# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I was not present for rollcall votes 80–91. Had I been able to vote, I would have voted ''no'' on the Motion on Ordering the Previous Question on the Rule, ''no'' on H. Res. 566, ''yes'' on the journal vote, ''yes'' on the Thompson (CA)/Eshoo (CA) Amendment to H.R. 1837, ''yes'' on the McNerney (CA) Amendment (#3) to H.R. 1837, ''yes'' on the McNerney (CA) Amendment (#4) to H.R. 1837, ''yes'' on the Garamendi (CA) Amendment (#5) to H.R. 1837, ''yes'' on the Napolitano (CA) Amendment to H.R. 1837, ''yes'' on the Garamendi (CA) Amendment (#7) to H.R. 1837, ''yes'' on the Markey (MA)/Thompson (CA)/Matsui (CA) Amendment to H.R. 1837, ''yes'' on the Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 1837 and ''no'' on Final Passage of H.R. 1837.

## CONGRATULATING AT&T VETERANS ON OPERATION HYDRATION: MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

### HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to recognize before the United States Congress the great men and women of AT&T Veterans.

This AT&T Employee Resource Group was founded in 2007 under the motto, ''Serving Those Who've Served Our Country.'' With over 300 members in Dallas/Fort Worth (DFW) and 3,300 nationwide, this group of true American patriots is doing great things for our nation's military veterans and active duty troops.

Recently, the DFW chapter joined forces with the local USO to raise $8,000 and provide over 1,200 cases of water for troops moving through DFW International Airport. Most of these servicemen and women were only home for two weeks of R&R before heading back overseas.

AT&T Veterans not only provided the water bottles, but volunteered to greet incoming flights and provide a hero's sendoff for departing troops. They called this project Operation Hydration, and it's been a real success.

To the AT&T Veterans, congratulations on a mission accomplished!

Thank you for your service—past and present—and may God continue to bless the United States of America through great folks like you.

## ST. CROIX RIVER CROSSING PROJECT AUTHORIZATION ACT

SPEECH OF

### HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today the U.S. House of Representatives passed the St. Croix River Crossing Project Authorization Act (S. 1134) by a vote of 339 to 80. Originally spearheaded by Congresswoman BACHMANN (MN–06), S. 1134 authorizes construction of a $700 million mega-bridge over the protected St. Croix River between Minnesota and Wisconsin, benefiting only 18,000 cars per day.

Every policy debate has two sides and I worked hard to reflect the voices of Minnesotans in the Fourth District, as well as those Stillwater and Oak Park Heights residents who are deeply concerned about this mega-bridge project.

Congress' passage of this $700 million bridge bill doesn't diminish its excessive cost, size, negative effect on Highway 36 traffic congestion, or its adverse impact on the St. Croix River.

Supporters of this legislation, including Senators KLOBUCHAR and FRANKEN, and Governor Dayton, assume responsibility for protecting communities along Highway 36 from crippling traffic congestion and the families and businesses of Oak Park Heights from property tax increases—the direct consequences of the project they so strongly championed.

I want to thank my friend and Minnesota colleague, Representative KEITH ELLISON (MN–05) for his eloquence on the floor of the House in opposition to S. 1134. I share Congressman ELLISON's concern that replacing one bridge at a cost of $700 million to the exclusion of more than 1,100 other structurally deficient bridges in Minnesota places too many communities and motorists at risk. I am committed to working with Representative ELLISON, Governor Dayton and all Minnesota members of Congress and state legislators to repair or replace these substandard bridges.

## RECOGNIZING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE

### HON. ANN MARIE BUERKLE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Ms. BUERKLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 125th Anniversary of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse.

Presided over by Bishop Robert J. Cunningham, the Diocese has been a beacon of hope and sanctuary for all those seeking assistance in the Greater Syracuse area.

The diocese has 133 parishes, 9 missions, and 3 devotional chapels. In addition, the diocese has three Catholic hospitals that assist 650,000. There are people and seven special centers for social services assisting over 100,000 people. The Catholic Diocese oversees 42 residential facilities that care for the disabled, 24 Catholic schools, and 264 offices. Overall, the diocese employs approximately 3,000 people.

Today, churches, schools, and community organizations of the Diocese serve much more than the Catholic population. The outreach programs established by parishes across seven counties in Central New York reach out to people of all beliefs and walks of life.

In 125 years, the dedicated volunteers and clergymen of the Diocese of Syracuse have not stopped spreading the universal messages of peace and goodwill. I commend the members of the Diocese for holding to their founding principles of Faith, Hope, and Charity for all. I congratulate the Diocese of Syracuse on their 125th Anniversary and I thank them all for their good works.

## IN APPRECIATION OF MR. RICK LOTTIE FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ON THE THIRD DISTRICT OF TEXAS, ACADEMY SELECTION BOARD

### HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to publicly recognize and thank Mr. Rick Lottie for his years of distinguished service on the Third District of Texas' Academy Selection Board.

A 1969 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, Mr. Lottie served his country with distinction as a Marine Corps infantry officer from 1969 to 1974, including a deployment to Vietnam from 1970 to 1971.

He then spent his civilian career working for first-rate IT services companies such as Electronic Data Systems, Perot Systems, and MCI Systemhouse.

Mr. Lottie, always a community servant, has served on the board of directors for the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation and Admiral Nimitz Foundation and is currently an advisor to the Injured Marine Semper Fi Fund.

As a member of the Third District's Academy Selection Board, Mr. Lottie has sacrificed his time and offered his guidance to help me send some of North Texas' best and brightest young people to United States Service Academies.

It is a privilege to know this true American patriot.

To Rick, thank you for your service, and God bless you.

## TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

### HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Friday, March 2, 2012, marks Texas Independence Day. 176 years ago, the Texas Declaration of Independence was ratified by the Convention of 1836 at Washington-on-the-Brazos.

This is an important day for Texas and patriotic Texans observe this occasion with great pride.

In 1824, a military dictatorship took over in Mexico abolishing the Mexican constitution. The dictatorship refused to provide trial by jury, freedom of religion, public education for their citizens, and allowed the confiscation of firearms, this last one being the most intolerable, particularly among Texans.

