HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
MR. WILMOT N. SUMMERALL III
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to an outstanding public servant, Wilmot N. Summerall III, for his more than 33 years of service within the civilian leadership of the Department of Defense. It is my great pleasure to recognize his achievements and to thank him and his family for their service to the Navy and our nation.

Mr. Summerall began his public service as a mining engineer with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and is concluding his career as Executive Director for the Combatant Office, Program Executive Office, Ships, where he oversees one of the most complex acquisition portfolios in the Navy—including more than $36 billion in new construction programs, encompassing $16 billion currently under contract and $20 billion in future programs. Highly respected throughout the DoD acquisition community for his unsurpassed knowledge, unwavering perseverance, and the courage of his convictions, he leaves a long and lasting legacy to our nation—both through his unparalleled contributions to the strength and flexibility of our Navy’s surface forces and through the generation of professionals that he has mentored during his time in federal service.

Mr. Summerall has a long and distinguished career of innovative thinking and aggressive execution of shipbuilding programs across the entire spectrum of naval shipbuilding. Since joining the federal service in 1978, which includes becoming a member of the Senior Executive Service in 2004, he has held a variety of key leadership roles, including senior positions with the Naval Sea Systems Command and the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Management and Comptroller. A visionary leader and revered expert in the field of defense acquisition, Mr. Summerall has led the Navy’s surface combatant shipbuilding activities through some of the most challenging and dynamic times of our modern Navy—with vision, insight, and determination. Challenged to help build the Surface Fleet of the future in a profoundly austere fiscal environment, he has worked relentlessly to foster support and understanding for leading edge ship programs at the highest levels of the Navy, Defense, and Congress. He truly leads by example, consistently compelled to do the right thing on behalf of our nation’s Sailors and Marines—America’s sons and daughters—who serve on the products he has tirelessly supported. His efforts have helped result in a monumental leap forward in the strength and capability of the Navy’s current and future Surface Fleet.

In 2004, Mr. Summerall joined the Program Executive Office, Ships, where he played a critical role in defining and fielding the Navy’s future Surface Fleet. During his tenure and as a result of his sound stewardship, the Navy has commissioned 19 surface combatants into the Fleet, including the nation’s first two Littoral Combat Ships; restarted production of the Arleigh Burke (DDG 51) Class guided missile destroyers; and begun design and construction of the Navy’s next generation destroyer, the Zumwalt (DDG 1000) Class. In 2011 alone, he oversaw contract awards and options for an additional 26 ships, valued at $12 billion. He has consistently encouraged innovation and driving implementation of best practices across his programs, resulting in the introduction of hybrid electric drive, common class-wide acquisition management processes, bold changes to acquisition strategies, major increases in design maturity, more efficient work sequencing, increased competition and smart buying practices. At the heart of his efforts has been a relentless drive to improve the strength, capability, and flexibility of our operating forces at the best possible value to the American public.

Mr. Summerall’s contributions to our nation extend far beyond his material achievements and programmatic accomplishments. His unique ability to recognize talent and to foster respect and camaraderie throughout the workforce has had an enormous influence on our nation’s next generation acquisition professionals and will continue to steer the course of our Navy well into the future.

Throughout his distinguished federal service career, Mr. Summerall has been honored with numerous awards for his service, including the Meritorious Presidential Rank Award, the Department of Defense Value Engineering Award and the Department of the Navy Competition and Procurement Excellence Award. Mr. Summerall’s tireless leadership and lifelong commitment to the Navy’s shipbuilding capability have earned him the deep respect of his peers and shipmates throughout the Navy acquisition and fleet support communities. It is, therefore, a pleasure to recognize him for his many contributions in a life devoted to our nation’s security. I know my colleagues join me in wishing him and his wife Linda much happiness and fair winds and following seas as they begin a new chapter in their lives together.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for roll call votes 74–79. Had I been able to vote, I would have voted no on H. Res. 563, yes on the Grijalva amendment to H.R. 2117, yes on the Bishop amendment to H.R. 2117, yes on the Polis amendment #5 to H.R. 2117, yes on the Democratic motion to recommit H.R. 2117 and no on final passage of H.R. 2117.

This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor. Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appendix, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.
PASSING OF ANTHONY SHADID

HON. DAN BOREN
OF OKLAHOMA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. BOREN. Mr. Speaker, last week the world lost an incredible journalist, and Oklahoma lost a son: Anthony Shadid. At the time of his death Anthony was covering the turmoil in Syria, despite the many attempts to limit media coverage of the violence. This attitude marked Anthony’s entire career—he put the importance of sharing information before his personal safety. For 15 years, Anthony worked relentlessly to investigate and bring to light the events in the Middle East.

Anthony was a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner for his reporting on the US invasion of Iraq in 2004 and for the withdrawal of US troops six years later, but he transcended traditional reporting. He was unafraid as he pushed into the front lines, and he often faced dangerous situations head-on.

While Anthony Shadid will always be remembered for his courageous reporting, he also leaves behind a loving family. Anthony’s wife, Nada Bakri, is also a reporter for the New York Times; Anthony also has two young children, Malik and Laila. Several members of his family remain in Oklahoma, including his cousin Ed Shadid, a city councilman in Oklahoma City.

My family’s deepest sympathies go out to the Shadid’s and everyone else whose life was touched by Anthony.

IN HONOR OF LARRY HORAN

HON. SAM FARR
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of myself and my late father, State Senator Fred Farr, to honor the life of a dear family friend. Larry Horan, who died recently at the age of 80. Horan was a devoted public servant and devoted family man whose example of public service and dedication to others served as a model for everybody who has the good fortune to know him.

Larry and his wife of fifty-eight years, Jean, were both University of California graduates. They raised five children who in turn gave them twelve grandchildren. Larry and Jean’s deep friendship with my father made them almost a part of my own family, and I theirs. Indeed, as Larry’s melanoma took hold, he and Jean approached my wife Shary to help them work the issues that they faced as the end of Larry’s life neared. Horan was a devout Catholic who attended 8 a.m. Mass at the Carmelite Monastery virtually every day. I always knew Larry to be concerned about the others around him. It was never about Larry. I don’t think he had a negative bone in his body.

Larry was an attorney for more than fifty years and one of the most respected in Monterey County. During a rich and full life, he directed the Peace Corps in three Central and South American countries, was a regional director of President Johnson’s War on Poverty, served on the board of the Monterey Institute of International Studies, and was a leader of the Special Olympics. Horan’s wide-ranging law practice included civil litigation, conservation matters, and land use among other areas. Upon graduation from the Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California, Larry signed on as a prosecutor in the Alameda County District Attorney’s office. After five years as a prosecutor, my father, then state Sen. Fred Farr, lured Larry and his wife Jean to the Monterey Peninsula in 1960 to join his law firm. Their partnership and friendship lasted many years. The law partnership grew and transformed and has become one of the leading firms on the Central Coast, with the Horan name at the lead.

The Horans were great admirers of President John F. Kennedy, whose assassination in 1963 spared them to change their lives. Following JFK’s call to serve, Larry and Jean became a Peace Corps family. With their four young children, Kevin, Kathleen, Maurine, and Stephanie, they applied to serve in Central America. Larry eventually served as agency director in El Salvador and Costa Rica and in Colombia, where their youngest daughter Laura was born and where I was already serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Medellin. Following the Peace Corps, Sargent Shriver tapped Larry to head the Western Regional office for President Johnson’s War on Poverty. Later, Shriver asked Larry to establish and chair the Northern California Chapter of the Special Olympics.

Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for the whole House in recognizing the contributions that Larry Horan made to make this world a better place. We offer our condolences to his family and friends. Those of us who had the good fortune to have known Larry are better people for the experience.

IN HONOR OF KAY HIND

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.
OF GEORGIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Peace Corps on its 51st anniversary and to recognize the outstanding work the organization has done in its years of service since 1961. The Peace Corps has placed over 200,000 volunteers in 139 countries. While abroad, volunteers make significant contributions in developing nations through assistance with agriculture, business development, information technology, education, health, HIV/AIDS, youth development, and the environment.

I am honored to congratulate the Peace Corps. Currently, the Corps has over 9,000 volunteers throughout Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Central America, South America, Europe, the Pacific Islands, and the Middle East. As a member of the Foreign Operations Sub-committee I make a consistent effort to ensure that the Peace Corps has adequate funding to fulfill its mission. Peace Corps volunteers have
long been instrumental in improving millions of lives, in addition to helping foster strong relationships between the United States and other countries around the world. The assistance the Peace Corps volunteers provide is an outstanding example of the United States' commitment to making the world a better place through not only compassion, but also development opportunities, like language training, youth skills development services, and much more.

One shining example of the success of the Peace Corps is its tremendous leadership in the global fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In 2010, approximately 34 million people lived with HIV/AIDS, with 22 million of those cases located in sub-Saharan Africa. I firmly believe the work done by the Peace Corps has had a tremendous impact in areas that have been disproportionally exposed to this virus. The volunteers use their unique training to teach HIV/AIDS prevention in a way that is culturally sensitive to local customs allowing Peace Corps professionals to provide essential health services to HIV/AIDS patients.

Finally, I would like to take a moment and give special recognition to the members of our district who are currently serving in the Peace Corps:

- Manuel A. Colon, serving in Paraguay from 09-Dec-2010 until 05-Dec-2012
- Hannah Gdalman, serving in Guatemala from 16-Jul-2010 until 15-Jul-2012
- Marjone A. Larson, serving in Mali from 03-Sep-2010 until 10-Sep-2012
- Ryne G. Peterson, serving in Moldova from 08-Aug-2009 until 08-Jun-2012
- Phebe I. Phillips-Adeyelu, serving in Macedonia from 25-Nov-2010 until 24-Nov-2012
- Glenise A. Rice, serving in Panama from 01-Jul-2010 until 29-Jun-2012

Thank you Peace Corps for 51 years of global service and leadership.

TRIBUTE TO SISTER JOAN KATHLEEN

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR. OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sister Joan Kathleen for her continued contributions towards the advancement of the intellectually and developmentally disabled. As an educator, mentor, and member of St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Oak Ridge, New Jersey, Sister Joan has dedicated her life to bettering the lives of others.

