both parties will share the same bipartisan spirit I exhibit today and support my efforts to control wasteful spending and restore fiscal accountability.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FIRST FRIDAY GROUP

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, on January 7, 2011 the First Friday Group (FFG) of Matagorda County celebrated its 20th anniversary. I am pleased to extend my congratulations to the organizers of the FFG for 20 years of service to the people of Matagorda County.

FFG provides a monthly forum for the citizens of Matagorda County to discuss their activities and issues affecting their community. As the name suggests, FFG's meetings take place on the first Friday of the month at 6:30 a.m. The meetings are currently held at the Thyme & Again restaurant in Bay City, Texas. The meetings are open to the public, and anyone is free to participate. Attendance typically runs from 25 to 40 people.

FFG is in many ways a modern town hall meeting. Attendees typically include national, state and local elected officials, representatives from the Matagorda County Chamber of Commerce, local business owners, developers, industrial plant managers, agriculture and agri-businesses, educators, religious leaders and state agencies.

The FFG meetings have two unique features that ensure everyone with something of interest to the community has a chance to participate. First, there is never a ''program'' or a set list of speakers chosen by the FFG. Instead, each meeting is conducted in a ''Round the Room Format,'' that gives each attendee a chance to talk about their activities. Secondly, speakers are asked to limit their remarks to two or three minutes in order to make sure that everyone who wants to speak has the chance. While the time limits may appear to make it difficult to convey all relevant information about an activity, regular attendees say that most speakers can convey a remarkable amount of information in a very short period of time.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I once again extend congratulations to the founders and organizers of the First Friday Group for providing a forum for the citizens of Matagorda County to exchange information about their various projects which are aimed at improving life in Matagorda County.

EVERETT & DARLA SANDERSON

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to honor businessman and community leader Everett Sanderson and his wife Darla for their efforts on behalf of Southeast Texas, particularly for their assistance to first responders during the critical first days after Hurricanes Rita and Ike.

In the span of three short years, from 2005 to 2008, the upper Texas coast was struck by two monstrous hurricanes that caused billions of dollars of damage and took multiple lives. Countless homes and businesses were destroyed. Debris and downed trees and power lines filled the streets, making travel extremely dangerous. Power and water services were off. It was a dire situation, indeed.

Tens of thousands Southeast Texans evacuated to safer ground, but a handful of individuals rode the storm out in order to start the clean up and restoration immediately. These first responders worked unending shifts with little resources available. A hot meal was difficult to find, until the Sandersons stepped in and opened their damaged restaurant for the brave souls who decided to stay.

Everett Sanderson was born and raised in Nederland, TX. A 1985 graduate from Baylor University Law School, he has practiced in Jefferson County since. He is an active member of the community, serving on the Nederland Independent School Board of Trustees, Jefferson County Bar Association Board of Directors, and the Mid-County YMCA Board of Directors, among many others. He was named Mr. Nederland in 2006. Sanderson and his wife Darla have two children, Jordan and Michelle.

In 2003, the Sandersons found time to open a restaurant in Nederland, Sanderson's Restaurant and Bar. It was an instant hit, serving everything from seafood to barbeque to salads and everything in between. It was here, in the first hours after the hurricanes passed, that they decided to open their doors for first responders from the police, fire departments, Red Cross, FEMA, and other organizations. Pulling in resources from wherever they could, the Sandersons provided food and some peace of mind. One day during the aftermath of Hurricane Rita, they served over 6,500 first responders.

On behalf of the Second Congressional District of Texas, I would like to commend Everett and Darla Sanderson for their hard work and dedication to make the first responders feel at home during this trying time. The Sandersons' hearts are bigger than their chicken fried steak, and if you have seen their chicken fried steak, you would know that is quite the compliment.

And that's just the way it is.

CELEBRATING THE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY OF SERVICE

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, this Monday our Nation celebrated the life of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Together we honored Dr. King's legacy with a national day of service.

Dr. King taught us many important lessons during his life—the greatest of all being that violence and hatred will get us nowhere, but love, service, and kindness for our fellow man can guide our Nation to overcome its most considerable struggles. While Dr. King was motivated by a period of division in our Nation's history, we know today that his lessons transcend all challenges. In this spirit, we pay tribute to the life and works of Dr. King, through participation in community service on the third Monday of January, each year.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to the record the following piece by Ambassador of Service for the Corporation for National and Community Service MLK Day, my colleague from Georgia, the Honorable JOHN LEWIS, and CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service, Patrick Corvington, on the importance of national service.

Ever since former Sen. Harris Wofford and I introduced legislation in the Congress that transformed the King Holiday into a National Day of Service, one question periodically arises: Do Americans view the King Holiday primarily as a day on or a day off? Are they commemorating the legacy of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. with their extra time or simply getting extra sleep? Clearly, there are kids who will joyfully spend their day in front of their Xboxes, and shoppers who will rush to a department store sale on the holiday.

But as the life of Dr. King and the movement that he led demonstrate, ordinary people with extraordinary vision working in the corners of their communities can have an impact that reverberates throughout America. These tiny ripples of human compassion can build into waves that cleanse and heal the wounds of a Nation.

The Corporation for National and Community Service is the Federal agency that engages more than 5 million Americans in service to solve community problems. In partnership with the King Center and community groups nationwide, the agency responds to a mandate provided in the legislation to organize the King holiday National Day of Service. Since the service day legislation was passed, we have seen interest grow from a handful of local events to well over 13,000 projects taking place this year in all 50 States.