The Texas Declaration of Independence states that Texas' government had been ''forcibly changed, without their consent, from a restricted federative republic, composed of sovereign states, to a consolidated central military despotism.''

It stated that because of the injustice of Santa Anna's tyrannical government, Texans were severing their connection with the Mexican nation and declaring themselves ''a free, sovereign, and independent republic . . . fully invested with all the rights and attributes'' that belong to independent nations; and a declaration that they ''fearlessly and confidently'' committed their decision to ''the Supreme Arbiter of the destinies of nations.''

The Texas Declaration of Independence was fully justified because this military dictatorship had ceased to protect the lives, liberty, and property of the people of Texas.

Failure to provide these basic rights violated the sacred contract between a government and the people, and Texans did what we still do today—stand up for our rights by declaring our independence to the world.

In response, the Mexican army marched to Texas waging war on the land and the people, enforcing the decrees of a military dictatorship through brute force and without any democratic legitimacy.

As future President Sam Houston and other delegates signed the Texas Declaration of Independence, General Santa Anna's army besieged independence forces at the Alamo in San Antonio.

Four days after the signing, the Alamo fell with her commander Lt. Colonel William Barrett Travis, Former Tennessee Congressman David Crockett, and approximately 200 other Texan defenders.

All these men were killed in action, a heroic sacrifice for Texan freedom. If this tragedy were not enough, weeks later Santa Anna's army massacred over 300 unarmed Texans at Goliad on March 27.

In a dramatic turnaround, Texans achieved their independence several weeks later on April 21, 1836. Roughly 900 members of the Texan army overpowered a much larger Mexican army in a surprise attack at the Battle of San Jacinto. I am proud to represent the San Jacinto Battlefield and State Park.

That battle is memorialized along the San Jacinto River with the San Jacinto Monument. The monument is larger than the Washington Monument here in DC.

Today we give thanks to the many Texans that sacrificed for the freedom we now enjoy. God bless Texas and God bless America.

## CELEBRATING HARRY BELAFONTE'S 85TH BIRTHDAY

### HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House to join me in extending warm wishes to Mr. Harry Belafonte, a great American who celebrates his 85th birthday today.

Harry Belafonte is not only the consummate entertainer, but he is a tireless civil rights advocate. He has used the fame and wealth that he earned early on in his career as a musician and actor to support and advance the cause of civil and human rights.

Harry Belafonte was born Harold George Belafonte, Jr., at Lying-in Hospital, New York City, New York. He was the son of Melvine, a housekeeper, and Harold George Belafonte, Sr., a Jamaican who worked as chef in the Royal Navy. From 1932 to 1940, he lived with his grandmother in the village of Aboukir in her native country of Jamaica. When he returned to New York City he attended George Washington High School after which he joined the Navy and served during World War II.

At the end of the 1940s, he took classes in acting at the Dramatic Workshop of The New School in New York with the influential German director Erwin Piscator alongside Marlon Brando, Tony Curtis, Walter Matthau, Bea Arthur, and Sidney Poitier, while performing with the American Negro Theatre.

Belafonte started his career in music as a club singer in New York, a job he took to help pay for his acting classes. The first time he appeared in front of an audience he was backed by the Charlie Parker band, which included the great Charlie Parker himself, Max Roach, and Miles Davis among others. At first he was a pop singer, launching his recording career on the Roost label in 1949, but later he developed a keen interest in folk music, learning material through the Library of Congress' American folk songs archives. With guitarist and friend Millard Thomas, Belafonte soon made his debut at the legendary jazz club The Village Vanguard. In 1952 he received a contract with RCA Victor.

His first wide-release single, which went on to become his ''signature'' song with audience participation in virtually all his live performances, was ''Matilda,'' recorded April 27, 1953. His breakthrough album Calypso (1956) became the first LP to sell over 1 million copies. The album introduced American audiences to Calypso music and Belafonte was dubbed the ''King of Calypso.'' Belafonte was also the first African American man to win an Emmy, with his first solo TV special Tonight with Belafonte (1959).

More than a musician and entertainer, Belafonte was a civil rights activist and tireless leader. Belafonte's political beliefs are greatly inspired by the man that he still views to this day as his mentor: singer and activist Paul Robeson. He strongly opposed racial prejudice, segregation, and discrimination in the United States. Like Robeson and other black entertainers, Belafonte's success in the arts did not protect him from racial discrimination, particularly in the American South. As a result, Belafonte refused to perform in the South from 1954 until 1961.

Also in the 1950s, Belafonte met a young Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on the latter's historic visit to New York. From that eventful first meeting until the day Dr. King was assassinated, Belafonte and Dr. King maintained a deep and abiding friendship.

Dr. King, Jr., said of Belafonte, ''[his] global popularity and his commitment to our cause is a key ingredient to the global struggle for freedom and a powerful tactical weapon in the Civil Rights movement here in America. We are blessed by his courage and moral integrity.''

Mr. Belafonte could always be counted on to be there when the need was greatest. He was there to provide the money to secure Dr. King's release from Birmingham City Jail. He raised thousands of dollars to post the bail needed to release other jailed civil rights protesters. He financed the Freedom Rides, supported voter registration drives, and helped to organize the March on Washington in 1963.

During ''Freedom Summer'' in 1964, Belafonte financed the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, SNCC, flying to Mississippi that August with $60,000 in cash and entertaining crowds in Greenwood with his ''Banana Boat Song.'' In 1968, Belafonte appeared on a Petula Clark primetime television special on NBC. In the middle of a song, Clark smiled and briefly touched Belafonte's arm, which made the show's sponsor, Plymouth Motors, nervous. Plymouth wanted to cut out the segment, but Clark, who had ownership of the special, told NBC that the performance would be shown intact or she would not allow the special to be aired at all. American newspapers published articles reporting the controversy and, when the special aired, it earned high ratings.

Belafonte has continued his involvement in the civil rights struggle to this very day. Recently, Belafonte spoke at the 50th SNCC Anniversary Conference.

Belafonte did not limit his fight for justice to the United States. He has spent his life and career advocating for human rights around the entire world. For example, disturbed by cruel events unfolding in Africa as a result of war, famine and drought, Belafonte set in motion the wheels that led to ''We Are the World,'' the iconic song and music video organized by Michael Jackson and Lionel Ritchie, that raised millions in support of famine relief efforts in Africa. In 1987, Belafonte accepted the appointment as UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador—the second American to hold this position—the first was Danny Kaye.