Sister Joan is one of three children and grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. After graduating from St. Hubert's High School, Sister Joan went on to receive her Bachelor's degree at Chestnut Hill College. She then taught for several years at local Philadelphia elementary schools. After being encouraged by those in her community, Sister Joan went on to obtain a Master's degree in special education from Marywood University.

Soon after she received her Master's degree, Sister Joan began to minister to those with special needs at St. Patrick School in Pottsville, Pennsylvania and at Our Lady of Confidence School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

In 1989, Sister Joan joined the staff of the Department for Persons with Disabilities. Upon her arrival, Sister Joan was critical in establishing the "People Need Friends" program, which remains popular to this day. Sister Joan also coordinates the "Catholic Adult Religious Education" program, which provides religious instruction to the Department for Persons with Disabilities.

Not stopping there, Sister Joan also provides emotional and spiritual support to the family members and friends of the residents of the Department for Persons with Disabilities. She also provides ongoing support to the residents that are too sick to leave the Department for Persons with Disabilities nursing facilities. Recently, she has had the privilege of organizing the Catholic Charities New Jersey Annual Conference and was a member of the Committee for Evangelization under Bishop Serratelli.

For those lucky enough to know Sister Joan personally, they know that family means everything to her. Her weekends are often filled with trips to Philadelphia and the surrounding area to celebrate birthdays, graduations, and other significant events. In her free time, Sister Joan enjoys reading, crossword puzzles, traveling, and Scrabble.

The job of a United States Congressman involves much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing and commemorating the achievements of truly selfless individuals like Sister Joan Kathleen.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Sister Joan's family and friends, all those whose lives she has touched, and me in recognizing Sister Joan Kathleen.

RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY AS NATIONAL MARFAN AWARENESS MONTH

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of February as National Marfan Awareness Month and to acknowledge the hundreds of thousands of Americans who are living with Marfan syndrome and related connective-tissue disorders.

I am quite proud that the nation’s leading organization working to raise awareness of Marfan syndrome and support the Marfan community, the National Marfan Foundation, is located in my congressional district, in Port Washington, New York. The NMF was founded in 1981 by Priscilla Cicciariello, a woman of tremendous compassion and vision. Since then, NMF members and staff have worked tirelessly to improve the lives of individuals affected by Marfan syndrome and related connective-tissue disorders by advancing research, raising awareness, and providing support.

Marfan syndrome is a rare genetic condition that affects connective tissue in the human body. About one in 5,000 Americans carries a mutation in the fibrillin gene. This irregularity results in an overproduction of a protein called transforming growth factor beta or TGFβ. Increased TGFβ impacts connective tissue throughout the entire body. Patient symptoms often include disproportionately long limbs, a protruding or indented chest bone, curved spine, and loose joints. Of most concern is thoracic aortic disease, which is when a Marfan patient’s aorta, the large artery that carries blood away from the heart, is weakened and can result in a fatal rupture. It is for this reason that increased awareness of Marfan syndrome can save lives.

While there is no cure for Marfan syndrome, research is underway to enhance our understanding of the condition and improve patient care. I commend the scientists at the National Institutes of Health, particularly the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases for their research efforts in this regard. I encourage NIH to continue to expand its research of Marfan syndrome.

Early diagnosis and proper treatment are the keys to successfully managing Marfan syndrome so that patients can live a full life. I am pleased to announce that recently the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology released new treatment guidelines for thoracic aortic disease. We can facilitate proper treatment by raising awareness of these guidelines and we can help achieve an early diagnosis by raising awareness of Marfan syndrome and related connective-tissue disorders.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in raising awareness by observing Marfan Awareness Month.

IN HONOR OF THE NISEI VETERANS

HON. SAM FARR OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize thirty-four Congressional Gold Medal recipients from my District in Central California for their courageous service to our nation during World War II as part of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS), the 100th Infantry Battalion (100th Inf), and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT). Established on November 1, 1941, MIS graduated 6,000 service members during World War II to provide critical Japanese language capabilities to the American military. These brave servicemen and women provided translation, interpretation and code breaking services in the essential Pacific Theater, which contributed significantly to our nation’s victory.

In the 1970s, the MIS’s name changed to the Defense Language Institute, and all of the Department of Defense language programs were consolidated at Monterey, California. From there, the program grew into the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.

The 100th Inf was largely made up of former members of the Hawaii Army National Guard. It was a unit within the US Army’s 34th Infantry Division and later combined with the 442nd RCT, another mostly Nisei unit. Together as a single fighting combat team they saw action in Italy where they earned the nickname of “Purple Heart Battalion.” Following World War II, the battalion was reorganized into reserve status but over the decades it was ordered back into active service several times, most recently in Iraq.

The original MIS, the 100th Inf, and the 442nd RCT were primarily comprised of Nisei.
second-generation Japanese-Americans. They faced crushing prejudice and discrimination in the United States during WWII. Many of their family members suffered internment while they were serving their country. This exceptional group has received honors and commendations of the highest level. Our nation awarded the Medal of Honor to twenty-one members of the 100th Infantry Battalion of the 442nd RCT for heroism during WWII. In 2000, the MIS received the Presidential Unit Citation, the highest possible honor for a military unit, and in 2010 the Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to the 442nd RCT and the 100th Infantry as well as the 6,000 graduates of the MIS. At the end of the war, General Charles Willoughby, Chief of Staff for Military Intelligence under General MacArthur, said that “The Nisei shortened the Pacific War by two years and saved possibly a million American lives and saved probably millions of dollars” during the conflict.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be paying tribute to this outstanding group of men who selflessly served our nation during World War II proving their patriotism and bravery of second generation Japanese Americans. From the 100th Infantry Brigade: Louie Hayashida, Tom Kakimoto, Richard Kawamoto, Robert Kitagi, Ky Miyamoto, William Omoto, Kaz Sugano, and Sam Sugidono. From the 442nd Regimental Combat Team: Haruo Esaki, Yoshio Fujita, Royal Manaka, Yutaka Nagasaki, Winston Nakagawa, Fred Sakasegawa, Roy Sakasegawa, and Kunio Shimamoto. From the Military Intelligence Service: George Aihara, Sakasegawa, and Kunio Shimamoto. From the 6,000 graduates of the MIS.

Unfortunately, the harm that cuts to federal unemployment benefits make to working families is amplified when states, such as Michigan, enact legislation slashing state unemployment benefits. Last year, Governor Snyder signed House Bill 4408 into law. While this legislation included a necessary technical fix to preserve Michigan’s access to the federal Extended Benefits (EB) program, it paired this minor change with a harmful and misguided reduction in state unemployment benefits from 26 to 20 weeks, the lowest in the country. Not only does this cut 6 weeks of state benefits, more importantly it triggers a proportional reduction in federal benefits.

Under the Payroll Tax Cut Conference Report, this 6 week change to state benefits will result in Michigan giving up between 11 and 14 weeks of 100% federally funded benefits this year and Michigan’s unemployed workers losing access to more weeks of federal benefits than any state in the nation.

Our economy is moving in the right direction and we can’t afford to jeopardize middle class families’ livelihood by further recovery by risking the expiration of the Payroll Tax Cut, but we certainly cannot afford to ignore the long-term unemployment in Michigan and across the United States.

PAYROLL TAX CUT CONFERENCE REPORT (H.R. 3630)

HON. GARY C. PETERS
OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concerns with the recently released conference report by the Payroll Tax Cut Conference Committee. While I am pleased that enacting this conference report will stop a tax hike on middle class families by extending the Payroll Tax Cut through the end of the year, I strongly oppose pairing this must-pass provision with legislation that will slash the number of available weeks of unemployment benefits for American workers. I also find it deeply troubling that the text of legislation cutting unemployment benefits reprimands of American workers is available for public review less than 24 hours before a vote, despite the pledge by House Republicans to make bills publicly reviewable for 72 hours before a vote.

Replacements are forcing an unfair choice between tax cuts for the middle class and fully maintaining the safety net for unemployed workers. This is not a choice Congress should have to make, or that the American public should accept, especially when House Republicans in their Pledge to America promised to “end the practice of packaging unpopular bills with ‘must-pass’ legislation to circumvent the will of the American people” and “to advance major legislation one issue at a time.”

The long-term unemployment crisis and the need for a full extension of unemployment benefits deserve Congress’s full attention. This is why I led 70 of my colleagues in writing the Chairs of the conference committee along with House and Senate Leadership to urge them to include a full extension of unemployment benefits in the legislation. While our economy is showing signs of real recovery with 23 consecutive months of job growth, the fact remains that our nation is experiencing an unprecedented long-term unemployment crisis.

Unemployment benefits are a proven lifeline to families that they rely on to help pay for necessities such as rent, groceries, and utilities. Expansions to the unemployment insurance program enacted in the Recovery Act and subsequent legislation in 2009 and 2010 kept over 3 million Americans out of poverty in 2010, including over 900,000 children.

In 2009 and 2010, including over 900,000 children. In 2009 and 2010, including over 900,000 children.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF MRS. MARY ZUNT
HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH
OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Mrs. Mary Zunt, an iconic figure to the City of Cleveland.

Mary was born on August 16, 1939 in Cleveland, Ohio, where she attended Holy Name High School. Following a brief stint in New York City, Mary returned to Cleveland, where she was instrumental in establishing WVIZ-TV in 1965. She was also behind the station’s fund-raising auctions. In 1973, Mary was elected to Cleveland’s City Council to represent the residents of the West Park neighborhood. She fought for consumer protections, gun safety and criminal defense programs until an untimely death.

Following her career in public service, Mary went on to work in the construction industry. She oversaw projects such as renovations of the Gateway and Society Center, Bureau of Workers’ Compensation, the Glass Bowl Stadium and construction of the scoreboard at Jacobs Field.