Right here in Atlanta, we will be joining thousands of volunteers who will be packing food boxes for the hungry, rebuilding homes for the homeless, beautifying schools and serving in many other ways to commemorate the legacy of Dr. King. In doing so, people are following in King's footsteps, taking nonviolent action into their own hands to heal and mend the problems in our communities. That is what the National Day of Service is all about, engaging Americans in the joy of giving and inspiring them to see this holiday differently, not as a time to rest, but as an opportunity to share in the healing work of love.

Last year, in the midst of the Great Recession, 63.4 million Americans volunteered in some way in their communities. They decided that they wanted to make service a meaningful part of their everyday lives. And their efforts are making a difference. They are expanding economic opportunity, helping to fix our education system, protecting our environment, responding to the needs of our veterans and assisting in the wake of natural disasters.

To mark the 25th anniversary of the King holiday, we are issuing the ''MLK 25 Challenge.'' We are calling on all Americans to honor Dr. King by pledging to take at least 25 actions during 2011 to make a difference for others.

The recent violence in Tucson is a sobering reminder that we as a nation have not yet fulfilled King's dream for our society, the building of a ''Beloved Community,'' defined as a society based on simple justice that values the worth and dignity of every human being.

As the victims, families and our Nation struggle to recover from this tragedy, it is fitting that we look to the words of a nonviolent warrior who met aggression and hostility with the power of peace. ''Darkness cannot drive out darkness,'' King once said, ''only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.''

RECOGNIZING CHIEF DWIGHT BLANKENSHIP AND LONG ISLAND'S FIRST RESPONDERS

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the everyday heroes who make up Long Island's first responder community for the service they give us every day.

In the aftermath of disasters, we often ask the same questions: What went wrong? How could this have been averted? Who is to blame?

Yet, in the early hours of January 1, 2011, a host of heroic first responders demonstrated how well-trained and dedicated experts could avert disaster and save lives. In this instance, the system worked. Mastic Fire Department Chief Dwight Blankenship and Assistant Chief Jim Mickert were the first to arrive on the scene of a gas leak and their immediate actions undoubtedly saved lives and property.

Upon seeing a gas leak spewing from out of the ground, Chief Blankenship immediately recognized the gravity of the situation and the need to act. First, he took action to prevent any action that could create a spark and ignite the gas. After taking action to secure the scene, he made a series of calls to coordinate the largest response Suffolk County has seen since the Pine Barrens fires of 1995.

Chief Blankenship's calls for assistance were answered by first responders from throughout Long Island. There are too many heroes to name, but the members of the Mastic Fire Department and the Mastic Volunteer Ambulance Company did so much to ensure the safety of the public. In all, more than 80 fire trucks and dozens of various departments joined in the effort.

While New Yorkers are loath to admit that anything good can come from across the river, we owe a debt of gratitude to John Stearns and his team with Industrial Propane and Reclamation of Sussex, New Jersey, for their quick and effective response.

I also want to highlight the Brookhaven Fire Marshals who responded to this potential disaster. Not only did the Town Fire Marshals ensure the safety of the public on January 1, but within three days of the incident they had completed their investigation and produced a comprehensive report about what had happened and how to avert a similar disaster.

Every day, our first responders train and take time away from their families, for that one call. On January 1, we are all so grateful that Chief Blankenship answered the call, because the difference is literally a matter of life and death. I am proud to represent so many dedicated first responders like Chief Dwight Blankenship and thank them for their continued service to our community.

TRIBUTE TO LARRY J. NEHASIL

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor and celebrate the life of Larry J. Nehasil, a devoted husband, father, brother, son, uncle and Police Officer; and to mourn him upon his tragic passing in the line of duty at age 48.

Larry was born on March 15, 1962. He grew up in Livonia, Michigan and graduated from Winston Churchill High School in 1980. After serving with the Wayne County Sheriff's Office, Larry Nehasil joined the ranks of the Livonia Police Department as a Cadet in 1991. He was promoted to Police Officer in 1993 and worked in the Patrol Bureau, the Special Operations Unit and most recently, the Intelligence Bureau. Highly decorated in his 20 year career, Officer Larry Nehasil was a valued brother to his fellow officers and a lover of life whose company brought joy to all he knew. Aside from his diligent work ethic, Larry enjoyed numerous outdoor activities, working out and watching his adored sons play hockey.

On January 17, 2011, Larry Nehasil laid down his life as he pursued a robbery suspect. This dedicated man gave his last breath, his last ounce of courage in service to the citizens he had dutifully sworn to defend and protect. He will be remembered as a father devoted to his family, especially his beloved wife, Linda, and his sons Adam and Aaron. The cherished son of Monica, Larry reunites with his father, the late Richard Nehasil, as he passes to his eternal reward. As a treasured brother to Cheryl, Craig and Lori, Larry Nehasil leaves a legacy in many nieces and nephews. Larry was a wonderful man with a ready smile, kind to all he encountered; and he will be truly and sorrowfully missed.

Mr. Speaker, during his lifetime, Officer Larry J. Nehasil enriched the lives of everyone around him. His End of Watch came far too soon and unexpectedly. As we bid farewell to this brave and wonderful individual, I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning his passing and honoring his years of loyal service to our community and country.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today our national debt is $14,052,380,830,542.80.

On January 6, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was $10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by $3,413,955,084,249.00 since then.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

BANK OVERCHARGED MILITARY FAMILIES ON MORTGAGES

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, admitting some ''very big mistakes,'' banking giant JP Morgan Chase revealed today that they overcharged more than 4,000 active-duty military personnel on their home loans and foreclosed, in error, on 14 of them.