Belafonte has continued to devote himself globally to civil and human rights issues, focusing in particular on the United States and Africa. ''My social and political interests are part of my career. I can't separate them,'' said Belafonte. ''My songs reflect the human condition. The role of art isn't just to show life as it is, but to show life as it should be.''

Belafonte's international civil rights accomplishments also include his contribution to ending the oppressive apartheid in South Africa and securing the release of his friend, Nelson Mandela, imprisoned for twenty seven and a half years.

Belafonte was appointed by President John F. Kennedy Cultural Advisor for the Peace

Corps, a position he held for five years. He has been honored many times by such diverse groups as the American Jewish Congress, the NAACP, the City of Hope, Fight for Sight, The Urban League, The National Conference of Black Mayors, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the ACLU, the State Department, the Boy Scouts of America, Hadassah International and the Peace Corps.

He has received awards from the Bronx Community College for his work with children, the Albert Einstein Award from Yeshiva University, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace Prize and the prestigious Kennedy Center Honors for excellence in the performing arts. He was the first recipient of the Nelson Mandela Courage Award and was honored at the White House with the 1994 National Medal of Arts from President Clinton for his contributions to our nation's cultural life. He has received honorary degrees from City University of New York, Spellman College in Atlanta, Tufts University, Brandeis University, Long Island University, Bard College and most recently Doctor of Humane Letters from Columbia University. In 2010, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation honored Mr. Belafonte with its prestigious Phoenix Award.

Mr. Speaker, Harry Belafonte has devoted his life to the cause of freedom, justice, equality, and human dignity. His has been an important and consequential life. And he is still going strong.

So on the occasion of his 85th birthday, I rise to say Mr. Belafonte: Happy birthday and thank you for your active faith, your lifetime of service, your tireless devotion to human rights and freedom.

## TRIBUTE TO BISHOP JOSEPH WILSON PARKS

### HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bishop Joseph Wilson Parks, for his contributions to the State of New Jersey and to our nation. On February 15, 2012, Bishop Parks passed away at the age of eighty-one. As a spiritual leader, mentor, and community servant, Bishop Parks dedicated himself to bettering the lives of others.

Bishop Parks was born on January 7, 1931 in Wilkesboro, North Carolina. He was one of six children of Ernest R. Parks and Lura V. (Barber) Parks. Although he began high school in Wilkesboro, NC, Bishop Parks ultimately received his high school diploma from Harren High School in New York City.

In 1945, Bishop Parks joined the Mt. Olive Fire Baptized Holiness Church in Harlem, New York. At the young age of seventeen, Bishop Parks became one of the first Junior Deacons at Mt. Olive and would later go on to serve as a Senior Deacon for ten years. Bishop Parks was a member of Mt. Olive Fire Baptized for twenty years.

On November 27, 1951, Bishop Parks was drafted into the United States Army. For eight years, he proudly served his country during the Korean War and would ultimately receive an Honorable Discharge.

After returning home, Bishop Parks went on to work in the printing industry for thirty-eight years. During his time in the printing industry, he was a proud and active member of the Local 1—Amalgamated Lithographers of America.

On January 30, 1954, Bishop Parks married the love of his life Anna B. Harmon Parks.

Bishop Parks went on to graduate from Manhattan Bible Institute in New York City, receiving his Bachelor's degree and Master's degree in 1968. He also received an Honorary Doctorate from Fuller Normal Industrial Institute in Greenville, South Carolina. In 1965, Bishop Parks was ordained as a reverend and appointed pastor of St. Peter F.B.H. Church in Paterson, New Jersey.

In 1973, Bishop Parks and his family moved to Paterson, New Jersey, where he continued to serve his church. Upon moving to Paterson, Bishop Parks became an active community advocate throughout Paterson. Bishop Parks was a member of the Paterson Pastors' Workshop, St. Joseph's Hospital Pastoral Care Team and instituted numerous ministries that benefited the community.

On November 24, 1994, Reverend Parks was ordained as a Bishop of Sounds of Praise Pentecostal Ministries, under the auspices of the Bishop Chandler David Owens, Chairman of the Church of God in Christ.

For those lucky enough to have known Bishop Parks personally, they knew that his family and faith meant everything to him. I know that he will be missed by his children, family, friends, and congregants, but most of all by his wife Anna B. Harmon Parks.

On February 25, 2012 the memorial service and funeral for Bishop Parks took place in our hometown of Paterson, New Jersey. I was humbled to have the honor to speak at Bishop Parks' memorial service. Having known Bishop Parks throughout my career in public service, I can confidently say that his life was a life well-lived.

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 Bishop Joseph Wilson Parks.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Bishop Park's family and friends, all those whose lives he touched, and me, in recognizing Bishop Joseph Wilson Parks.

## McKINNEY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY: CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF FIRST-RATE EDUCATION

### HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to congratulate McKinney Christian Academy on 20 years of providing first-rate education to the young people of North Texas.

As the school's mission statement says, "McKinney Christian Academy exists to honor Jesus Christ by teaching students to live biblically through education of mind, body, and spirit." Over the past two decades, it has done just that for hundreds of students.

On the first day of classes back in 1992, just 13 children walked through the doors. Currently, 510 students from pre-kindergarten through the twelfth grade are being served at McKinney Christian by a devoted, skilled faculty and staff.

In fact, the local paper recently named McKinney Christian's lower school principal, Ms. Debi Sass, and a top-notch teacher, Mr. Jeff Anderson, 2011 Principal of the Year and Teacher of the Year for the area.

McKinney Christian is honored to have former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee join them at a special anniversary celebration this month, and while I will be in Washington, D.C. during the occasion, it's a pleasure to welcome the Governor to the Third Congressional District of Texas.

To the McKinney Mustangs—parents, students and teachers alike—congratulations on being a part of such an exceptional institution. Keep up the good work.

God bless you, God bless Texas, and may God continue to bless the United States of America through great folks like you.

