

hands of the Castro regime on February 23, 2010.

Reina Luisa Tamayo, Orlando Zapata Tamayo's mother, declared that the regime murdered her son and loudly condemned the atrocity. As a consequence, Castro's thugs punished her with harassment, barbaric acts of repression, and beatings by hateful mobs in the days and weeks following her son's murder.

Sadly, the two years since Orlando Zapata Tamayo's death have been years of increased repression and more murders by the Castro regime. The number of political arrests doubled between 2010 and 2011. Furthermore, since Orlando Zapata Tamayo's death, the Cuban regime has murdered three other brave prisoners of conscience—Juan Wilfredo Soto Garcia (d. May 8, 2011), Laura Pollan, inspirational leader of the Ladies in White (d. October 14, 2011), and Wilman Willar Mendoza (d. January 19, 2012). They are all heroes, and their deaths were all immeasurable losses.

While we continue to mourn the loss of Orlando Zapata Tamayo, and the senseless deaths of so many other brave activists, his spirit and mission have strengthened Cuba's courageous pro-democracy movement. Immediately following his death, other political prisoners picked up his cause and began hunger strikes of their own. Another great pro-democracy activist, Jorge Luis Garcia Perez ("Antunez"), renamed his pro-democracy organization the "Orlando Zapata Tamayo National Front for Civic Resistance and Civil Disobedience," which continues to organize protests and oppose the Castro dictatorship. On June 30, 2011 in Vilnius, Lithuania, the Parliamentary Forum of the Community of Democracies unanimously passed a resolution honoring that organization and acknowledging its importance to the pro-democracy movement in Cuba.

I remain outraged that the regime in Cuba robbed the world of such a remarkable and courageous leader. But, in many ways, Orlando Zapata Tamayo lives. Within the pro-democracy movement that still honors him, and among the courageous activists that were emboldened by his sacrifice, Orlando Zapata Tamayo has become a symbol of perseverance in the face of crushing totalitarianism. His life will forever be a blessing to Cuba's brave pro-democracy movement, and his memory will outlast the horrors of the dying Castro regime. When the Cuban dictatorship is finally relegated to the ash heap of history, Orlando Zapata Tamayo will be remembered as a hero who helped to lead Cuba into freedom.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BANKRUPTCY EQUITY ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2012

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, when nearly one in four homeowners owe more on their mortgage than their home is worth, I am pleased to introduce the Bankruptcy Equity Act. "Underwater" mortgages are a tremendous source of financial stress for families. While some are able to continue making their payments, others are so overwhelmed by debt

that they lose their home to foreclosure, to a "short sale," or by simply walking away. Bankruptcy should offer a legal means to escape from debt and get a second chance, but ordinary homeowners are denied this opportunity with their mortgages.

Current bankruptcy law prohibits modifying mortgages for people who live in their homes but allows modification for vacation homes or investment properties. For instance, if a speculator whose investment property lost half of its value files for bankruptcy, a judge can modify the loan, including reducing the balance to its fair market value and lowering the interest rates.

The Bankruptcy Equity Act allows a bankruptcy judge to modify a homeowner's mortgage, bringing fairness to ordinary people who cannot afford payments on the inflated value of their homes, but can make payments if their mortgages were fairly valued. It helps keep families in their homes and prevents the foreclosures that are driving down home prices and creating vacant properties that can devastate communities. It will also help prevent the buildup of another housing bubble by encouraging financial institutions to take greater care to ensure they are lending to only responsible borrowers. The securitization of questionable mortgages would not have been possible if homeowners were treated as businesses.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to protect America's homeowners.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM GRAVES

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2012

Mr. GRAVES of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 61, the Bishop Amendment to H.R. 3408, I inadvertently voted "aye," when in fact I intended to vote "no."

IN HONOR OF THE NEW YORK GIANTS SUPER BOWL XLVI VICTORY

HON. MICHAEL G. GRIMM

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2012

Mr. GRIMM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the New York Giants—the champions of Super Bowl XLVI. I ask that this poem, penned in their honor by Mr. Albert Caswell, be placed into the RECORD.

"THE G FORCES"

In nature there are such forces . . .

As in this sport is!

That which are so hard to withstand!

For in the NFL, there are such Giants who dwell!

Whose strength, size, power, and speed over all others exceed!

The G-Men, of whom I speak have Gotham Hearts you must heed!

As it's all here where a team bonds as one to succeed!

Learning to rely on each other as brothers in arms, their creed!

With such sacrifice and blood, sweat, and tears, all at speed!