The Service Members Civil Relief Act of 2003 provides military personnel certain rights and protections as they enter active duty with respect to credit card interest rates, mortgage interest rates, and mortgage foreclosures. Per the provisions of this act both mortgage interest rates and consumer debt interest rates can be limited to 6 percent in some circumstances and foreclosures are not permitted.

While Chase has apologized for this ''customer mistake,'' has agreed to send out $2 million worth of refunds and has resolved all but one of the foreclosure cases, the strain put on the service members and their families through the bank's failure to comply with this act is inexcusable.

Two issues need urgent attention if we are to avoid a recurrence of this kind of illegal behavior on the part of the banks: 1) We must accelerate the formation of the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that was created by Congress in the wake of the financial crisis; 2) We need to acknowledge that current interest rates are running as low as 4.6 percent for fixed 15 year loans and look into amending the Service Members Civil Relief Act of 2003 to reflect that reality, thus giving those who leave their families behind to serve our country the best rates available.

[From NPR.org, Jan. 19, 2011]

BANK OVERCHARGED MILITARY FAMILIES ON MORTGAGES

(By Tamara Keith)

The banking giant JPMorgan Chase is admitting it made some very big mistakes. As first reported by NBC News, the firm says it overcharged more than 4,000 active-duty military personnel on their home loans and foreclosed in error on 14 of them.

Julia Rowles and her husband, Marine Capt. Jonathan Rowles, have been fighting with Chase ever since Rowles was commissioned as an officer in 2006.

''They would say, 'We will take your house. We will report you to the credit agency. This is a bad situation that you don't want to be getting into. Pay us today.' They were harassing us for money that we did not owe them,'' Julia Rowles says.

Her husband once got a collection call at 3 a.m. None of that was supposed to happen. Under a federal law called the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, most troops can get their mortgage interest rates reduced to 6 percent while on active duty, and foreclosures aren't allowed. Rowles says her husband, who is now overseas, was granted the lower interest rate, but Chase didn't adjust its records.

''They kept still charging us 9 and 10 percent, and we were paying upwards to $2,000 when we should have only been paying $1,400,'' she said.

This week Chase said it would send out $2 million worth of refunds to 4,000 active-duty customers like the Rowles family who were overcharged. It also admitted to wrongfully foreclosing on 14 homes, and said all but one of those cases had been resolved. Bank officials declined an interview request, but in a statement said: ''While any customer mistake is regrettable, we feel particularly badly about the mistakes we made here.''

But attorney Dick Harpootlian in Columbia, S.C., isn't ready to accept the apology. He's one of the lawyers representing the Rowles family in what he hopes will become a class-action lawsuit against Chase.

''I was a prosecutor for 12 years. Everybody that got caught taking money that wasn't theirs always said they were sorry, offered to give it back and call it even,'' he said. ''And that's just not what ought to happen in cases like this.''

Elizabeth Warren, a special assistant to President Obama, says the case illustrates why the U.S. needs a strong consumer financial protection agency. She's putting together the new Consumer Financial Protection Bureau that was created by Congress to look out for consumers in the wake of the financial crisis. The agency will also focus on protecting military families.

''We need a cop on the beat,'' Warren said. ''The laws are in place, but there's no one to enforce them and no one to speak up for these families. This is just wrong.''

Warren says the laws exist so service members can concentrate on doing their jobs.

They should not be ''worried about paperwork and bills and whether or not a loved one is being harassed for money that's not even owed.''

Warren visited Lackland Air Force Base in Texas on Tuesday to talk to military families about their financial concerns. She was joined by Holly Petraeus, the wife of Gen. David Petraeus, the commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

Holly Petraeus was one of the first hires for the new consumer bureau.

''I really can't think of anything better to be doing while my husband is deployed forever than working on a project like this,'' she said.

She'll head the office of Service Member Affairs, which will be on the lookout for issues like those at Chase.

SERVICEMEMBERS CIVIL RELIEF ACT (SCRA) OF 2003

MORTGAGE INTEREST RATE REDUCTION FOR ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL

This federal law (formerly known as The Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940) provides military personnel important rights and protections as they enter active duty, on issues that include mortgage interest rates, mortgage foreclosure, and credit card interest rates. A major benefit is the ability to reduce mortgage interest rates and consumer debt interest rates (including debts incurred jointly with a spouse) to a 6% limit under certain circumstances. The mortgage or debt must have been incurred before entry into active military service, and the servicemember must show that military service has had a ''material effect'' on the legal or financial matter involved. This provision applies to both conventional and government-insured mortgages.

SCRA applies to active duty military personnel who had a mortgage obligation prior to enlistment or prior to being ordered to active duty. This includes members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard; commissioned officers of the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration who are engaged in active service; reservists ordered to report for military service; persons ordered to report for induction under the Military Selective Service Act; and guardsmen called to active service for more than 30 consecutive days. In limited situations, dependents of servicemembers are also entitled to protections.

The mortgage interest rate limit is not automatic. To request this temporary interest rate reduction, you must submit a written request to your mortgage lender and include a copy of your military orders. The request may be submitted as soon as the orders are issued but must be provided to your mortgage lender no later than 180 days after the date of your release from active duty military service. When you contact your mortgage lender, you should provide the following information: notice that you have been called to active duty; a copy of the orders from the military notifying you of your activation; your FHA case number, if applicable; evidence that the debt precedes your activation date.