## TANZANIA MISSION FULFILLS DREAM FOR CARMEL COUPLE

### HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

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

[From the Monterey Herald, Jan. 22, 2012]

DAVE AND WENDY BANKS TEACH VILLAGERS DURING PEACE CORPS EXPERIENCE

(By Amy E. West)

When Carmel's Dave and Wendy Banks met in the 1960s, they talked about joining the Peace Corps. What they didn't realize was it would take them more than four decades to make it happen.

After marrying, raising kids and retiring, they said to each other, "You know what we talked about long ago? Maybe we should try it."

The retired couple returned to Carmel in 2010 after spending more than two years in Tanzania, educating villagers about HIV prevention, biology and English.

Surprisingly, they integrated well into the Tanzanian culture.

"If you have gray hair, you're in," said Dave Banks, 70, a retired pharmacist.

Their Tanzanian village of about 1,000 people not only respected their elders, but also respected the customs of one another. The village, Maringo, had two major tribes, and Catholic, Muslim and Lutheran faiths lived and celebrated traditions together, which impressed the Bankses.

"I think a lot of places in the world could take an example from Tanzania," said Wendy Banks, 69, a retired teacher.

Tanzanians subsist on less than a dollar a day, and at least 10 percent of the population lives with HIV. The stigma of the disease, especially with women, inspired the Bankses to start a life skills club to teach how to prevent the spread of HIV and brainstorm ways for HIV-inflicted villagers to support their families.

High school students from the club performed skits and raps for the younger school kids, and persuaded even Muslim girls to do condom demonstrations.

Primary education, required in Tanzania, is free, but tuition for high school costs about $100 a year. Educating boys takes priority over girls, but the headmaster in Maringo worked hard to keep the ratio at 50 percent.

To stay in school, girls commonly find older men to finance their education in exchange for sexual favors. "Babu" Dave and

''Bibi'' Wendy worked to teach the women to say, ''No, not without a condom.''

''You just don't know if you get through,'' Wendy said.

The headmaster also requested their help teaching in a high school with 500 students and only two teachers. Dave taught biology and Wendy taught English to 80 freshmen each.

To start the school's first library, the couple called for donations from Monterey Peninsula residents, who mailed nearly 3,000 books. To cover shipping costs of nearly $55 a box, the community raised $5,000.

The couple's family also offered support. A ganddaughter requested soccer balls—used or new—instead of gifts for her 10th birthday, and shipped them with pumps to Tanzania. One of the couple's daughters raised money to finance two girls' education for three years.

The couple brought with them a laptop, printer, solar charger, shortwave radio and a power strip, which proved especially useful in a village that had just one room with electricity and many villagers with cellphones that needed charging.

Wendy Banks was struck by villagers' resourcefulness. ''They can do so much with so little,'' she said.

One memorable side trip seems to bear this out. To get to a larger city a few hours away, the couple rode in trucks called dala-dalas, which were crammed with livestock, people and bags and had ''already lived their life and died,'' Dave Banks said. On one trip, the truck got a flat tire. The driver used a pile of rocks to jack up the truck, but jammed on the wrong size spare tire. Soon after starting up again, the truck ran out of gas. After the driver borrowed a bike to travel to the only village with gas, he returned and swished gasoline in his mouth, spit it on the carburetor, and they were finally on their way.

''Traveling was just so awful,'' Wendy said.

''When we got off the bus, we were always real happy,'' Dave said. The average age of a Peace Corps volunteer is 28, and only 7 percent of volunteers are older than 50 or married. The organization is trying to change that. In November it teamed up with AARP to reach out to volunteers with a lifetime of skills and professional experience.

The oldest volunteer currently serving in the Peace Corps is 82, just five years younger than the oldest volunteer ever to serve.

But the Peace Corps' rigorous medical background may stymie the process for older Americans, who must provide thorough documentation to show a clean bill of health. Though both Wendy and Dave were in excellent physical health, the Peace Corps still requested medical records dating back to their 20s. Applicants with diseases like diabetes can serve, but may be placed closer to medical facilities instead of in remote villages.

For Dave and Wendy, 18 months passed from the time they submitted the application until they left for Tanzania. Though they returned a year and a half ago, the couple still uphold one of the three Peace Corps goals—promoting a better understanding of Tanzanians to Americans. They've given numerous talks around the San Francisco Bay Area and don't seem to tire of telling their stories.

In an African culture that respects their elders, but also depends on an extended family for support, the Tanzanians thought it odd for two people to leave their home and family of four children and 10 grandchildren.

Wendy's response: ''We'll go back to our family . . . and maybe our family will be better, because we had this experience to share.''

## CONDEMNING IRAN FOR ITS PERSECUTION OF YOUCEF NADARKHANI

SPEECH OF

### HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 556, which condemns the Government of Iran for its persecution, imprisonment, and sentencing to death of Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani.

H. Res. 556 rightfully condemns the Government of Iran for its state-sponsored persecution of religious minorities, and calls for the exoneration and immediate release of Pastor Youcef and all other individuals held or charged on account of their religion.

Pastor Youcef is a 34-year old father of two who was arrested over two years ago for the crime of converting from Islam to Christianity. In October 2009 he was tried and found guilty of apostasy. Adding to this atrocity, his sentence of death-by-hanging was recently upheld by the Supreme Court of Iran.

Only in oppressive regimes like Iran could this fundamental human freedom to worship as one sees fit could be considered a crime, let alone one punishable by death.

And sadly, the case of Pastor Yousef is only one of many other deplorable religious freedom cases in Iran. It demonstrates the Iranian authorities' utter disregard for religious freedom, and highlights Iran's continuing violation of the universal rights of its citizens.

It is deplorable, and this House should denounce it in the harshest of terms. Pastor Youcef deserves to be free. He deserves to practice his faith and be home with his wife and young children. He deserves to have his rights as a human being upheld and respected.

I urge a yes vote on H. Res. 556.

## IMPORTANCE OF FISCAL DISCIPLINE IN OUR OFFICES

### HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that is of principal importance to our fiscal situation today in this Congress. I am referring to our own fiscal responsibility within the confines of our Congressional offices.