As week by week and all throughout the year so grows this seed!

And some will give up their health in future years indeed!

As all in their most Gotham hearts so beats! A dream to be the best in the NFL . . . the Dream!

To be the Super Bowl Champions of the World!

The one that every player has unfurled!

Perhaps even greater than being in the Hall of Fame

For above all else, this championship means team!

And now this moment of truth has come, sixty minutes and it's done!

To make that dream come true, or so succumb!

And on this night, the G-Men stood strong and defiant!

To become the world champions, they are The New York Giants.

In the battle of two strong guns, two of the Hall's future sons,

As Eli was coming and Brady was hoping for another one . . .

Would E lie down or would Brady's dreams come undone?

The Patriots were favored, but of this the Giants would have none!

Because, G-Forces are so hard to tolerate, my son!

And too much exposure will make your dreams come undone!

All for Myra, the Patriots so wanted this one!

While on the opening drive their defenses came alive,

As one of Weatherford's three great punts put the Pats in a bind!

But, the reversal on the 12 man D left Belichick crying!

Then, Victor put it into Cruz control with a TD flying!

Already nine to zip, it was looking like a G-Man Championship!

Eli was nine for nine,

But, the Pats did the patriotic thing . . . they never gave up, and they never gave in.

As Brady completed ten passes straight, on a 96 yard drive . . .

As Danny Wood used his head on a catch across the line.

At the half, the Pats look like Giant killers, finally this time!

As the Pats got the ball and scored seven on a 79 yard drive,

Even Ochocinco and Brady hooked up, and finally combined.

And then Hernandez was key when he caught a 12 yard TD . . .

While in Bean Town a World Championship was coming to mind!

But little did they know that E would not lie down!

And in that Gotham City you could hear the hearts pound!

But the drive died . . . failed, as time was running out . . .

When, the Pats got the ball back they started to drive . . .

Looking like the Giants may be going down for the count this time!

Would Brady take away the G and the I?

Who would play Batman and Robin this time?

And as the ball came down to Wes Welker on that 20 yard line . . .

Surely he'd make that great catch, as he had made a million times!

Turning the G-Forces into P-forces, and to over them preside!

But he dropped it, as you could feel him and the Patriots' hearts die

As the G-Men got the ball back with 3:46!

It was getting close, as time meant the most, do or die!

As Commissioner Gordon put up the bat signal in the sky,
 While Archie was up in the box as he was about ready to cry!
 And Peyton said "I wish I was on the sideline!"
 "Get me a neck brace; I'm going down there this time!"
 As it was Eli's time to shine, or let his team die!
 "The mountain top, go get in, failure's not an option, can't stop"
 With the play of the game looking like their last Super Bowl fame!
 As a dynamic duo, Batman and Robin somehow combined!
 To snatch the revolution out of these Patriots' hands, one more time!
 With a 38 yard miraculous catch by Manningham . . .
 And it was a thing of beauty, a pure work of art . . .
 That kind of throw and catch that could stop someone's heart!
 With a tap dance and a catch,
 Even Gregory Hines and Raymond Berry would make proud!
 That, in NFL history will now forever sound!
 And then Bradshaw, didn't know if he should score or fall?
 With the Pats strategy to give them some time and back the ball!
 But his G-Forces carried him into the end zone . . .
 As it was now Brady's time to bring it home!
 On another key play, for the second time that day . . .
 Justin, invoked his own version of the Tuck Rule, to Pound!
 With all those hits, Brady must have wondered if?
 The G-Men had a contract on him!
 As he spent more time lying on the field, than the turf in the ground!
 And then the final play by Brady . . . "in the midnight hour"
 But (too bad) his receivers seemed to cower!
 As the ball fell to the ground, as there were tears in Bean Town . . .
 As Coach Belichick caught a bad Coughlin!
 And as Tom said: "Beli-chiek-mate!"
 Enjoy the off season Bill and Brady in Boston!
 For only another Super Bowl ring can this so help erase . . .
 But, the game is in New York next year . . .
 Where the G-Force is even greater, I hear!
 But the MVP was big E . . .
 Because in the moment of truth . . . E did not Li down!
 Showing us why he has two MVPs and Super Bowl rings now!
 In Peyton's Place, will he forgive?
 As two great families would so clash . . .
 The Mara's and Kraft's, who both stand for class!
 As they all should be so proud!
 As all the TV records that were broken . . .
 The largest crowd ever had so spoken!
 And as those World Champions walked off that field . . .
 You could feel the vibe, so very real!
 In the end the Big Blue,
 Would not be so compliant.
 For there is no way to curtail,
 The heart of a Giant.