When notified that you are on active military duty, your mortgage lender must reduce the interest rate to no more than six percent per year during the period of active military service, recalculate your payments to reflect the lower rate, advise you of the adjusted amount due, provide adjusted coupons or billings, and ensure that the adjusted payments are not returned as insufficient payments. If a mortgage lender believes that military service has not affected your ability to repay your mortgage, they have the right to ask a court to grant relief from the interest rate reduction, but this action is not common.

Interest in excess of 6 percent per year that would otherwise have been charged is forgiven. However, the reduction in the interest rate and monthly payment amount only applies during the period of active duty. Once the period of active military service ends, the interest rate will revert back to the original interest rate, and the payment will be recalculated accordingly.

If you cannot afford to pay your mortgage even at the lower rate, your mortgage lender may allow you to stop paying the principal amount due on your loan during the period of active duty service. Lenders are not required to do this, but they generally try to work with service members to keep them in their homes. In such a case, you would still owe this amount but would not have to repay it until after your complete your active duty service.

Furthermore, mortgage lenders may not foreclose, or seize property for a failure to pay a mortgage debt, while a service member is on active duty or within 90 days after the period of military service unless they have the approval of a court. In a court proceeding, the lender would be required to show that the service member's ability to repay the debt was not affected by his or her military service.

Servicemembers who have questions about the SCRA or the protections that they may be entitled to may contact their unit judge advocate or installation legal assistance officer. Dependents of servicemembers can also contact or visit local military legal assistance offices where they reside. A military legal assistance office locator for each branch of the armed forces is available at the Armed Forces Legal Assistance (AFLA) website.

Most lenders have other programs to assist borrowers who cannot make their mortgage payments. If you or your spouse find yourself in this position at any time before or after active duty service, contact your lender immediately and ask about loss mitigation options. Borrowers with FHA insured loans who are having difficulty making mortgage payments may also be eligible for special forbearance and other loss mitigation options.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF R. SARGENT SHRIVER

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a giant of public service, Robert Sargent Shriver, Jr. who passed away yesterday at the age of 95. Sargent Shriver was the absolute embodiment of selfless devotion, harnessing the excitement of the Kennedy era to the ideals of volunteerism and assistance to those less fortunate in this country and around the world. The programs he organized have endured for nearly half a century and have become true institutions, affecting generations of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, it is fitting that tomorrow marks the 50th Anniversary of President Kennedy's Inaugural Address. On that cold January day in 1961, a young President inspired the Nation to lift itself up and apply its energies to advancing America and its ideals at home and around the world using those iconic words: ''Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.'' As one of his chief lieutenants, Sargent Shriver

spread President Kennedy's message far and wide to millions of little boys and girls, some of whom, myself included, rose to heed his call to public service.

Mr. Speaker, since the age of 6 I have wanted to work for others, and though I was a little girl at the time, I was touched by the energy of the times and the spirit of service has never left me. The ideals that Sargent Shriver advocated fell across a generation.

Born in Maryland, Sargent Shriver earned his undergraduate and law degrees at Yale University. Despite organizing a group focused on keeping America out of World War II, he volunteered and served for 5 years in the Pacific with the Navy, achieving the rank of lieutenant and receiving the Purple Heart for wounds suffered at Guadalcanal. He became associated with the Kennedy family, first managing a store in Chicago owned by Joseph Kennedy Sr. and later marrying Eunice Kennedy, John F. Kennedy's sister. He worked on the Kennedy campaign and endeared himself to the newly elected President.

On October 14, 1960, John F. Kennedy gave a speech at the University of Michigan and lingered afterwards with a group of students, the conversation lasting long into the night. During that meeting, they discussed the idea of a government program whereby young Americans would be sent to developing nations to aid in local projects, mostly centering on education, health, and agriculture. President Kennedy assumed office with this program in mind, and on March 1, 1961, the Peace Corps was born with Sargent Shriver as its first director. Volunteers arrived in five countries during 1961. In just under six years, Shriver developed programs in 55 countries with a volunteer count of more than 15,000.

The Peace Corps will also celebrate its 50th Anniversary in March, and it can credit its success to the diligent devotion shown by its first director and to his predecessors who must strive to meet his lofty standards. Sargent Shriver carried the flame of Camelot. Entire generations, inspired by his energy, took up his call to right wrongs, improve their communities, and implement his color-blind approach to administering the government.

In his drive to promote social equality and bring more people to public service, he founded numerous social programs and non-governmental organizations, including the Head Start Program, VISTA, Job Corps, Community Action, Upward Bound, Foster Grandparents, Special Olympics, Legal Services, the National Clearinghouse for Legal Services (now the Shriver Center), and Indian and Migrant Opportunities and Neighborhood Health Services.

His record of service includes representing the U.S. as Ambassador to France, being the 1972 Democratic candidate for Vice-President, practicing international law, and membership on the boards for numerous non-governmental organizations and philanthropic institutions. In his later years, he and his beloved wife, Eunice, organized The Special Olympics and made it an international force for the dignity of the disabled.

Mr. Speaker, Sargent Shriver once said, "The only genuine elite are the elite of those men and women who gave their lives to justice and charity." Today I commend Sargent Shriver's long life and distinguished career. His dedication and work on behalf of others has directly benefited thousands of communities, from the inner cities of the United States to the most remote villages in Africa. He was the model of civil service and he will be missed.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF SARGENT SHRIVER

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, as a returned Peace Corps volunteer, I rise today to note the passing of Sargent Shriver, who founded the Peace Corps and headed it for its first five years. He was the enthusiastic and committed leader of the new agency, taking it from its founding in 1961 to more than 14,500 volunteers serving in 55 countries by 1966.