According to the Chicago Tribune, the number of members from Illinois that have returned more than one million dollars from their office accounts, called Member representational allowances, or MRA account only totals four members. They are Congressmen COSTELLO, JACKSON, MANZULLO and I. I encourage my fellow colleagues from my home state, and those across the county, to accept my challenge to strive for this respectable marker, to ensure the general public that we in Congress can also ''Live within our means.'' We ask those who we serve, our constituents to make sacrifices to do so, and therefore we are expected to do the same in return.

I understand that returning this money will not offset our debts significantly and is a nominal amount when compared to our ever increasing colossal debt. But, the country and our citizenry demand a Congress that is in tune with their needs and values. Consequently, fiscal responsibility is tantamount to operating a home and a business, and we as leaders should make an effort, no matter how minuscule, in order to gain back the public's trust in this government.

I thank you Mr. Speaker for allowing me to speak on this issue. I praise my Colleagues from Illinois that are motivated to pursue fiscally responsible policies, and I encourage all Members of Congress as a whole, to follow our example.

## IN CELEBRATION OF JOHN COWANS'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

### HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and admiration that I congratulate Mr. John Cowans on a significant milestone, his 90th birthday, which will be on Thursday, March 1, 2012. John will celebrate this remarkable milestone with family and friends on Saturday, March 3, 2012, at a semi-formal gala in his honor. For over 32 years John's lasting dedication and irreplaceable presence in Northwest Indiana has allowed him the opportunity to touch the lives of countless individuals.

John Cowans was born on March 1, 1922, in Union Springs, Alabama. After high school, John devoted six years of his life to serving our country in the United States Army. Mr. Cowans then attended Tuskegee Institute, earning a bachelor's degree in elementary education, which would be the beginning of an influential teaching career. John went on to further his education and earned a master's degree in school administration from Alabama State Teachers College. John accepted his first teaching position at the Morgan County Schools in Decatur, Alabama. Later, he moved to Gary, Indiana, and taught science, math, and social studies at Charles R. Drew School. His career at Charles R. Drew would span 32 years. For his many dedicated years of inspiring youth through teaching, he is worthy of the highest praise.

John Cowans made his mark on history as the first African American Vice-President of the Indiana State Teachers Association. Mr. Cowans also became President of the Gary Classroom Teachers Association. Mr. Cowans's pursuit to push education to greater levels continued, and he was instrumental in bringing about a day of recognition for teachers. To add to his already extraordinary career, John was a member of the National Education Association Assembly of Delegates to the Democratic National Convention 1976. John was able to impact the lives of youth for generations to come when he contributed to the creation of the 21st Century Scholars Program, which today helps to ensure that every student in Indiana can afford to attend college in exchange for a good citizenship pledge. Mr. Cowans is truly an inspiration, and I am grateful for his outstanding contributions to education in Indiana and across the nation.

Mr. Speaker, John Cowans has been an excellent leader in our community. Not only has

he dedicated his time and efforts selflessly to numerous students, teachers, and people of the community, he is also a faithful servant of God, loving husband to the late Roberta Emogene Matthews, and compassionate father to his five daughters: Carmen, Cheryl, Vickie, Judy, and Emelia. I respectfully ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in wishing John a very happy 90th birthday!

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, on February 29, 2012, I was unavoidably detained and was unable to record my vote for rollcall Nos. 80–82. Had I been present, I would have voted: rollcall No. 80: ''no''—Providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1837) to address certain water-related concerns on the San Joaquin River, and for other purposes; rollcall No. 81: ''no''—Providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1837) to address certain water-related concerns on the San Joaquin River, and for other purposes; rollcall No. 82: ''yes''—On Approving the Journal.

## HONORING THE LEROY PANTHERS WRESTLING TEAM

### HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of a talented group of student athletes from LeRoy, Illinois.

The LeRoy Panthers wrestling team recently captured the Illinois High School Athletic Association Class 1A Dual Team state wrestling finals after placing 2nd in 2009 and 3rd in 2011. The Panthers won with an impressive 40–24 victory over Lena-Winslow.

I hope that members of the LeRoy community continue to support and promote local athletics, as I believe that physical activity and extra circulars are an important staple of our education system. This team was considered being cut in the past, and now it is clear that this program has positively impacted the lives of these young men.

I would like to congratulate Head Coach Doug DeWald for all of his hard work with the team. But most of all, I want to congratulate the 2012 state champion wrestling team from LeRoy. These young men have represented themselves, their school and their community in an exemplary fashion and I want to join with all the members of this House in wishing them continued success in their athletic and academic endeavors.

## SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY WATER RELIABILITY ACT

SPEECH OF

### HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1837) to address certain water-related concerns on the San Joaquin River, and for other purposes:

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Chair, I rise to speak against this hazardous piece of legislation.

H.R. 1837 is an assault on the environment and on the state of California. It would lead to gridlock in the Delta with potentially disastrous consequences for ecosystems and communities throughout our state.

This bill would undermine years of bipartisan compromise, and would prohibit California from following established precedent in managing its own water resources.

The policies in place today have been carefully crafted by broad consensus and represent the needs of a variety of stakeholders.

The success of these policies prove that cooperative and fair governance are the best way to protect natural resources, promote conservation and boost California's economy.

For example, the Delta Protection Commission has determined that the Delta region provides nearly $800 million in annual agricultural revenues and $250 million in revenue related to recreation. This is due to sound management of the commons by an extensive network of public-private partnerships in my State.

But H.R. 1837 would reduce water quality and reliability for Delta communities and farmers—diverting water supply from North of the Delta to agribusiness in the South, and seriously damaging Delta agriculture, a $4.2 billion dollar industry.

Nearly every environmental group in the country opposes this bill because of the devastating effects it would have on the San Joaquin River Valley.

And, hundreds of fishing groups oppose this bill because it would divert water from the Delta, leaving 40 miles of the San Joaquin River completely dry in most years.

This would devastate the restoration of the river, and the salmon and steelhead that depend on it, hurting our state's fishermen, including many that call the Central Coast home.

This bill also disregards the best available science, repeals environmental protections, and damages local tourism.

That's why our state's two Senators, the California Department of Natural Resources, and the California Attorney General oppose this bill.

Mr. Chair, water management is a growing challenge across the nation, particularly in the West.