LITHUANIAN INDEPENDENCE

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2012

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to mark the 94th anniversary of Lithuanian independence.

Lithuania gained its independence from the Russian Empire at the end of World War I. It was the first time in three centuries that the Lithuanian people were free of the czarist regime. Their newfound liberty lasted only until 1940, when Stalinist Russian troops invaded and annexed Lithuania and the other Baltic states. The Lithuanian people suffered greatly under a brutal Soviet regime, but they never gave up their quest for freedom and self-determination. After decades of struggle, Lithuania finally gained its independence from the Soviet Union on March 11, 1990.

Freedom never came easily for the Lithuanian people. The celebration of Lithuanian independence is a reminder to all Lithuanians of their heroic struggle to obtain and maintain that freedom. Lithuanian Independence Day is a remembrance of the many years Lithuania spent under oppressive foreign rule, and of its people's struggle to be free. Americans of Lithuanian descent commemorate the anniversary of Lithuanian independence with celebrations and festivities throughout the country.

The Knights of Lithuania was organized on April 27, 1913. They believe in their members' dedication by having an appreciation of the Lithuanian language, customs, and culture, and by emphasizing the importance of their Roman Catholic beliefs. They strive to live up to their motto, "For God and Country" through cultural presentations, lectures, trips, and choral and dance groups. They are tremendous advocates of the Lithuanian people and heritage.

Mr. Speaker, the 94th anniversary of Lithuanian independence is a milestone of that nation's freedom. I commend all those of Lithuanian heritage for their dedication to their heritage, their community, and their country.

RECOGNIZING DR. SULEIMAN ALIBHAI

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2012

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor, Dr. Suleiman Alibhai, an outstanding leader committed to helping people in Northern Virginia improve and preserve their sight. Dr. Alibhai is the recipient of this year's Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington's (POB) Professional Service Award.

Dr. Alibhai has spent the past 20 years providing rehabilitative services and support to individuals with low vision in the greater Washington, DC area. He began his career as Director of Low Vision Services at the Retina Group of Washington and now shares his expertise with the National Institutes of Health's National Eye Institute, the Wilmer Eye Institute at the Johns Hopkins University and in his own private practice. Without his work, many

individuals would not have access to the help they need to make the most of their sight.

Dr. Alibhai is also a well known author and lecturer who has given numerous presentations to eye care professionals on issues related to low vision. In addition to these endeavors, Dr. Alibhai is committed to sharing his knowledge with the public. He often speaks at educational events and makes presentations to community groups about low vision.

An active member of the community, Dr. Alibhai has served as a board member for several vision organizations, including POB, and was an examiner for the National Board of Examiners in Optometry. Dr. Alibhai is also a member of the Fairfax Hosts Lions Club District 24-A and played an instrumental role in connecting the club with POB to develop POB's Low Vision Learning Center in Alexandria, VA. Since the center opened in 2010, Dr. Alibhai and his team have helped more than 750 individuals make the most of their sight.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of Virginia's 8th Congressional District, I want to extend my congratulations to Dr. Alibhai, recognizing him for his leadership, passion and most importantly, his commitment to improving the quality of life for people with low vision. We wish him continued success in his work both with POB and throughout Northern Virginia.

RECOGNIZING JUSTINA PICKARD AS THE 2012 WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA SCHOOL RELATED EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 16, 2012

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Justina Pickard as the 2012 Walton County, Florida School District Related Employee of the Year. Justina Pickard is an Instructional Aide at Maude Saunders Elementary, where she has proudly served for thirteen years.

Mrs. Pickard found her calling for teaching later in life than most. When her son began primary school, she volunteered in his classroom and fell in love with helping children. Even though Mrs. Pickard already possessed a Business Degree, her passion for teaching brought her back to school so that she could earn a degree in Early Childhood Education. Her educational background, passion for teaching, and ability to speak three languages make her among Northwest Florida's finest educators. Education is more than just teaching—it is about inspiring. Mrs. Pickard exemplifies this mantra. When she teaches, Mrs. Pickard bestows in her students that anything is attainable and through hard work, success is always within reach.

Mrs. Pickard attributes her excellence in the classroom to multiple factors with most importance accredited to her family and her church. Her dedication to the Northwest Florida Community, her family, and the First Baptist Church is certainly admirable.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize Justina Pickard on her achievement and contributions in the Walton County School District. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Mrs. Pickard, and we wish her all the best.