I served in the Peace Corps in Somalia in 1966 and 1967 and saw firsthand the contribution that Peace Corps volunteers make to the communities they serve, as well as the effect service has on the volunteers. Fifty years later, the continued selfless and noble service outside our borders remains a testament to the timeless American ideals demonstrated and encouraged by Sargent Shriver.

But it wasn't just the Peace Corps. Sargent Shriver led a life of service, founding the Office of Economic Opportunity and helping to develop its many programs. From 1968 to 1970, he was our able ambassador to France during a difficult time in our relations with that country. In 1972, he ran for Vice President with George McGovern and then ran for President in 1976.

And yet, there are many people who are unfamiliar with Sargent Shriver's service and achievements. His biographer, Scott Stossel, told the Washington Post that it's hard to find another American figure where the disproportion between how much he accomplished and how little he is known is so large.

Let us pause to mark the passage of this public servant and say "thank you."

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC) APPROVAL OF MERGER OF NBC UNIVERSAL AND COMCAST

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the FCC approved the takeover of NBC, a television network, by Comcast, a cable TV and internet provider.

One condition of the merger's approval is that the combined company must not restrict access to any lawful online content. Another condition is that the merged company cannot give better treatment online to its own content than to the content produced by others. Comcast now has 23 million cable TV subscribers, and 16 million internet subscribers, making it the largest internet and cable TV service provider in the US. With such a pervasive conglomerate, it seems unlikely that these restrictions will ensure equal access to the internet, whose creation was funded by taxpayers.

Like any powerful tool, the internet must be protected from falling into the control of any one entity or entities which have too much authority to decide who can access it and what content they can put there. We need real Net Neutrality, not the FCC's recent proposal, which I will fight to strengthen.

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS FOR THE 112TH CONGRESS AS ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON JANUARY 18, 2011

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following.

A. GENERAL

RULE 1. APPLICATION OF HOUSE RULES

The rules of the House are the rules of the Committee on Ways and Means and its subcommittees so far as applicable, except that a motion to recess from day to day, and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution, if printed copies are available, is a non-debatable motion of high privilege in the Committee.

Each subcommittee of the Committee is part of the Committee and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee and to its rules so far as applicable. Written rules adopted by the Committee, not inconsistent with the Rules of the House, shall be binding on each subcommittee of the Committee.

The provisions of rule XI of the Rules of the House are incorporated by reference as the rules of the Committee to the extent applicable.

RULE 2. MEETING DATE AND QUORUMS

The regular meeting day of the Committee on Ways and Means shall be on the second Wednesday of each month while the House is in session. However, the Committee shall not meet on the regularly scheduled meeting day if there is no business to be considered.

A majority of the Committee constitutes a quorum for business; provided however, that two Members shall constitute a quorum at any regularly scheduled hearing called for the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence. In establishing a quorum for purposes of a public hearing, every effort shall be made to secure the presence of at least one Member each from the majority and the minority.

The Chairman of the Committee may call and convene, as he considers necessary, additional meetings of the Committee for the consideration of any bill or resolution pending before the Committee or for the conduct of other Committee business. The Committee shall meet pursuant to the call of the Chair.

RULE 3. COMMITTEE BUDGET

For each Congress, the Chairman, in consultation with the Majority Members of the Committee, shall prepare a preliminary budget. Such budget shall include necessary amounts for staff personnel, travel, investigation, and other expenses of the Committee. After consultation with the Minority Members, the Chairman shall include an amount budgeted by Minority Members for staff under their direction and supervision.

Thereafter, the Chairman shall combine such proposals into a consolidated Committee budget, and shall present the same to

the Committee for its approval or other action. The Chairman shall take whatever action is necessary to have the budget as finally approved by the Committee duly authorized by the House. After said budget shall have been adopted, no substantial change shall be made in such budget unless approved by the Committee.

RULE 4. PUBLICATION OF COMMITTEE DOCUMENTS

Any Committee or Subcommittee print, document, or similar material prepared for public distribution shall either be approved by the Committee or Subcommittee prior to distribution and opportunity afforded for the inclusion of supplemental, minority or additional views, or such document shall contain on its cover the following disclaimer:

Prepared for the use of Members of the Committee on Ways and Means by members of its staff. This document has not been officially approved by the Committee and may not reflect the views of its Members.

Any such print, document, or other material not officially approved by the Committee or Subcommittee shall not include the names of its Members, other than the name of the full Committee Chairman or Subcommittee Chairman under whose authority the document is released. Any such document shall be made available to the full Committee Chairman and Ranking Minority Member not less than 3 calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) prior to its public release.

The requirements of this rule shall apply only to the publication of policy-oriented, analytical documents, and not to the publication of public hearings, legislative documents, documents which are administrative in nature or reports which are required to be submitted to the Committee under public law. The appropriate characterization of a document subject to this rule shall be determined after consultation with the Minority.

RULE 5. OFFICIAL TRAVEL

Consistent with the primary expense resolution and such additional expense resolution as may have been approved, the provisions of this rule shall govern official travel of Committee Members and Committee staff. Official travel to be reimbursed from funds set aside for the full Committee for any Member or any Committee staff member shall be paid only upon the prior authorization of the Chairman. Official travel may be authorized by the Chairman for any Member and any Committee staff member in connection with the attendance of hearings conducted by the Committee, its Subcommittees, or any other Committee or Subcommittee of the Congress on matters relevant to the general jurisdiction of the Committee, and meetings, conferences, facility inspections, and investigations which involve activities or subject matter relevant to the general jurisdiction of the Committee. Before such authorization is given, there shall be submitted to the Chairman in writing the following:

(1) The purpose of the official travel;

(2) The dates during which the official travel is to be made and the date or dates of the event for which the official travel is being made;

(3) The location of the event for which the official travel is to be made; and

(4) The names of the Members and Committee staff seeking authorization.