Developing balanced water solutions is essential to California's long-term economic and environmental health.

California deserves sound water policy that benefits all Californians, not just the needs of a few.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

## IN HONOR OF DENNIS ''DENNY'' GILLETTE

### HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Dennis ''Denny'' Gillette, who retires today after nearly 14 years on the Thousand Oaks City Council, making him the second-longest serving councilmember in the city's history.

My wife, Janice, and I have had the honor of knowing Denny and his wife, Terry, for more than 30 years. Denny spent his entire adult life in the service of his country and his community, as a Marine, as a sheriff's deputy who rose to the rank of assistant sheriff, as vice president of California Lutheran University (CLU), and as an elected official.

Denny stepped down from the council for health reasons. I mention that only to share a story that illustrates his dedication as a public servant. Last month, Denny was hospitalized for surgery. At the time, the council was interviewing candidates for city attorney. Although Denny was advised by his doctors to rest, Denny insisted that the finalists come to the hospital, where he interviewed them from his hospital bed.

I was not surprised to hear that story.

When Denny was with the Ventura County Sheriff's Department—a career that spanned 25 years—I worked with him often on criminal justice issues. During his 12-year stint as vice president of CLU, we worked together on educational and community issues. As a cotuicilmember—and three-time mayor—we worked together on a host of issues, including the widening of the 123 Freeway and 101/23 freeway interchange.

Denny's sure hand and calm but determined demeanor ensured that projects moved forward and were completed. Denny was also served 10 years on the Conejo Recreation and Park District Board before deciding to run for the City Council, and he completed many of the park projects he started on the park board from the council dais.

His many other accomplishments are too lengthy to list here, but they include: construction of the Community Transportation Center; forging a strong working relationship among the city, Park District, and Conejo Valley Unified School District; forging a highly successfully ''Town-Gown'' relationship between the city and CLU when he was at CLU, resulting in the successful completion of the North Campus Specific Plan and construction of the popular Community Pool located on the CLU campus; and construction of state-of-the-art athletic fields at Newbury Park High School, Thousand Oaks High School, and Westlake High School.

Current Mayor Jacqui Irwin told a local newspaper that when she learned of Denny's decision to retire, her heart dropped because she could not imagine the City Council without him.

The rest of the community feels the same way, Denny.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in thanking Denny for his lifetime of public service and in wishing him good health and many years of continued happiness with Terry, his wife of 42 years, and their daughters, Kristine and Lisa.

HONORING LUKAS MILEWSKI AND CORMAC MOLLOY ON THE OCCASION OF THE 51ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE PEACE CORPS.

## HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 51st anniversary of the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps has become an enduring symbol of American ideals and has served as a tremendous example of how we can win friends around the world by providing trained workers and improving understanding between countries.

In October of 1960, then Senator John F. Kennedy challenged college students to commit themselves to serve overseas. Since 1961 more than 200,000 volunteers have answered that call to serve. Peace Corps volunteers have worked in 139 countries, helping people around the world in areas as diverse as education, AIDS prevention and treatment, agriculture, economic development and more. Five of my colleagues in Congress are former Peace Corps volunteers and can attest to the program's importance. As President Clinton stated, "When President Kennedy founded the Peace Corps in 1961, he saw it as a bold experiment in public service that would unite our nation's highest ideals with a pragmatic approach to bettering the lives of ordinary people around the world. He also saw it as an investment in our own future, in an increasingly interdependent world. In the years since, it's paid off many times over."

Two young people from my district can also attest to the important work the Peace Corps continues to perform. On behalf of the 5th District of Illinois, I would like to thank Lukas Milewski and Cormac Molloy, serving in Indonesia and Uganda respectively, for the service they are providing to our country and others.

PROTECTING ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN HIGHER EDUCATION ACT

SPEECH OF

## HON. MARTHA ROBY

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 28, 2012*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2117) to prohibit the Department of Education from overreaching into academic affairs and program eligibility under title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965:

Mrs. ROBY. Madam Chair, I rise today to highlight the passage of H.R. 2117, the Protecting Academic Freedom in Higher Education Act (H.R. 2117). The House of Representatives approved this legislation on February 28, 2012.

I am a proud cosponsor and a Member of the Education and the Workforce Committee, which debated and reported this bill out of Committee with a bipartisan vote last summer.

If enacted, this legislation would remove costly and burdensome regulations from colleges and universities across the country. In a time of federal government expansion, H.R. 2117 would help curtail the Department of Education's overreach into the rules and regulations governing institutions of higher learning. The bill contains two provisions that would repeal recent Department of Education mandates. These provisions relate to the federal definition of a credit hour and to the way states authorize and license institutions of higher education.

Historically, each institution of higher learning maintained the ability to determine what constitutes a credit hour subject to the oversight of accrediting agencies that would determine the specific number of credit hours to assign each course. Over time the federal government became more involved in the process. I strongly believe that the federal government should not impose a one-size-fits-all approach to determine standard credit hours for all colleges and universities. This decision should be made at the state and institutional levels.

Burdensome federal regulation of institutions of higher learning slow innovative learning and increase costs for students. Federal government regulations should not control a states' decision whether to grant a college or university permission to operate within that state.

Madam Chair, I have heard from numerous institutions across Alabama regarding these challenges. Please allow me to submit a letter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD from the president of Spring Hill College, which is located in my home state of Alabama, for support of H.R. 2117. This letter explains how the Department's intrusive regulations are hampering growth of Spring Hill College. The letter also notes that the high cost associated with federal regulations stifle educational opportunities when those costs must be transferred to students. The federal government must not impede the work of our colleges and universities. When this happens, students are the ones most negatively affected.

Removing federal standards and granting states and institutions more flexibility is the key for expanding learning for all students. By allowing institutions to determine the educational needs of its students and by releasing states from these new mandates, we can move our system forward. I look forward to continued bipartisan support of the Protecting Academic Freedom in Higher Education Act, and I encourage our friends in the Senate to give H.R. 2117 serious consideration in the coming months.

Hon. MARTHA ROBY,
*House of Representatives, U.S. Congress, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN ROBY: As I know you are aware, the House of Representatives has now scheduled H.R. 2117 to be discussed on the house floor this week. As president of one of the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States, I urge you to lend your support to this important legislation.