In 1994, Mary left Cleveland and moved to Nice, France to study wine for two years. She
later moved to St. Helena, California where she worked at the St. Helena Catholic Church, caring for migrant workers. She also began to focus more on her writing and was taught creative writing at Napa Valley College. Mary was a feature writer for the Cleveland Plain Dealer and contributed to Cleveland Magazine, the Napa Valley Register and the St. Helena Star and Appellation Magazine. Mary also wrote a novel, “The Politics of Annie Quinn,” chronicling her experience on Cleveland’s City Council.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring the memory of Mrs. Mary Zunt. Her contributions to the City of Cleveland will be remembered for years to come.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF MRS. SARA LOUISE JONES PETTIS

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Mrs. Sara Louise Jones Pettis. Mrs. Pettis was a respected community activist in the Fort Lauderdale area, and her commitment to civic service was admirable. She recently passed away at the age of 90, and I would like to take this opportunity to extend my deepest sympathies to her family and all those who knew her.

Mrs. Pettis was a resident of Fort Lauderdale, Florida for 64 years. She married Mr. Cyrus Pettis in 1941, and the couple lived in Fort Lauderdale since first moving to the area in 1947. They both understood the importance of giving back to the community. Mr. Pettis was a postal worker, and Mrs. Pettis served as a teacher’s aide at multiple schools in Broward County.

Mrs. Pettis was known for her desire to improve the community. She was a lifetime member of the Parent Teacher’s Association, and she volunteered at local schools, churches, and numerous charitable organizations. Mrs. Pettis was ultimately credited for expediting the creation of the Dillard High School Gymnasium in 1959. Her dedication to improving the lives of the people of Broward County was truly remarkable.

In 1985, the Pettis family received a very special recognition from then-First Lady Nancy Reagan. The First Lady recognized the Pettis family as a Great American Family. Over 25 members of the Pettis family were in attendance at a special White House ceremony. The award is given to families leading exemplary lives, and giving back to their communities. The Pettis family is one of only nine other families to ever receive this award.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend Mrs. Pettis for her dedication to the people of Fort Lauderdale. I knew Mrs. Pettis personally, and I was saddened to hear of her passing. She had an extraordinary sense of civic duty, and I would like to extend my sympathies to not only her family and friends, but to the entire South Florida community, and all of those whose lives she touched. Mrs. Pettis will be truly missed.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL CLIFFORD GEORGE FORD

HON. JIM COSTA
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Lieutenant Colonel Clifford George Ford, distinguished veteran of the United States Air Force, loyal friend, and loving father. Clifford, a great-grandson, great-great-grandson, great-great-great-grandson, of the Union, led a life filled with resolve, self-reliance, and love. He was the importance he placed on family and kinship. Clifford leaves his family with many warm and cherished memories.

A note to Cliff, his grandson wrote, “every person is an example of the people they have spent their life with.” As we reflect on Cliff’s life, let us aspire to lead a life like his—one filled with resolve, self-reliance, and love.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the life of Lieutenant Colonel Clifford George Ford, an honored and respected man with an unwavering commitment to his loving family and our Nation.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF LITHUANIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH
OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the anniversary of the restoration of Lithuania’s independence, and the re-establishment of their independence as it is commemorated by the Cleveland Chapter of the Lithuanian American Community.

On February 16, 1918, the people of Lithuania declared their independence to the world as a distinct country with its own culture and traditions. The state was founded on democratic principles and its independence in a peaceful manner. However, Lithuania’s freedom was short-lived, as the country and its people were subjected to foreign occupation and conquest by the Nazi Germany regime and the U.S.S.R. during World War II. In 1940, the Soviet Union took control of Lithuania without the people’s consent. This unjust control of a free people lasted for 50 years. On March 11, 1990, upon the fall of the Soviet Union, the people of Lithuania re-established their independence, and once again, became a sovereign, free state.

The Lithuanian-American Community’s Cleveland Chapter has worked to connect the people of Cleveland of Lithuanian descent and to share their rich and vibrant culture with the community. I offer my best wishes for the upcoming celebration of their heritage and their independence.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in commemorating the independence of Lithuania and, in wishing the country and its people continued freedom and success.

HONORING SUPERINTENDENT SANDY THORSTENSON

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend Sandy Thorstenson for her leadership and dedication as Superintendent to the Whittier Union High School District.

Born and raised in Whittier, CA, Sandy has served as Superintendent of the Whittier Union High School District for 10 years. She is a graduate of Whittier High School and Whittier College with her Master’s Degree in Education from California University, Fullerton. Sandy started her 34-year career in the Whittier Union High School District as a teacher and quickly ascended to Assistant Principal, Principal, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, and ultimately Superintendent.

Under her leadership, Sandy has spearheaded Whittier Union’s transformation into a high-achieving district with five comprehensive high schools serving 13,400 students from socio-economically diverse backgrounds. Sandy and whatever it takes to ensure student achievement for all students, resulting in state and national recognition. Whittier Union High School District has demonstrated remarkable gains in student achievement at every school, becoming one of the top school districts in Los Angeles County.

Sandy is an active advocate for quality and equity in public education at the local, state, and national level as a member of many professional and community organizations. She currently serves on the California State Superintendent’s Council and is the current President of California City Superintendents Association. She is also a member of the Soroptimist International of Whittier, Whittier College Corporate
Council, and a past member of the Whittier Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

Due to these outstanding achievements for the school district and beyond, Sandy has been selected as California's National Superintendent of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators.

Mr. Speaker and distinguished colleagues, please join me in honoring this extraordinary woman whose love and dedication to our students is overwhelmingly obvious. Let us congratulate her on her many accomplishments to the Whittier Union High School District and our community.


HON. BRAD SHERMAN
OP CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the 24th anniversary of a dark chapter in modern history. During the Nagorno-Karabakh War of 1988 to 1994, Armenian civilians were indiscriminately attacked.

On February 27, 1988, Armenian civilians living in Sumgait, in Soviet Azerbaijan, were violently targeted in a three-day rampage. Armenian civilians were hunted down and brutally assaulted. Some were raped, and some were burned alive at the hands of rioters. Local police reportedly ignored repeated calls for help by Armenian civilians. The official figure from Soviet authorities, who prohibited journalists from entering the area, was just over 30 people dead and over 200 injured. However, it is believed that more—perhaps hundreds—were murdered by roving mobs.

The Sumgait Pogrom was, sadly, only the beginning.

Despite international condemnation of the pogrom in Sumgait, another anti-Armenian pogrom occurred later that year in Kirovabad, Azerbaijan, from November 21st to 27th. Due to the brutality, the Armenians of Kirovabad and the surrounding areas were forced to flee their homes.

Another crime against humanity occurred yet again from January 13th to the 19th, in 1990. Members of the Armenian community of Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, were assaulted, tortured and killed again by violent mobs.

I would like to commemorate the terrible crimes of the victims of the Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku pogroms. In every horror, the Armenians of Azerbaijan—and the surrounding areas were forced to flee their homes.

After these crimes, Armenian civilians were hunted down and brutally assaulted. Some were raped, and some were burned alive at the hands of rioters. Local police reportedly ignored repeated calls for help by Armenian civilians. The official figure from Soviet authorities, who prohibited journalists from entering the area, was just over 30 people dead and over 200 injured. However, it is believed that more—perhaps hundreds—were murdered by roving mobs.

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Despite international condemnation of the pogrom in Sumgait, another anti-Armenian pogrom occurred later that year in Kirovabad, Azerbaijan, from November 21st to 27th. Due to the brutality, the Armenians of Kirovabad and the surrounding areas were forced to flee their homes.

Another crime against humanity occurred yet again from January 13th to the 19th, in 1990. Members of the Armenian community of Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, were assaulted, tortured and killed again by violent mobs.

I would like to commemorate the Armenian victims of the pogroms in Sumgait, Kirovabad, and Baku massacre to honor the memory of the murdered, and to stop future bloodshed. If we hope to stop future massacres, we must acknowledge these horrific events and ensure they do not happen again.

We will not forget the ethnic-cleansing of the Armenians from Azerbaijan.

But we need to do more—we need to demonstrate to Azerbaijan that the United States is committed to peace and to the protection of Artsakh from coercion.

We must urge Azerbaijan to cease all threats and acts of coercion against the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh.

In 1992, Congress prohibited aid to Azerbaijan because of its continuing blockade against Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. Unfortunately, Congress in 2001 approved a waiver to this provision and administrations have used the waiver since then to provide aid to Baku. Congress should strengthen Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act by removing the President’s ability to waive U.S. law prohibiting aid to Azerbaijan because of its continuing blockade against Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh.

I urge the Administration to remove all barriers to broad-based U.S.-Nagorno Karabakh governmental and civil society communication, travel, and cooperation.

We must reaffirm America’s commitment to an enduring, peaceful and democratic resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOHNNY KILBANE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH
OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and memory of Cleveland’s Boxing Champion, Johnny Kilbane, on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of his attainment of the title of World Featherweight Championship.

Johnny Kilbane was born in Cleveland, Ohio on April 9th, 1889. He began his ascent into the boxing world at age eighteen with his first fight in the featherweight division. Throughout his career, Johnny fought in over 140 fights—resulting in 46 victories, 79 no decisions and only four losses. On February 22, 1912, in a 20 rounder in Vernon, California, Johnny Kilbane won his first world title in a fight against Abe Attell. The fight was for the World Featherweight Championship, a title he would hold from 1912 to 1923. Kilbane is believed to have held that title for the longest uninterrupted reign in boxing history.

A Cleveland local, Kilbane held a number of positions after he retired from the boxing world. During World War II, he worked as a boxing instructor at Camp Gordon in Georgia, Camp Sherman in Ohio, and Camp Custer in Michigan. He was also a boxing referee and instructor at local high schools. He operated a training club in Vermillion.

Johnny Kilbane transitioned into politics as well, and was elected to the Ohio State Senate in 1941. He also held office as a State Representative, and was elected to the Municipal Court Clerk’s Office in 1951, a role which he served until his death in 1957.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring the life of Johnny Kilbane and the 100th anniversary of his achievement of the title of World Featherweight Championship.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SOMERSET COUNTY MILITARY FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

HON. MARK S. CRITZ
OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. CRITZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a military support group in my district that provides deployed members of our armed forces and their families with material support, emotional comfort and spiritual sustenance.