In the case of official travel of Members and staff of a Subcommittee to hearings, meetings, conferences, facility inspections and investigations involving activities or subject matter under the jurisdiction of such Subcommittee, prior authorization must be obtained from the Subcommittee Chairman and the full Committee Chairman. Such prior authorization shall be given by the full Committee Chairman only upon the representation by the applicable Subcommittee Chairman in writing setting forth those items enumerated above.

Within 60 days of the conclusion of any official travel authorized under this rule, there shall be submitted to the full Committee Chairman a written report covering the information gained as a result of the hearing, meeting, conference, facility inspection or investigation attended pursuant to such official travel.

RULE 6. AVAILABILITY OF COMMITTEE RECORDS AND PUBLICATIONS

The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with Rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives. The Chairman shall notify the Ranking Minority Member of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of Rule VII, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination on the written request of any Member of the Committee. The Committee shall, to the maximum extent feasible, make its publications available in electronic form.

RULE 7. COMMITTEE WEBSITE

The Chairman shall maintain an official Committee website for the purpose of furthering the Committee's legislative and oversight responsibilities, including communicating information about the Committee's activities to Committee members and other members of the House. The ranking minority member may maintain a similar website for the same purpose, including communicating information about the activities of the minority to Committee members and other members of the House.

B. SUBCOMMITTEES

RULE 8. SUBCOMMITTEE RATIOS AND JURISDICTION

All matters referred to the Committee on Ways and Means involving revenue measures, except those revenue measures referred to Subcommittees under paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 shall be considered by the full Committee and not in Subcommittee. There shall be six standing Subcommittees as follows: a Subcommittee on Trade; a Subcommittee on Oversight; a Subcommittee on Health; a Subcommittee on Social Security; a Subcommittee on Human Resources; and a Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures. The ratio of Republicans to Democrats on any Subcommittee of the Committee shall be consistent with the ratio of Republicans to Democrats on the full Committee.

1. The Subcommittee on Trade shall consist of 14 Members, 9 of whom shall be Republicans and 5 of whom shall be Democrats.

The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Trade shall include bills and matters referred to the Committee on Ways and Means that relate to customs and customs administration including tariff and import fee structure, classification, valuation of and special rules applying to imports, and special tariff provisions and procedures which relate to customs operation affecting exports and imports; import trade matters, including import impact, industry relief from injurious imports, adjustment assistance and programs to encourage competitive responses to imports, unfair import practices including antidumping and countervailing duty provisions, and import policy which relates to dependence on foreign sources of supply; commodity agreements and reciprocal trade agreements involving multilateral and bilateral trade negotiations and implementation of agreements involving tariff and non-tariff trade barriers to and distortions of international trade; international rules, organizations and institutional aspects of international trade agreements; budget authorizations for the customs revenue functions of the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. International Trade Commission, and the U.S. Trade Representative; and special trade-related problems involving market access, competitive conditions of specific industries, export policy and promotion, access to materials in short supply, bilateral trade relations including trade with developing countries, operations of multinational corporations, and trade with non-market economies.

2. The Subcommittee on Oversight shall consist of 11 Members, 7 of whom shall be Republicans and 4 of whom shall be Democrats.

The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Oversight shall include all matters within the scope of the full Committee's jurisdiction but shall be limited to existing law. Said oversight jurisdiction shall not be exclusive but shall be concurrent with that of the other Subcommittees. With respect to matters involving the Internal Revenue Code and other revenue issues, said concurrent jurisdiction shall be shared with the full Committee. Before undertaking any investigation or hearing, the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight shall confer with the Chairman of the full Committee and the Chairman of any other Subcommittee having jurisdiction.

3. The Subcommittee on Health shall consist of 14 Members, 9 of whom shall be Republicans and 5 whom shall be Democrats.

The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Health shall include bills and matters referred to the Committee on Ways and Means that relate to programs providing payments (from any source) for health care, health delivery systems, or health research. More specifically, the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Health shall include bills and matters that relate to the health care programs of the Social Security Act (including titles V, XI (Part B), XVIII, and XIX thereof) and, concurrent with the full Committee, tax credit and deduction provisions of the Internal Revenue Code dealing with health insurance premiums and health care costs.

4. The Subcommittee on Social Security shall consist of 11 Members, 7 of whom shall be Republicans and 4 of whom shall be Democrats.

The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Social Security shall include bills and matters referred to the Committee on Ways and Means that relate to the Federal Old Age, Survivors' and Disability Insurance System, the Railroad Retirement System, and employment taxes and trust fund operations relating to those systems. More specifically, the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Social Security shall include bills and matters involving title II of the Social Security Act and Chapter 22 of the Internal Revenue Code (the Railroad Retirement Tax Act), as well as provisions in title VII and title XI of the Act relating to procedure and administration involving the Old Age, Survivors' and Disability Insurance System.

5. The Subcommittee on Human Resources shall consist of 11 Members, 7 of whom shall be Republicans and 4 of whom shall be Democrats.