H.R. 2117 addresses regulatory overreach by rescinding regulations on credit hour and state authorization, imposed by the Department of Education that became effective July 1, 2011. I, along with my fellow Jesuit college presidents, believe these regulations are intrusive and inappropriate.

Determining credit hour requirements has been and should be determined by the institution of higher education that awards credit for fulfilling academic work. National higher education accrediting agencies through long established peer review processes oversee how colleges and universities award college credit, and that is the way it should be. Spring Hill College, for example, is an accredited member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS.)

The current federal regulatory definition interferes with the integrity of awarding college credits with a one size fits all approach. This approach hinders course creativity and academic autonomy.

This regulation also impacts institutions that provide distance education courses by mandating unnecessary filings in states that result in more costs of time and money for many institutions. As I'm sure you recall, testimony given by several college presidents to the House Subcommittee on Postsecondary and Workforce Training pointed out that "unnecessary federal regulations will impose additional regulatory burdens on colleges and universities, which could lead to higher costs being passed down to low-income and disadvantaged students. H.R. 2117, the Protecting Academic Freedom in Higher Education Act, ensures that colleges and universities are able to focus their energy and resources on educating students. Congress and the Administration should focus on increasing educational opportunities for students and streamlining federal regulations that inhibit innovation in higher education," according to the subcommittee's summary. Therefore, I ask for your support of H.R. 2117.

I can also assure you that Spring Hill College continues to implement and seek further ways to hold down college costs while staying true to our mission to form leaders engaged in learning, faith, justice and service for life.

Thank you for all you do for our Alabama and for your support of Spring Hill College and our important mission. We look forward to welcoming you to our campus when your schedule permits.

May God Bless you.

Sincerely,

RICHARD P. SALMI, S.J.,
*President, Spring Hill College.*

IN HONOR OF NATIONAL KIDNEY MONTH

## HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give recognition to Kidney Action Day today March 1st and World Kidney Day on March 8, 2012. I would also like to recognize the month of March as National Kidney Month.

As one out of nine Americans suffers from kidney related disease, it is more prudent than ever to devote time, resources and compassion to this community. We must raise awareness and encourage screening in order to catch the disease early. There are 31 million Americans affected by kidney disease, and we should do everything in our power to make sure this number does not rise.

As a physician, I have seen the devastating effects of Chronic Kidney Disease, especially in the end stages. The two leading causes of this disease are high blood pressure and diabetes, both ailments which would spare the kidneys if patients were screened early and managed properly thereafter. As there is no cure for Chronic Kidney Disease, it is in our nation's best interest to help everyone gain

access to the resources needed in order to prevent this disease from progressing. Prevention is crucial.

For those who do have kidney diseases that progress, dialysis and transplant become the only options. The world's first outpatient dialysis facility opened 50 years ago in my district in Seattle, and although technologies continue to improve, the basic idea remains the same: Patients with end-stage renal disease are dependent on access to dialysis centers to survive. We must continue to fully fund the Medicare ESRD program, as well as advance kidney disease research at the NIDDK (National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases).

Today, I join other members from both sides of the aisle to attend Kidney Action Day events on Capitol Hill. I encourage my fellow members to join me in helping to spread awareness about a cause that affects us all. I hope we will all stand together to fight Kidney Disease and support those living with the disease every day, as well as their families.

## HONORING KYLE EWING

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Kyle Ewing. Kyle is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 714, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Kyle has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Kyle has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned 38 merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Kyle has served in many leadership roles within his unit, most notably as Senior Patrol Leader. Kyle has also contributed to his community by rehabilitating the parking lot and painting the community room of Dearborn Retirement Community in Dearborn, Missouri.

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

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, February 29, 2012, I was absent from the House Chamber. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall vote 80.

## CONDEMNING IRAN FOR ITS PERSECUTION OF YOUCEF NADARKHANI

SPEECH OF

### HON. E. SCOTT RIGELL

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. RIGELL. Mr. Speaker, Youcef Nadarkhani is a Christian pastor in Iran who at this very moment is under sentence of death for refusing to convert to Islam. As a matter of conscience, Pastor Youcef's story must be boldly told in this chamber and in every place where human rights are valued. His story reminds us of the blessings of liberty which we enjoy and sometimes take for granted. It reminds us that millions of people around the world live under brutal regimes that deny those same basic freedoms to their own people.

In 2009, Pastor Youcef protested a law that would forcibly impose Islam on his children. In September 2010 an Iranian court accused Pastor Youcef of the "crime" of abandoning the Islamic faith and condemned him to death by hanging unless he converts to Islam.

Mr. Speaker, this case represents just one in a long line of abuses the government of Iran has perpetrated against religious minorities. The intolerant, indeed barbaric, actions of the Iranian regime trample on the most basic of human rights—the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. I condemn it in the strongest possible terms.

Iranian leaders must understand that if Iran is to be a legitimate member of the community of nations, if it seeks trade, if it seeks the benefit of economic engagement with the free world, if it wants to provide a firm and secure future for its citizens, it must protect and defend the rights of religious minorities. It must respect the religious liberties which its own constitution guarantees, and which it is obligated to respect as a signatory to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

So I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 556 condemning the government of Iran for its continued persecution, imprisonment, and sentencing of Pastor Youcef on the charge of apostasy. I am a cosponsor of this resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

## HONORING THE CARROLLTON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize the Carrollton Area Chamber of Commerce and to congratulate them on their 100th anniversary.

Since its founding in 1912, the Chamber has been an effective advocate for Carrollton and Carroll County. Now numbering 160 members, the Chamber remains committed to leading the way for economic development and promoting small businesses throughout the Carrollton region.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending the Carrollton Area Chamber of Commerce for their accomplishments over the past 100 years and in looking forward to the years to come.

## HONORING THE ARLINGTON CHAPTER OF THE LINKS INCORPORATED

### HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, for 45 years the Arlington Chapter of the Links Incorporated has been serving women, children and youth in the Alexandria and Arlington, Virginia communities.