Founded in 2003, the Somerset County Military Family Support Group sends deployed service members monthly packages containing food, health products, books, letters and games. The group also counsels family members of deployed military personnel, takes part in festivals and parades in order to pay homage to the sacrifices of our soldiers, gathers and distributes information about pressing issues facing members of the military and their families and holds annual candlelight vigils to honor those who have worn our nation’s colors in battle.

Because the group is comprised largely of veterans and individuals from military families, its members understand the physical and psychological strain our troops experience each day they are separated from their families, and the emotional turmoil the family members of these service members are forced to endure as a result of knowing that someone they love is in harm’s way. That they chose to use their first-hand knowledge of these struggles to craft a renowned military support program speaks to their capacity to turn hardship into an outstanding gift for others.

Mr. Speaker, while all of us appreciated the valor and sacrifices of our troops, only the most talented and proactive among us are able to act on this appreciation in a way that makes an impact on thousands of lives. The Somerset County Military Family Support Group has not only accomplished this, but has done so while spreading the spirit of service throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. All of us should seek to emulate the selfless efforts of its members in our own efforts to promote the greater good.

TRIBUTE TO SUNY CANTON FIRST RESPONDERS

HON. WILLIAM L. OWENS
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the heroism of those responsible for safely controlling a fire that broke out on campus at SUNY Canton this month.

Following a fire in the chemistry lab inside Cook Hall, it was the unquestionable valor and commitment of these men and women that protected students, faculty and administrators. These individuals acted with the utmost professionalism and courage when called to duty and protected members of their community. These first responders prevented untold psychological strain our troops experience each day they are separated from their families, and the emotional turmoil the family members of these service members are forced to endure as a result of knowing that someone they love is in harm’s way. That they chose to use their first-hand knowledge of these struggles to craft a renowned military support program speaks to their capacity to turn hardship into an outstanding gift for others.

Mr. Speaker, while all of us appreciated the valor and sacrifices of our troops, only the most talented and proactive among us are able to act on this appreciation in a way that makes an impact on thousands of lives. The Somerset County Military Family Support Group has not only accomplished this, but has done so while spreading the spirit of service throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. All of us should seek to emulate the selfless efforts of its members in our own efforts to promote the greater good.
IN CELEBRATION OF MRS. GRACE VIRGINIA RICHARDSON HUMPHREY CUTTS' 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR. OF GEORGIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an inspiring mentor, beloved educator, respected community leader and the trans-generational pillar in Dawson, Georgia—Mrs. Grace Virginia Richardson Humphrey Cutts. On Saturday, March 3, 2012, Mrs. Cutts will be honored at an event celebrating her 100th birthday. This highly anticipated event will be attended by Mrs. Cutts' family members, friends, former colleagues, well-wishers and former students.

Mrs. Grace Virginia Richardson Humphrey Cutts was born on March 2, 1912 in Dawson, Georgia to Walter Revenna Richardson and Clara Louise Cochran Richardson. As a 92-year member of the Adoration Temperance Obedience Charity African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Dawson, Georgia, Mrs. Cutts is a woman who has been guided by her strong moral convictions and Christian faith. As a tenured member of Adoration Temperance Obedience Charity AME Church, Mrs. Cutts has served as the church pianist, secretary and a stewardess.

Mrs. Cutts was raised in the rural South in the 1920s, a period in our nation's history in which most African-Americans had limited opportunities to pursue their educational dreams. Despite the numerous societal challenges that lay in her path, Mrs. Cutts would go on to graduate from Allen Normal and Industrial School. After she obtained her high school diploma, Mrs. Cutts enrolled in Georgia Normal and Agricultural College and graduated from the institution in 1949.

Understanding the importance of a quality education, Mrs. Cutts served as a teacher for 45 years. As an instructor, Mrs. Cutts helped generations of young scholars reach their full potential and obtain excellent educations. Even in retirement, Mrs. Cutts continued to serve as a mentor and tutor for young students in her community.

Mrs. Cutts has achieved numerous successes in her life, but none of this would have been possible without the support of her late first husband Calvin Homer Humphrey; late second husband Sammie Lee Cutts; late son Calvin Walter Humphrey; grandchildren; and great-grandchildren.

George Washington Carver once said, “How far you go in life depends on your being tenacious of the weak and strong because someday in your life you will have been all of these.” Mrs. Cutts has advanced far in life because of her strong moral convictions and Christian faith. Currently, more than 31 million Americans are affected by Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) and millions more are at risk. Kidney Disease is the slow loss of kidney function over time and, if left untreated, gradually progresses to end-stage renal disease marked by the complete loss of kidney function. While there is no cure for CKD, proper lifelong treatment can slow the onset of kidney failure and help control the symptoms of this devastating disease.

In the spirit of National Kidney Month, I encourage my fellow Members of Congress to participate in these events on Capitol Hill and events hosted in their districts and to consider joining the Congressional Kidney Caucus in support of efforts to ensure your staff reach out to my office if you are interested in the schedule of events or if you are interested in joining the Caucus.

On a personal note, I would like to not only congratulate Mrs. Cutts on becoming a distinguished centenarian but also express my profound gratitude to her for her outstanding contributions to America’s education system and her principled advocacy on behalf of our nation’s students.

NATIONAL KIDNEY MONTH

HON. JESSE L. JACKSON, JR. OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with more than 60 of my colleagues of the Congressional Kidney Caucus in support of the goals and ideals of National Kidney Month which begins tomorrow.

Each year, the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases as well as leading kidney care organizations recognize March as National Kidney Month to promote public awareness, education, screening and detection throughout the nation.

The Congressional Kidney Caucus, which was established in 2002, has partnered with a number of kidney organizations to promote policies that benefit patients with kidney disease and provide Members and their staff the most comprehensive, up-to-date information related to this disease.

Throughout the month of March, the Caucus supports the thousands of kidney advocates and groups that are expected to visit Capitol Hill to discuss their experiences and advocate for enhanced patient care, research and public education and prevention.

In the spirit of National Kidney Month, I encourage my fellow Members of Congress to participate in these events on Capitol Hill and events hosted in their districts and to consider joining the Congressional Kidney Caucus in support of these efforts. Let your staff reach out to my office if you are interested in the schedule of events or if you are interested in joining the Caucus.

IN RECOGNITION OF SISTER KATHLEEN KILBANE

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Sister Kathleen Kilbane and to...
acknowledge her receipt of the Walks of Life Award from the Irish American Archive Society. Sister Kathleen has dedicated her life to the homeless and to students of the Greater Cleveland area.

Sister Kathleen attended high school in Cleveland, Westlake, and graduated from St. Joseph Academy. She later earned a bachelor’s degree in education from St. John College and a master’s degree from Cleveland State University.

In 1952, Sister Kathleen entered the nunnerly at St. Clement in Lakewood. Early on, she devoted most of her time as a grammar school teacher at Annunciation, St. Angela Merci, St. Aloysius, St. Mary and St. Colman schools. In 1977, the West Side Catholic Center was established to assist the elderly and homeless; Sister Kathleen was named the director. Twenty years later, in 1997, Sister Kathleen established Seeds of Literacy, an organization dedicated to helping high school drop-outs earn their diplomas.

Because of her relentless work to support those in need, in 2000, the West Side Catholic Center honored Sister Kathleen with the Dorothy Day Humanitarian Award.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in congratulating Sister Kathleen Kilbane as she is honored by the Irish American Archive Society.

CONGRATULATING THE WAIALUA HIGH SCHOOL ROBOTICS TEAM, THE ‘HAWAIIAN KIDS,’ ON WINNING THE 2011 FIRST CHAIRMAN’S AWARD

HON. MAIZE K. HIRONO OF HAWAII IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Waialua High School Robotics Team, the “Hawaiian Kids,” on winning the prestigious Chairman’s Award at the 2011 FIRST Robotics World Championships and to recognize their impressive contributions to the founding and expansion of robotics in Hawaii. The FIRST Chairman’s Award recognizes a program’s contributions to robotics, service to other robotics programs, and overall excellence. Waialua High School was one of 48 teams nationwide competing for the prize.

The judges of the 2011 FIRST Championship described the winning team as “helping transform the region from an area of agricultural industry decline to one where the accomplishments of these students are celebrated as an indicator of promise for the future.” All of the team members of the “Hawaiian Kids” graduate from high school, compared to the region’s average of a less than 30 percent graduation rate, and all of the school’s valedictorians in the past four years have been members of the robotics team. The team has shown great promise as science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) leaders and innovators with 90 percent of the members pursuing careers in STEM fields.

Founded in 1999 by Glenn Lee, a Career and Technical Education Teacher and a grad student engineering, the FIRST High School Robotics Program has become a model for engaging students in STEM and college-readiness courses. The “Hawaiian Kids” were the first FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) team in Hawaii and initiated the development of other teams statewide. Its accomplishments have been shared with local government representatives, their community, and schools throughout our State. Today, close to one-third of Hawaii’s high schools have an FRC team, the highest percentage of involvement in the Nation.

While the “Hawaiian Kids” have experienced great success over the past few years, they continue to embrace their program’s motto: “It’s not all about winning, it’s about teamwork, commitment and responsibility.” Congratulations to the members of the Waialua High School Robotics Team for all their accomplishments, their dedication sharing robotics and STEM education with their peers, and continuing to raise Hawaii’s academic standards.

Mahalo nui loa (thank you very much).

RECOGNIZING THE CARSON WOMEN’S CLUB AND EDWARD TILLMON, A TUSKEGEE FIGHTER PILOT

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON OF CALIFORNIA IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Carson Women’s Club, based in my congressional district, for the wonderful work it has accomplished over the years and their unwavering commitment to our local community.

The Carson Women’s Club was founded in 1968 as a non-profit, non-political organization with a mission to serve as the official hostess of the City of Carson by supporting and promoting scholarships, and by engaging in community service activities focused on making Carson stronger.