The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Human Resources shall include bills and matters referred to the Committee on Ways and Means that relate to the public assistance provisions of the Social Security Act, including temporary assistance for needy families, child care, child and family services, child support, foster care, adoption, supplemental security income, social services, eligibility of welfare recipients for food stamps, and low-income energy assistance.

More specifically, the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Human Resources shall include bills and matters relating to titles I, IV, VI, X, XIV, XVI, XVII, XX and related provisions of titles VII and XI of the Social Security Act.

The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Human Resources shall also include bills and matters referred to the Committee on Ways and Means that relate to the Federal-State system of unemployment compensation, and the financing thereof, including the programs for extended and emergency benefits. More specifically, the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Human Resources shall also include all bills and matters pertaining to the programs of unemployment compensation under titles III, IX and XII of the Social Security Act, Chapters 23 and 23A of the Internal Revenue Code, and the Federal-State Extended Unemployment Compensation Act of 1970, and provisions relating thereto.

6. The Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures shall consist of 11 Members, 7 of whom shall be Republicans and 4 of whom shall be Democrats.

The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Select Revenue Measures shall consist of those revenue measures that, from time to time, shall be referred to it specifically by the Chairman of the full Committee.

RULE 9. EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF SUBCOMMITTEES

The Chairman of the full Committee and the Ranking Minority Member may sit as ex-officio Members of all Subcommittees. They may be counted for purposes of assisting in the establishment of a quorum for a Subcommittee. However, their absence shall not count against the establishment of a quorum by the regular Members of the Subcommittee. Ex-officio Members shall neither vote in the Subcommittee nor be taken into consideration for the purposes of determining the ratio of the Subcommittee.

RULE 10. SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

Insofar as practicable, meetings of the full Committee and its Subcommittees shall not conflict. Subcommittee Chairmen shall set meeting dates after consultation with the Chairman of the full Committee and other Subcommittee Chairmen with a view towards avoiding, wherever possible, simultaneous scheduling of full Committee and Subcommittee meetings or hearings.

RULE 11. REFERENCE OF LEGISLATION AND SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Except for bills or measures retained by the Chairman of the full Committee for full Committee consideration, every bill or other measure referred to the Committee shall be referred by the Chairman of the full Committee to the appropriate Subcommittee in a timely manner. A Subcommittee shall, within three legislative days of the referral, acknowledge same to the full Committee.

After a measure has been pending in a Subcommittee for a reasonable period of time, the Chairman of the full Committee may make a request in writing to the Subcommittee that the Subcommittee forthwith report the measure to the full Committee with its recommendations. If within seven legislative days after the Chairman's written request, the Subcommittee has not so reported the measure, then there shall be in order in the full Committee a motion to discharge the Subcommittee from further consideration of the measure. If such motion is approved by a majority vote of the full Committee, the measure may thereafter be considered only by the full Committee.

No measure reported by a Subcommittee shall be considered by the full Committee unless it has been presented to all Members of the full Committee at least two legislative days prior to the full Committee's meeting, together with a comparison with present law, a section-by-section analysis of the proposed change, a section-by-section justification, and a draft statement of the budget effects of the measure that is consistent with the requirements for reported measures under clause 3(d)(2) of Rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

RULE 12. RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES

Whenever in the legislative process it becomes necessary to appoint conferees, the Chairman of the full Committee shall recommend to the Speaker as conferees the names of those Committee Members as the Chairman may designate. In making recommendations of Minority Members as conferees, the Chairman shall consult with the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee.

C. HEARINGS

RULE 13. WITNESSES

In order to assure the most productive use of the limited time available to question hearing witnesses, a witness who is scheduled to appear before the full Committee or a Subcommittee shall file with the Clerk of the Committee at least 48 hours in advance of his or her appearance a written statement of their proposed testimony. In addition, all witnesses shall comply with formatting requirements as specified by the Committee and the Rules of the House. Failure to comply with the 48-hour rule may result in a witness being denied the opportunity to testify in person. Failure to comply with the formatting requirements may result in a witness' statement being rejected for inclusion in the published hearing record. In addition to the requirements of clause 2(g)(4) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House regarding information required of public witnesses, a witness shall limit his or her oral presentation to a summary of their position and shall provide sufficient copies of their written statement to the Clerk for distribution to Members, staff and news media.

A witness appearing at a public hearing, or submitting a statement for the record of a public hearing, or submitting written comments in response to a published request for comments by the Committee must include in their statement or submission, a list of all clients, persons or organizations on whose behalf the witness appears. Oral testimony and statements for the record, or written comments in response to a request for comments by the Committee, will be accepted only from citizens of the United States or corporations or associations organized under the laws of one of the 50 States of the United States or the District of Columbia, unless otherwise directed by the Chairman of the full Committee or Subcommittee involved. Written statements from non-citizens may be considered for acceptance in the record if transmitted to the Committee in writing by Members of Congress.

RULE 14. QUESTIONING OF WITNESSES

Committee Members may question witnesses only when recognized by the Chairman for that purpose. All Members shall be limited to five minutes on the initial round of questioning. In questioning witnesses under the five minute rule, the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member shall be recognized first, after which Members who are in attendance at the beginning of a hearing will be recognized in the order of their seniority on the Committee. Other Members shall be recognized in the order of their appearance at the hearing. In recognizing Members to question witnesses, the Chairman may take into consideration the ratio of Majority Members to Minority Members and the number of Majority and Minority Members present and shall apportion the recognition for questioning in such a manner as not to disadvantage Members of the majority.