The Carson Women’s Club has an active presence in local charity work. For example, each year on the 4th of July, Club members bring food to the on-duty firefighters at all stations in Carson. The Club also sends Thanksgiving baskets to 15 adopted Carson elementary schools and organizes a Christmas toy drive for the children at the El Nido Center. Mr. Speaker, the Carson Women’s Club is a shining example of civic commitment, mutual trust, respect, and equal treatment without regard to race, sex, or ethnicity. The Club promotes mutual cooperation between individuals of different backgrounds through its diverse membership and informative community engagement events.

This past weekend, I had the opportunity to attend a Carson Women’s Club event in my district honoring members of the Los Angeles Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. The Tuskegee Airmen were the first black military airmen in the United States. This heroic group of 13,000 young African American men overcame institutionalized racism to become one of the most distinguished fighter units in World War II.

At the meeting, we were fortunate enough to be graced with the presence of Mr. Edward Tillmon, a surviving Tuskegee Airman who reminded us of the remarkable accomplishments of the Tuskegee Airmen—both in and out of combat.

Through his experience growing up in a segregated America, Mr. Tillmon learned that hard work and perseverance are the key to overcoming obstacles that seem impenetrable. Mr. Tillmon expressed his appreciation for the challenges and opportunities that accompanied his time at war while holding fast to beliefs that the successes of the Tuskegee Airmen would not have been possible if it were not for the strong sense of camaraderie between the members. They were truly a band of brothers.

Edward Tillmon continues to serve his nation by preserving the Tuskegee Airmen legacy through his association with the Angeles based “Tuskegee Airmen Scholarship Foundation”, which was established in 1979 to provide annual scholarships to exceptional young students in their quest for academic excellence.

Mr. Speaker, Edward Tillmon served his nation with pride, even at a time when African Americans were treated like second-class citizens. The legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen is one of courage and heroism in the face of adversity and their story has provided many with the inspiration necessary to achieve their goals.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to recognize the contributions of the Carson Women’s Club and Edward Tillmon and to thank them for their service to our community and our nation.

INTRODUCTION OF WORKING FAMILIES FLEXIBILITY ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY OF NEW YORK IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, as a result of demographic shifts over the last 50 years, the modern workforce has a different, more diverse set of needs. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 70 percent of children are raised in families that are headed by either a working single parent or two working parents. The number of married households with children where both parents were in the labor force rose to 66 percent in 2010, while the number of single parent families has almost tripled over the last fifty years, from 5 percent in 1960, to 14 percent in 2010. Furthermore, more households are caring for older relatives as medical advances mean people are living longer, with studies showing that almost 60 percent of those who provide unpaid care to an adult or to a child with special needs are employed.

Flexible work arrangements are the key to meeting these diverse workforce needs. Such voluntary arrangements between employees and employers include changing the time, amount, and/or place that work is conducted in order to allow workers to more easily meet the needs of both work and family life. To give employees the right to request flexible work options in terms of hours, schedules, and work location, today I am introducing the Working Families Flexibility Act. This legislation also provides employers with flexibility by encouraging them to review these requests, propose changes, and even deny them if they are not in the best interest of the business.

Having flexible workplace policies has been shown to boost employee satisfaction and morale as well as improve business bottom line.
These policies help businesses retain key talent, reduce absenteeism, and enhance employee productivity. President Obama's Council on Economic Advisors found that as more firms adopt flexibility practices the benefits to society, in the form of reduced traffic, improved employment outcomes, and more efficient allocation of workers to employers, may be greater than the gains to individual firms and workers. In addition, a 2011 U.S. Government Accountability Office report found that a flexible work environment can increase and enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Flexibility is clearly a win-win for employees and employers. I offer special thanks to Senator Bob Casey for introducing Senate companion legislation, and to my colleagues Representatives John Lewis, George Miller, and Jose Serrano for their cosponsorship.

HONORING MR. ROELOF VAN ARK
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Roelof van Ark, who will soon end his term as the chief executive of the California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA). There is no textbook on how to build high-speed rail in America; it has never been done before. For the past two years Mr. van Ark has written the first chapter of that book by dedicating himself wholly to building the nation's first true high-speed rail system in California. He deserves our recognition and true appreciation for all the work he has done for California and our nation.

For three decades, Mr. van Ark has worked on high-speed rail and other transportation systems throughout the world. Before becoming only the second chief executive since the Authority was formed in 1996, he led ALSTOM Transportation, Inc., for five years. Mr. van Ark previously worked in Germany and South Africa for Siemens Transportation Systems, a global leader in high-speed rail systems. During his more than 20 year tenure with Siemens, he successfully constructed complex infrastructure projects such as the “Skytrain” in Bangkok, several subways throughout China, and high-speed rail lines in Germany. He ended his time with Siemens while working in Sacramento as President and Chief Executive Officer of the company.

His lifetime of experience enabled him to bring such tremendous expertise and leadership to the implementation of California's high-speed rail project. I applaud Roelof van Ark for his years of tireless work on behalf of the California High-Speed Rail Authority and the state of California. Mr. van Ark has truly laid the groundwork for the nation's first high-speed rail system, and I hope he will join me in riding the first train that departs from San Francisco en route to Los Angeles via the San Joaquin Valley. All Californians will be better off due to the service and sacrifice of this great leader.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great appreciation that I ask my Colleagues to stand with me in thanking Roelof for his work in advancing modern modes of transportation within the United States and around the world. Please join me today in recognizing the commitment, dedication and success of Mr. Roelof van Ark and wish him well as he embarks on new endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF JANICE G. MURPHY
HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH
OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Janice G. Murphy and to acknowledge her receipt of the Walks of Life Award from the Irish American Archive Society. A Cleveland native, Mrs. Murphy has dedicated her life to improving the health of others.

Mrs. Murphy began her career in the health care industry while serving as a nun with the Sisters of Notre Dame. She left the convent upon discovery of her true calling in life and began classes at Fairview Hospital's School of Nursing. She later earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from Bowling Green State University and a master's degree from the University of Akron.

Mr. van Ark worked as a nurse at Fairview Hospital in oncology and later coronary care. She was named chief nursing officer and in 2007, became the hospital's chief operating officer. While leading Fairview Hospital, Mrs. Murphy was also the president of Lakewood Hospital, a role in which she served for nearly three years. Today she remains the president of Fairview Hospital.

In addition to running two of Cleveland's premier hospitals, Mrs. Murphy serves on the boards of the Ursuline Community Advisory Board, North Coast Health Ministry, St. Joseph Academy and Hospice of Western Reserve. She has also been awarded the Cleveland Clinic Western Region Leadership Award and Baldwin Wallace Healthcare Award.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in congratulating Janice G. Murphy as she is honored by the Irish American Archive Society.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF U.S.-AZERBAIJAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS
HON. GENE GREEN
OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my Colleagues to join me in recognizing the 20th year of diplomatic relations with our friend and key ally, Azerbaijan.

On February 19, 1992, the United States and Azerbaijan initiated formal diplomatic relations and on March 6 of that year Azerbaijan opened their embassy in the United States. The United States opened our embassy in Baku, Azerbaijan on March 16.

After the fall of the former Soviet Union and the independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, we have seen a growing need for strong allies in the region. Azerbaijan, a predominantly secular Muslim country bordered by Russia to the north and Iran to the south, is a natural partner to promote peace, stability, and economic prosperity in this important part of the world.

Azerbaijan was among the first to join us in the War Against Terror, sending troops to Afghanistan that served alongside our service men and women, and through the lens of war, today, Azerbaijan offers a crucial route to transport supplies to our troops in Afghanistan.

Azerbaijan is also a key contributor in promoting energy security internationally. The opening of the BTC pipeline in 2005 allowed Caspian oil to reach the world market via Georgia and Turkey, bypassing Russia.

With the recent arrival of Ambassador Elin Suleymanov to Washington, DC, I look forward to working with the Embassy to further strengthen this important relationship.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT
HON. MIKE COFFMAN
OF COLORADO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was $10,626,877,048,913.08. Today, it is $15,442,129,683,688. We've added $4,815,243,820.08 to our debt in 3 years. This is debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. MIKE CLEARY
HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH
OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Mike Cleary and to acknowledge his receipt of the Walks of Life Award from the Irish American Archive Society.

Mr. Cleary was raised in East Cleveland by his parents, both of whom were immigrants from Ireland. He graduated from St. Ignatius High School before attending John Carroll University. Mike also served for the U.S. Navy for two years aboard the USS Lake Champlain, an aircraft carrier.

Prior to his retirement in 2011, Mr. Cleary worked in the collegiate and professional sports arena for 46 years. Early on in his career, he worked as a general manager for the Cleveland Pipers and Kansas City Steers. He later entered intercollegiate athletics and worked as the director of championship events for the National Collegiate Athletic Association. In 1965, he was hired as the executive director for the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics.

Mr. Cleary was also the fund administrator for the John McLendon Minority Scholarship Foundation and served on the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority and U.S. Olympic Committee. He is highly regarded in the athletic world and has been recognized by the National Football Federation, College Hall of Fame, and in 2009, he was inducted into the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.
Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in congratulating Mr. Mike Cleary as he is honored by the Irish American Archive Society.

HONORING JOSEPH J. VINCI, SR., ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. ROSA L. DELAURRO
OF CONNECTICUT
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. DelLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to join family, friends, and the City of Middletown in honoring one of its most outstanding community members, Joseph J. Vinci, Sr. as he celebrates his 100th birthday—a remarkable milestone for this ordinary citizen.

A lifelong Middletown resident, J.J., as he is affectionately known, married his wife, Mary, in November of 1934. Together, they not only raised three wonderful children, Joseph J. Jr., Robert, and Rosemarie, they also opened and ran their family business, J.J. Vinci Oil. The home heating oil business is not the easiest of businesses to run, but J.J. and Mary worked hard every day to build the business and provide for their family. For more than seven decades, J.J. Vinci Oil has been a staple in the Middletown business community and its success over the years has been because of the dedication of its founder, J.J., who at 100 years young can still be found in the office every day.

J.J. has not only been an outstanding business leader, but an exemplary civic leader as well. He has always understood that his community is only as strong as those who give back to it. Throughout his life, J.J. has devoted countless hours to a variety of local service organizations. The myriad of awards and commendations which have been bestowed on him are testament to his unparalleled efforts on behalf of the community. He is a charter member of the New England Association of Fire Marshals, Connecticut Chiefs of Police Association, twenty-five year charter member of the Connecticut Independent Oil Men’s Association, life member of the State of Connecticut 100 Club, one of the original founders of the Middletown Italian-American Civic Order, twenty-five year Chairman of the St. Sebastian Cadillac Committee, member of the St. Sebastian Renovation Committee, lifetime member of the Benevolent Protective Order of Elks, Moose Club, and Knights of Columbus Fourth Degree, to name but a few. Through his work with each of these organizations, J.J. has made a difference in the lives of others and has enriched the community.

Marking decades of hard work, this birthday celebration reflects J.J.’s extraordinary resilience and strength of spirit. Over the course of his life, he has not only witnessed remarkable changes and tremendous progress he has helped to shape the very character of the City of Middletown. It is with my warmest regards that I join his children, Joseph Jr., Robert, and Rosemarie, his grandson, Michael, and his great-grandchildren, Nicholas, Lauren, and Christian in extending my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for many more years of health and happiness.

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN
OF MASSACHUSETTS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, demagoguing the hungry, unfortunately, has become a regular occurrence during this Republican presidential primary season. The truth is that the majority of the hungry struggle to put food on their table not because they are lazy but because of circumstances outside of their control. Many are unemployed at no fault of their own. Others simply don’t earn enough and need help supplementing their monthly budget. But all of the hungry, all of those who are relying on America’s anti-hunger safety net programs, deserve the helping hand they are receiving. And none of these 50 million food insecure people deserve to be demagogued simply because they have trouble putting food on their kitchen tables.

Last week, I met with Andrew Morehouse, the executive director of the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. Mr. Morehouse shared with me an op-ed he wrote for the Daily Hampshire Gazette titled “Stop demagoguing our food safety net.” Mr. Morehouse makes a clear, coherent and smart argument that attacking the hungry is wrong for both moral and economic reasons. I respectfully urge my colleagues to read this important op-ed.

I submit this op-ed into the RECORD.

From the GazetteNET, Feb. 7, 2012
ANDREW MOREHOUSE: STOP DEMAGOGING OUR FOOD SAFETY NET

HATFIELD.—Former Northampton Mayor Clare Higgins made some eloquent points about hunger and food stamps in her recent column, “Beyond food stamp buzzwords” (Jan. 28).

I, too, feel compelled to set the record straight so that the general public has a more complete—and critical issue at this juncture in our nation’s history. Attacks on SNAP (the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as Food Stamps) can be found in some corners of the public discourse these days. Republican presidential candidates have blamed entitlement programs such as SNAP—and those who receive benefits from them—for the country’s deficit problem.

Newt Gingrich has even claimed that “more people are on food stamps today because of Obama’s policies than ever in history.” It’s true that the number of food stamp recipients has risen over the past few years, but the unemployment rate has also increased 110 percent since 2006. As millions of Americans find themselves out of work, those who seek assistance from programs like SNAP to help meet their basic needs. The Census Bureau estimates that food stamps helped to keep 3.9 million people above the poverty line in 2010.

Equally misleading is Gingrich’s characterization of SNAP as a race issue, with comments like, “I’m prepared, if the NAACP inns to be used. I’m not prepared to talk about why the African-American community should demand paychecks and not be satisfied with food stamps.” This statement reinforces a false perception that people of color are the primary recipients of SNAP benefits. The truth is that 49 percent of SNAP recipients are white, while blacks comprise 26 percent and Latinos 20 percent of recipients.

SNAP received more biased criticism in a recent Wall Street Journal op-ed piece by Warren Kozak (Jan. 30), which declared hunger in America a myth.

Kozak claims that food government programs like SNAP waste billions of dollars providing food to people that are not really in need of help. Tell that to the 110,000 people in western Massachusetts, the majority children, elders, or the disabled—who wouldn’t have a meal tonight without their SNAP benefits or food assistance from our region’s emergency food network.

What Gingrich and Kozak don’t seem to understand is that SNAP is not only a life-line for millions of households facing hunger. It is also an economic stimulus. SNAP allows families to put food on their table, and provides food dollars that are spent locally. According to the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, SNAP generates approximately $406 million annually in total economic activity in western Massachusetts. SNAP doesn’t cause recessions, it responds to them until the economy turns around by supporting vulnerable households while injecting much-needed revenue for local food businesses and employers thousands of residents in our communities.

The fact is that hunger is a very real problem in our country—and right here in Western Massachusetts. At least one in every eight residents of western Massachusetts relies on emergency food to avert hunger. More than 45,000 people seek food assistance each month in our region, a 25 percent increase compared just three years ago.

Here at the Food Bank, we believe that no one should have to go hungry. Without jobs that provide the necessary income to support households, SNAP and other government programs are crucial for the region’s emergency food network. Without these programs, thousands more households in our region would find their cupboards empty on a regular basis.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF MR. STEPHEN O’CONNOR DIEMERT, JR.

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH
OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Mr. Stephen O’Connor Diemert, Jr.

Born in 1932, Stephen was destined to serve his country and the Greater Cleveland community. He served as a private in the United States Army from July 1953 through March of 1955. After returning home, Mr. Diemert began his career as a firefighter in January of 1961. He stopped working for the city in January of 1985. Mr. Diemert was also a long-time member of the American Legion Firefighter Post 339 and served as the Director of Fire Affairs for Silver and Gold, a fraternal organization dedicated to “supporting the Safety Forces of Northeast Ohio.”

Stephen was preceded in death by his wife, Carol; children, Stephen (deceased) and Cindy, Robert, Laura and Tony, Mary Lou and Mike and Matthew and Vicki; grandchildren, A.J., Sara, Stephanie, Hanna, Katie and Gary; great-grandchildren, Karen, Fallon and Brucey; nieces and nephews.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring the memory of Mr. Stephen O’Connor Diemert, Jr.
RECOGNIZING ANGELA BRUSCATO

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER
OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is with enormous pride and admiration that I rise today to recognize Angela Bruscato.

Angie joined the St. Francis Medical Center volunteer program in May of 1975, and recently surpassed 20,000 hours of service. Needless to say, this is a tremendous feat.

In her long-standing role as a volunteer, Angie has been recognized for her caring service. Over the years, this extraordinary woman has been awarded the Auxiliary of the Year, bestowed St. Francis Medical Center’s Certificate of Merit for Dedicated Auxiliary Service, and last year, Angie was named one of my Hometown Heroes.

Angie has provided decades of consistent strength and a caring heart for the patients and staff of St. Francis Medical Center. I am honored to bring forth her exceeding 20,000 volunteer hours before this body and our Nation today.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARINE CORPS LOGISTICS BASE IN ALBANY, GEORGIA

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.
OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the men and women who have served and currently serve at the Marine Corps Logistics Base (MCLB) in Albany, Georgia. On Thursday, March 1, 2012 base personnel, Armed Services veterans and local dignitaries will celebrate the facility’s 60th anniversary.

Over the last 60 years, the brave men and women who have served at MCLB, Albany have made significant contributions in defending our homeland and safeguarding our liberties.

On March 1, 1952, MCLB, Albany was commissioned as the Marine Corps Depot of Supplies. By 1954 the station was sufficiently complete with warehouses and administration buildings to assume supply support for Marines east of the Rocky Mountains and in the Atlantic area.

In 1967, the base became a Storage Activity and Depot Maintenance Activity.

On January 17, 1990, the Commandant of the Marine Corps designated the Commanding General, Marine Corps Logistics Base, Albany to also be Commander, Marine Corps Logistics Bases. The reorganization placed control of Marine Corps Logistics Base, Barstow, California; Blount Island Command, Jacksonville, Florida, as well as Marine Corps Logistics Base, Albany under this single command.

Over the last several decades, MCLB, Albany has provided exceptional support to the Marine Air Ground Task Forces sent to Southwest Asia. The MCLB, Albany military and civilian team’s hard work and dedication, combined with equal efforts from MCLB, Barstow and Blount Island Command, have reaped outstanding results for our nation’s Armed Services.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the pleasure of traveling to many U.S. military installations around the world and the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany, Georgia is one of the finest military bases I have ever had the pleasure of visiting.

Through my ongoing interaction with MCLB, Albany personnel, one of the things I have come to admire about our nation’s Marines is that their commitment to serving our country does not end once they separate from Active Duty.

MCLB, Albany Marines hold themselves to a higher standard—that service to our nation is a lifelong commitment, not just a tour of duty. Whether it is going on to work as policemen, fire fighters, teachers or business professionals, a MCLB, Albany Marine’s commitment to making our nation better remains at the fundamental core of what not only makes them great during their Armed Services career, but what will also make them invaluable members of our society once their military careers end and their transition into civilian life begins.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to the men and women who have served at the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany, Georgia over the last 60 years for their outstanding valor and patriotic service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JESSE L. JACKSON, JR.
OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, February 27, and Tuesday, February 28, 2012, I was unavoidably detained for personal reasons, and missed the recorded vote for the Senate Amendment to H.R. 347, the Federal Restricted Buildings and Grounds Improvement Act, H. Res. 563, providing for consideration of H.R. 2117, the Protecting Academic Freedom in Higher Education Act.

If present, I would have recorded my votes as the following: On Monday, February 27, “yea,” on rollcall vote 73; on Tuesday, February 28, “nay,” on rollcall vote 74, “yea” on rollcall vote 75, “yea” on rollcall vote 76, “yea” on rollcall vote 77, “yea” on rollcall vote 78, and “nay” on rollcall vote 79.

CELEBRATING ST. FRANCIS MEDICAL CENTER’S AUXILIARY MEMBERS

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER
OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the St. Francis’s Auxiliary Members ringing in their 85th year of service and assistance to the patients of the medical center. These men and women have dedicated countless hours to help those during times of need, and I am evermore grateful.