RULE 15. SUBPOENA POWER

The power to authorize and issue subpoenas is delegated to the Chairman of the full Committee, as provided for under clause 2(m)(3)(A)(i) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

RULE 16. RECORDS OF HEARINGS

An accurate stenographic record shall be kept of all testimony taken at a public hearing. The staff shall transmit to a witness the transcript of his or her testimony for correction and immediate return to the Committee offices. Only changes in the interest of clarity, accuracy and corrections in transcribing errors will be permitted. Changes that substantially alter the actual testimony will not be permitted. Members shall have the opportunity to correct their own remarks before publication. The Chairman of the full Committee may order the printing of a hearing without the corrections of a witness or Member if he determines that a reasonable time has been afforded to make corrections and that further delay would impede the consideration of the legislation or other measure that is the subject of the hearing.

RULE 17. BROADCASTING OF HEARINGS

The provisions of clause 4(f) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives are specifically made a part of these rules by reference. In addition, the following policy shall apply to media coverage of any meeting of the full Committee or a Subcommittee:

(1) An appropriate area of the Committee's hearing room will be designated for members of the media and their equipment.

(2) No interviews will be allowed in the Committee room while the Committee is in session. Individual interviews must take place before the gavel falls for the convening of a meeting or after the gavel falls for adjournment.

(3) Day-to-day notification of the next day's electronic coverage shall be provided by the media to the Chairman of the full Committee through an appropriate designee.

(4) Still photography during a Committee meeting will not be permitted to disrupt the proceedings or block the vision of Committee Members or witnesses.

(5) Further conditions may be specified by the Chairman.

D. MARKUPS

RULE 18. PREVIOUS QUESTION

The Chairman shall not recognize a Member for the purpose of moving the previous question unless the Member has first advised the Chair and the Committee that this is the purpose for which recognition is being sought.

RULE 19. POSTPONEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS

The Chairman may postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving any measure or matter or adopting an amendment.

The Chairman may resume proceedings on a postponed request at any time. In exercising postponement authority the Chairman shall take reasonable steps to notify Members on the resumption of proceedings on any postponed record vote.

When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

RULE 20. MOTION TO GO TO CONFERENCE

The Chairman is authorized to offer a motion under clause 1 of rule XXII of the Rules

of the House of Representatives whenever the Chairman considers it appropriate.

RULE 21. OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS OF MARKUPS AND OTHER COMMITTEE MEETINGS

An official stenographic transcript shall be kept accurately reflecting all markups and other official meetings of the full Committee and the Subcommittees, whether they be open or closed to the public. This official transcript, marked as ''uncorrected,'' shall be available for inspection by the public (except for meetings closed pursuant to clause 2(g)(1) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House), by Members of the House, or by Members of the Committee together with their staffs, during normal business hours in the full Committee or Subcommittee office under such controls as the Chairman of the full Committee deems necessary. Official transcripts shall not be removed from the Committee or Subcommittee office.

If, however, (1) in the drafting of a Committee or Subcommittee decision, the Office of the House Legislative Counsel or (2) in the preparation of a Committee report, the Chief of Staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation determines (in consultation with appropriate majority and minority committee staff) that it is necessary to review the official transcript of a markup, such transcript may be released upon the signature and to the custody of an appropriate committee staff person. Such transcript shall be returned immediately after its review in the drafting session.

The official transcript of a markup or Committee meeting other than a public hearing shall not be published or distributed to the public in any way except by a majority vote of the Committee. Before any public release of the uncorrected transcript, Members must be given a reasonable opportunity to correct their remarks. In instances in which a stenographic transcript is kept of a conference committee proceeding, all of the requirements of this rule shall likewise be observed.

RULE 22. PUBLICATION OF DECISIONS AND LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE

A press release describing any tentative or final decision made by the full Committee or a Subcommittee on legislation under consideration shall be made available to each Member of the Committee as soon as possible, but no later than the next day. However, the legislative draft of any tentative or final decision of the full Committee or a Subcommittee shall not be publicly released until such draft is made available to each Member of the Committee.

E. STAFF

RULE 23. SUPERVISION OF COMMITTEE STAFF

The staff of the Committee shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Chairman of the full Committee except as provided in clause 9 of Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives concerning Committee expenses and staff.

Pursuant to clause 6(d) of Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Chairman of the full Committee, from the funds made available for the appointment of Committee staff pursuant to primary and additional expense resolutions, shall ensure that each Subcommittee receives sufficient staff to carry out its responsibilities under the rules of the Committee, and that the minority party is fairly treated in the appointment of such staff.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JEAN SCHMIDT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 12, I missed the vote due to travel delays while returning from my district. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

OPPOSITION TO THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 19, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, opposition to the war in Afghanistan is growing. At a time when the divides in our nation seem beyond repair, Americans are united in their concern over the war.

A recent poll of conservatives conducted by the Afghanistan Study group shows that 71 percent of conservatives overall, and 67 percent of Tea Party supporters are concerned about the costs of the war in Afghanistan. They worry that the costs will make it difficult to address the deficit and balance the nation's budget by the end of the decade. Two-thirds of conservatives polled support a troop reduction, with a further 30 percent supporting full troop withdrawal.

More than 6 out of 10 Americans oppose the war in Afghanistan according to another poll conducted by CNN this month. 56 percent believe that things are going badly for the U.S. in Afghanistan.

Yet we are being assured of progress in Afghanistan as the date for withdrawal continues to slip into 2014.

The financial costs of the war are unsustainable. The human costs threaten to undermine our national, economic and moral security.

It is time to bring our troops home. It's time to dedicate our resources to nation building here at home.