To say that this group is a source of strength within the Monroe community is an understatement. Bringing comfort and hope to patients and their families is a priceless gift. They have made a real difference in the lives of many, and I commend each member, past and present, for their admirable service and leadership.

This group is among Louisiana’s finest, and it is an honor to pay tribute to the 85th anniversary of such devoted and selfless individuals. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in applauding such an outstanding benchmark.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF BARBARA DOUGLAS

HON. EDOULPHUS TOWNS
OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in great sadness to mark the passing of Barbara Douglas, an exceptional businesswoman and a champion of the game of golf who displayed tremendous courage during her three-year battle with cancer.

Although Barbara faced challenges and endured discrimination as a female and minority, she never let that get in the way of her personal and professional goals. She was a successful executive for IBM, but what she was most well-known for was her passion and contributions to the game of golf.

Barbara started playing golf on New York-area public courses and went on to compete as an adult in the U.S. Women’s Amateur Public Links, a United States Golf Association national tournament.

In her long-standing role as a volunteer, Angie has provided decades of consistent strength and a caring heart for the patients and staff of St. Francis Medical Center. I am honored to bring forth her exceeding 20,000 volunteer hours before this body and our Nation today.
At home, however, Georgia confronts the unresolved conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In December, I chaired a briefing by the Helsinki Commission that examined the conflicts in the Caucasus, including Abkhazia and South Ossetia as well as Nagorno-Karabakh. I was impressed by the witnesses’ expert testimony and concerned by their warning about the possibility of renewed hostilities in this strategically important region.

Despite mediation by the OSCE Minsk Group, the parties seem no closer to a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute than they were years ago. Prospects for settling the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia are even more remote, with Russia having recognized the independence of those separatist regions, where OSCE monitors have also been excluded.

Of course, the U.S. Government has for years been involved in negotiating a settlement of these conflicts, through participation in the Minsk Group and by attempting to move Russia toward a constructive approach in the Geneva talks on Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Washington’s efforts have unfortunately not resulted in a resolution of these protracted disputes.

We have seen how quickly so-called “frozen” conflicts can come unfrozen, with terrible consequences. It is my understanding that Secretary Clinton is planning a trip to Georgia. I hope this is a sign that the region will receive a continuing and high priority in U.S. diplomacy.

Mr. DAVID of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Mark S. Newman, the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of DRS Technologies, as he retires after thirty-nine years of dedicated service to the defense industry and our servicemen and women.

Mark’s leadership and inspirational concern for providing our warriors with the very best technology this nation can produce has led to the development and fielding of products which have directly saved lives on the battlefield, created enhanced situational awareness and provided superior advantages to our armed forces. He has, for his entire career, sought to place equipment in the hands of our troops that ensured they not only completed their missions, but returned home safely.

Mark joined DRS Technologies in 1973, four years after the company’s founding, and was named a director in 1988. After serving many years as the company’s Chief Financial Officer, he was named President and CEO in 1994, and in 1995 was elected Chairman of the Board. Under his watch, the company grew from a small specialty electronics supplier to a highly diversified defense technology provider with 10,000 employees—over 15% of whom have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. In short, Mark has built a company that is a true American success story.

In 2005, Mark established the DRS Technologies Charitable Foundation, with a focus on helping those who serve—a cause he knew would resonate throughout the entire DRS workforce. Through the years that followed, he has raised about $600,000 to support the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund and their efforts to build a world-class, state-of-the-art physical rehabilitation center at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. Mark also helped raise over $500,000 to assist the USO with the initiative “Operation Enduring Care,” becoming a Global Partner with the USO in the process. In 2009, Mark helped raise over $600,000 for the building of the state-of-the-art Intrepid Center of Excellence to research, diagnose and treat Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) suffered by those injured while serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and just last year Mark made it his personal mission to support “Operation Mend” at UCLA Medical Center matching the $240,000 donated by DRS leadership with $240,000 of his own money. His patriotism and philanthropic initiatives supporting military charities makes him a hero in his own right.

Mr. Speaker, I ask House—me in recognizing Mark S. Newman’s contributions and thanking him for his dedication to our service men and women.

HONORING THE THADDEUS KOSCIUSZKO SOCIETY AS THEY CELEBRATE THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO
OF CONNECTICUT

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to join the many families and community leaders who have gathered today to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Thaddeus Kosciuszko Society—a remarkable milestone for this very special organization.

Like so many others of its kind, the formation of the Thaddeus Kosciuszko Society was rooted in the common need of immigrants to support one another. Milford, Connecticut was an ideal location for Polish terers who had recently immigrated to America to settle because of the agricultural opportunities the land presented. In a new country and beginning new farms, these families faced many challenges. Seeing the need to have someone or something available to them to assist in a time of crisis, a group of seven men met on Sunday, April 1, 1912, and established an organization through which they could not only help each other, but also future generations. Their mission, as stated in their original bylaws was “To promote social activities, recreation and mental improvement among its members and to provide relief benefit therefor in cases of sickness or trouble.”

From that handful of farmers, the Society has grown throughout the years. Many of today’s seventy-five members are descendents of the original seven. Throughout its 100-year history, the Society has often been a source of comfort and support for newly immigrated families. Over that time, the Society Treasury, funded by member dues and modest fundraising events, has enabled the Society to provide financial assistance to survivors of the sick and deceased as well as more than $50,000 in scholarships to students of Polish decent seeking higher education.

Keeping with the practice started by their founders, the Thaddeus Kosciuszko Society still meet once a month on a Sunday afternoon and their Annual Summer Picnic, now a well-known community tradition, is still held on a mid-summer Sunday afternoon. Though times and the needs of the members have changed, the Society continues to make a difference in the lives of those in need, strengthening the bonds of friendship and community from one generation to the next. Today, as they celebrate their 100th Anniversary, they can proudly look back on their rich history and are secure in the knowledge that the Thaddeus Kosciuszko Society will remain a source of support and encouragement for many more families in the years to come.

RECOGNIZING LOUISIANA’S LONGEST MARRIED COUPLE

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER
OF LOUISIANA

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize Louisiana’s longest-married couple, Norman and Norma Bumah.

The Marksville couple, who celebrated their 81st wedding anniversary, will be inducted into the Louisiana Family Forum’s Marriage Hall of Fame, and were recently commended by Governor Bobby Jindal in a reception held in their honor on Valentine’s Day.

An introduction by Norma’s friend, the couple began their courtship in 1930 at the Roof Garden Dance Hall in New Orleans. The following year, Norman and Norma were married at Holy Ghost Church in the Crescent City.

Known as “Maw” and “Paw” to their loved ones, they are the proud parents of two daughters, and have been blessed with six grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. After Hurricane Katrina destroyed their home in 2005, Norman and Norma relocated to Marksville where their strong commitments to each other, family and God have continued.

It is an honor to recognize Norman and Norma Bumah and give my heartfelt congratulations to them on this truly incredible event in their lives. I ask my colleagues to join me in extending best wishes to Louisiana’s longest married couple.

EARTHQUAKE AWARENESS MONTH

HON. RUSS CARNAHAN
OF MISSOURI

Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring the important issue of earthquake awareness to the attention of the members of the House.

February is Earthquake Awareness Month in Missouri. My district lies within the New Madrid Seismic Zone, the nation’s most active earthquake zone east of the Rocky Mountains. Every year there are more than 200 small earthquakes in this region and there have been earthquakes as strong as magnitude 7.0
in the past. These natural disasters aren’t predictable so we must remain vigilant in our preparation for and awareness of the hazards associated with earthquakes.

This month I had the opportunity to speak with high school students from my district about what they are doing to prepare themselves for an earthquake. On February 7th they joined other students from 414 Missouri schools in the 2012 Great Central US Shake-Out. We discussed how the students can prepare their schools and homes for an earthquake and they told me about their experience practicing an earthquake drill. The safety of our children is of the utmost importance and schools play a key role during disasters so when they are well prepared the whole community benefits.

The Saint Louis University Earthquake Center is a world leader in the field of earthquake seismology. I had the opportunity to tour this facility and to learn about the groundbreaking research they are doing. As part of this year’s Earthquake Awareness Month, Saint Louis University hosted a seminar entitled “Earthquakes: Mean Business” that focused on disaster preparedness and business continuity planning. The St. Louis Science Center also hosted an Earthquake Awareness Day to introduce our citizens to the science behind earthquake preparedness and business continuity.

On February 28, 2012 I was unavoidably detained and missed roll call vote 79. If present, I would have voted “nay.”

HONORING NATIONAL KIDNEY MONTH

HON. CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY
OF CONNECTICUT
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on February 28, 2012 I was unavoidably detained and missed roll call vote 79. If present, I would have voted “nay.”

SUPPORTING GREAT LAKES WEEK

HON. MARCY KAPTR
OF OHIO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Ms. KAPTR of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, this week in Washington is Great Lakes Week. It could not come at a more important time.

Last Thursday, the Administration released the 2012 Asian Carp Action Plan and Strategy Framework, which is important in establishing the fight to protect our Great Lakes against invasive Asian carp that threaten our $7 billion fishing industry. No lake is more important than Lake Erie—the largest fishery on the Great Lakes.

We should be thankful that President Obama is elevating Asian carp as a priority. I encourage him to do more to stop the carp from migrating into our precious ecosystem. Last month, another important study was released, outlining a necessary path forward to separate our Great Lakes from the Mississippi watershed. This is the only real solution for stopping the enemy at the gate.

For the same reason, I am a co-sponsor of the Stop Asian Carp Act, which calls for that barrier to be built now, not delayed for over a decade. Too much is at risk.

I represent the largest portion of costal Ohio along Lake Erie—which contains more native fish than all the other Lakes combined. We must protect this valuable ecological treasure, and the local multi-billion dollar economy it supports. This involves the lakeside industries, the maritime industry, coastal tourism, recreation, wildlife refuges, energy protection, industrial plants and so much more.

These endowments extend far beyond Asian carp. This year, lakeside communities again are grappling with an expanding algal bloom that can be poisonous if ingested, creates biological dead-zones, and just plain stinks.

Residents stay inside to avoid the putrid smell, charter boat captains suffer as fishing declines, and hotels and restaurants in popular vacation spots sit empty as travelers take their recreational dollars elsewhere.

Under the Western Lake Erie Basin Partnership, I have brought together researchers, non-profits, and local residents to work with federal agencies including the EPA, Department of Agriculture, and Army Corps of Engineers to address this huge challenge.

Under President Obama, many of these efforts were integrated into a new program called the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which is proving effective at addressing the enormous needs facing our Great Lakes.

Through the GLRI, specific areas of concern like the Cuyahoga, Maumee, and Black Rivers are receiving much needed federal dollars to improve these watersheds.

After years of work to develop the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, the GLRI is helping expand their efforts in wetland habitat restoration and enhancement.

In the Black River, we are removing steel mill slag and restoring habitat for native fish species.

This fall in Sandusky, we dedicated a new research vessel for Lake Erie—The “USS Muskie.”

And, the University of Toledo is undertaking a study to assess the benefits provided by a newly created wetlands to prevent agricultural runoff that can produce algal blooms and increase nearshore health concerns, such as e coli and other bacteria.

Along with a broad range of costal stakeholders, continue to work closely with the agency officials to ensure that the most fragile Great Lakes ecosystem—Lake Erie—receives funding levels in line with the great need.

And, it is essential that our Great Lakes delegation works with my colleagues in Congress to ensure that we continue sufficient funding to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

America has done so much to help certain areas like the Everglades and expanses of Alaska that few Americans will ever get to enjoy. More than one quarter of our country lives in a Great Lakes state and depends on healthy lakes for water, farming, business and pleasure.

During this Great Lakes Week, and throughout the upcoming months in which we will determine our spending priorities, I urge my colleagues, especially those in our region who have not already gotten on board, to support the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and other programs to protect these national and global treasures for today and tomorrow.

RECOGNIZING INTERNATIONAL RARE DISEASE DAY

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, February 29, 2012

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the fifth International Rare Disease Day, a day reserved to promote awareness of the approximately 6,800 rare diseases affecting 30 million Americans.

In the United States, a rare disease is one that affects fewer than 200,000 people. The National Organization of Rare Disorders estimates that one in ten Americans are suffering today from a rare disease. Thanks to patients and their families, the medical community, and organizations established to advocate for greater awareness and research, advances have been in the diagnosis and treatment of many of these diseases. With a renewed commitment to scientific research and discovery,
we can provide much more than treatments and disease management to millions of our suffering constituents, we can provide cures.

In my congressional district, I have met with countless constituents and their families whose lives have, in one way or another, been impacted by a rare disease such as Epidermolysis Bullosa, commonly known as EB, which is characterized by the presence of extremely fragile skin that results in the development of recurrent, painful blisters, open sores, and in some forms of the disease, in disfiguring scars, disabling musculoskeletal deformities, and internal blistering. EB affects approximately 12,000 individuals in the United States.

I have also met with families impacted by Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. This is a form of muscular dystrophy found in boys who experience a progressive loss of muscle function. Parent Project Muscular Dystrophy estimates that 15,000 young men suffer from Ducherme.

Marfan Syndrome is another rare disease that has impacted my constituents. Marfan Syndrome is a disorder of the connective tissue that can affect the skeletal, cardiovascular, and nervous systems, the skin, eyes, and lungs. While there is no cure, an early diagnosis and proper treatment can provide a normal life-span. The National Marfan Foundation estimates that 200,000 are affected by Marfan Syndrome.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to also mention Dysautonomia, a group of disorders that cause a breakdown or failure of the autonomic nervous system which regulates involuntary functions of the body: heart rate, blood pressure, body temperature, and perspiration. Some forms of this order are characterized as rare diseases such as Multiple System Atrophy and Familial Dysautonomia. Although other forms such as Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome, Neurocardiogenic Syncope, and Autoimmune Autonomic Ganglionopathy are not, this does not detract from their importance and should not result in a federal commitment less than resolute in discovering advances to help increase accurate diagnosis and better treatment. Together, the National Dysautonomia Research Foundation estimates that over one million Americans are impacted by an autonomic system disorder.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I join with patients, their families, and millions in the United States and around the world to recognize this important day. I urge my colleagues to take a moment today to think about what more Congress can do to help Americans and their families suffering from rare diseases. Together, we can do more for all.
SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 1, 2012 may be found in the Daily Digest of today’s RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 6
9:30 a.m.
Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command in review of the Defense Authorization request for fiscal year 2013 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC–217 following the open session.

10 a.m.
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
To hold hearings to examine spurring job growth through capital formation while protecting investors, part II.

Budget
To hold hearings to examine perspectives on the President’s proposed budget request for fiscal year 2013 for the Department of Defense.

Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine the President’s proposed budget request for fiscal year 2013 for the Forest Service.

Finance
To hold hearings to examine tax reform options, competition for capital investment and manufacturing.

10:30 a.m.
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Tony Hammond, of Missouri, to be a Commissioner of the Postal Regulatory Commission.

2:30 p.m.
Foreign Relations
To hold hearings to examine the President’s proposed budget request for fiscal year 2013 for international development priorities.

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Mark A. Robbins, of California, to be a Member of the Merit Systems Protection Board, and Roy Wallace McLeese III, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Science and Space Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine keeping America competitive through investments in research and development.

Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

MARCH 7
9 a.m.
Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the situation in Syria; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC–217 following the open session.

9:30 a.m.
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
To hold hearings to examine healthy food initiatives, local production, and nutrition.

10 a.m.
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
To hold hearings to examine risk management and commodities in the 2012 farm bill.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To hold hearings to examine priorities, plans, and progress of the nation’s space program.

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the President’s reorganization plan, focusing on retooling government for the 21st century.

Judiciary
To hold hearings to examine lending discrimination practices and foreclosure abuses.

Appropriations
Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2013 for the Department of Health and Human Services.

Veterans’ Affairs
To hold joint hearings to examine a legislative presentation from the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).

10:30 a.m.
Appropriations
Department of Defense Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 2013 for the Department of the Navy.

2 p.m.
Aging
To hold hearings to examine opportunities for savings, focusing on removing obstacles for small business.

2:30 p.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine the President’s proposed budget request for fiscal year 2013 for the Coast Guard and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Energy and Natural Resources
National Parks Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine S. 29, to establish the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area, S. 1150, to establish the Susquehanna Gateway National Heritage Area in the State of Pennsylvania, S. 1191, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to carry out a study regarding the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Naugatuck River Valley National Heritage Area in Connecticut, S. 1198, to reauthorize the Essex National Heritage Area, S. 1215, to provide for the exchange of land located in the Lowell National Historical Park, S. 1298, to extend the authorization for the Coastal Heritage Trail in the State of New Jersey, S. 1706, to establish the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park, H.R. 1141, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating prehistoric, historic, and limestone forest sites on Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, as a unit of the National Park System, H.R. 2606, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to allow the construction and operation of natural gas pipeline facilities in the Gateway National Recreation Area, S. 2131, to reauthorize the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area, the Lackawanna Valley National Heritage Area, and the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, and S. 2133, to reauthorize the America’s Agricultural Heritage Partnership in the State of Iowa.

MARCH 8
9:30 a.m.
Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the Department of the Army in review of the Defense Authorization request for fiscal year 2013 and the Future Years Defense Program.

10 a.m.
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine the key to America’s global competitiveness, focusing on a quality education.

2:15 p.m.
Indian Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the President’s proposed budget request for fiscal year 2013 for Native Programs.

2:30 p.m.
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
To hold hearings to examine the President’s proposed budget request for fiscal year 2013 for the Department of Homeland Security.

Intelligence
To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

MARCH 13
9:30 a.m.
Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine U.S. Southern Command and U.S. Northern Command in review of the Defense Authorization request for fiscal year 2013 and the Future Years Defense Program;
with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.

SD-G50

10 a.m.  
Energy and Natural Resources  
To hold hearings to examine the report of the Independent Consultant’s Review with Respect to the Department of Energy Loan and Loan Guarantee Portfolio.

SD-366

10:30 a.m.  
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
Contracting Oversight Subcommittee  
To hold hearings to examine contractors, focusing on how much they are costing the government.

SD-342

Judiciary  
To hold hearings to examine the Freedom of Information Act, focusing on safeguarding critical infrastructure information and the public’s right to know.

SD-226

MARCH 14  
10 a.m.  
Veterans’ Affairs  
To hold hearings to examine ending homelessness among veterans, focusing on Veterans’ Affairs progress on its five year plan.

SR-418

2 p.m.  
Armed Services  
Personnel Subcommittee  
To hold hearings to examine the Active, Guard, Reserve, and civilian personnel programs in review of the Defense Authorization request for fiscal year 2013 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A

MARCH 15  
9:30 a.m.  
Armed Services  
To hold hearings to examine the Department of the Navy in review of the Defense Authorization request for fiscal year 2013 and the Future Years Defense Program; with the possibility of a closed session in SVC-217 following the open session.

SD-G50

2 p.m.  
Judiciary  
Antitrust, Competition Policy and Consumer Rights Subcommittee  
To hold hearings to examine Verizon and cable deals.

SD-226

MARCH 22  
10 a.m.  
Veterans’ Affairs  
To hold joint hearings to examine the legislative presentations of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Air Force Sergeants Association, Blinded Veterans Association, American Veterans (AMVETS), Gold Star Wives, Fleet Reserve Association, Military Officers Association of America, and the Jewish War Veterans.

345, Cannon Building

MARCH 23  
10 a.m.  
Veterans’ Affairs  
To hold hearings to examine the nominations of Margaret Bartley, of Maryland, and Coral Wong Pietsch, of Hawaii, both to be a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

SR-418

2 p.m.  
Armed Services  
Personnel Subcommittee  
To resume hearings to examine the Active, Guard, Reserve, and civilian personnel programs in review of the Defense Authorization request for fiscal year 2013 and the Future Years Defense Program.

SR-232A