Collectively, the chapter has been able to:

Award over $100,000 in scholarships to high school and college students;

Reach hundreds of students and parents at multi-cultural events to honor/celebrate their rich heritage;

Support student-run TV broadcasting and offer mentoring and character building workshops;

Support educational, health and sustainable food sources to international developing countries; and

Conduct awareness training to hundreds of community residents on obesity, diabetes, and the number one killer of women . . . heart disease.

I would like to commend the Arlington Links for providing resources to deliver sustainable and impactful programs, and for promoting civic, educational and cultural activities that instill excellence and improve the quality of life to thousands in the Northern Virginia community.

## COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF SKILLED HOME HEALTH IN MEDICARE

### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, as we search for solutions to ensure that the Medicare system remains solvent for seniors and future beneficiaries, I believe it is vitally important to support cost-effective benefits that allow seniors to remain healthy and independent. Many of the treatments that were once offered exclusively in a hospital or physician setting can now be safely, effectively, affordably and efficiently provided in patients' homes by skilled clinicians. Home health care offers an intermediate level of care for patients who have difficulty accessing outpatient care or who need intensive assistance with an acute or chronic health problem.

Home health services are cost effective because they prevent costly hospitalizations, and serve as an alternative to expensive skilled nursing facilities. According to an October 2010 report in the Des Moines Register, seniors utilizing skilled home care cost taxpayers an average of $607 per month, compared to an average of $3,687 for seniors in nursing homes. Not only is home care less expensive, but studies also show that the vast majority of seniors prefer to live independently and remain in their home if possible.

A case study through the Veterans' Administration (VA) highlights the benefits of home healthcare. The VA has provided comprehensive primary care services to veterans in their homes since 1972 in an effort to keep patients in their homes and reduce inpatient hospital days. The program was specifically designed to target patients with complex chronic diseases through an interdisciplinary team of health professionals. This program showed a reduction in inpatient hospital days by 62 percent, and a reduction in nursing home bed days by 88 percent. This translated into a reduction in the cost of care from $38,000 to $29,000 per patient per year for patients enrolled in the program (a 24 percent reduction).

The Medicare program continues to increase in importance in my home state of Iowa, where our senior population is increasing dramatically. The percentage of Iowans age 65 and older is expected to grow from 14.8 percent in 2009 to 22.4 percent by 2030, according to the Iowa Department on Aging. I am committed to preserving benefits for current recipients and those nearing retirement, while guaranteeing the program's solvency for future generations of Americans.

Seniors throughout Iowa depend on Medicare for their health coverage, and we have to do everything we can to safeguard those benefits. As we examine solutions to address Medicare's solvency, there is strong evidence that home care is a cost-effective benefit that should remain accessible to seniors.

## HONORING MR. WILLIAM F. SCHENCK FOR HIS SERVICE IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSION

### HON. STEVE AUSTRIA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. AUSTRIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of Ohio's Seventh Congressional District to recognize William F. Schenck for his outstanding career as a prosecuting attorney and his efforts of upholding justice in the Greene County Community and the nation.

Bill earned his Juris Doctor from The Ohio State University and shortly after began his career in the Greene County prosecutor's office. Elected to the position of Prosecuting Attorney seven times, Bill honorably served the citizens of Greene County for over 25 years. During his time as the county's prosecuting attorney, Bill prosecuted over 50,000 felonies and brought justice to numerous victims.

After his time in the Greene County prosecutor's office, Bill served as the Assistant United States Attorney at Department of Justice in the U.S. Attorney's Office for over five years. During this time, Bill prosecuted felons involved in organized crime.

Bill has shown himself to be a dedicated and hardworking member of the Greene County community and the state of Ohio. Throughout his service, he has been an advocate for victims' rights and has worked tirelessly for justice.

Thus, it is with great pride, I congratulate William F. Schenck for his commendable service in protecting the Miami Valley, the state of Ohio, and the United States. I join the people of Ohio's Seventh Congressional District in extending best wishes upon his retirement from the U.S. Attorney's Office and success in all future endeavors.

## RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GIRL SCOUTS

### HON. ANN MARIE BUERKLE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Ms. BUERKLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Girl Scouts of America.

On March 12, 1912, Juliette "Daisy" Gordon Low brought together 18 girls for the first ever Girl Scout meeting. One hundred years later Girl Scouts of America has 112 councils and more than 3.2 million members.

Since being founded, the Girl Scouts has been devoted to providing opportunities for all girls to develop and grow physically, mentally, and spiritually. Through the work of dedicated volunteers, young women are given a firm foundation to build upon their strengths and learn other valuable life skills.

Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways is the branch of the Girl Scouts of America that covers my district. It serves nearly 19,000 girls and over 7,000 adults in 24 counties in New York and two counties in Pennsylvania. Through activities that help girls discover their values and skills, Girl Scouts of NYPENN Pathways gives girls courage, confidence, and character; attributes that will serve them well in their future.

I congratulate Girl Scouts of America on their 100th anniversary and offer my sincerest thanks to all of the Girl Scouts of America's volunteers, especially those from NYPENN Pathways, for their dedication and leadership to the next generation of young women.

## A TRIBUTE TO MELISSA HEER

### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Melissa Heer of Ames for receiving a coveted Fullbright award to study and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fullbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fullbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fullbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Melissa's host country for the 2011–2012 academic year is India.

To receive a Fullbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent future leaders like Melissa from the great state of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the United States Congress will join me in congratulating her for receiving this prestigious award. I wish her the best of luck in her studies and future career.

## HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO

### HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo for their commitment to education and to honor the volunteers that make it possible.

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo has been known as the largest rodeo in the world. It attracts the best of the best in the rodeo and livestock industries but it also raises millions of dollars for Houston area children to go to college.

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo will award more 600 scholarships totaling over $9.53 million in 2012. Every year, the rodeo increases the number of awards given to local students.

Since its beginning in 1932, the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo has committed more than $283 million to scholarships, research, endowments, and other educational youth programs. Students have received more than $165 million in direct support, since the first scholarship was awarded in 1957.

Currently, more than 2,000 students are on Show scholarships, attending more than 100 different Texas colleges and universities. The value of these scholarships is approximately $30 million.

I'm sure many students from the 29th District, and from all over the Houston area, will enjoy benefiting from this great program as it continues to grow in the future.

I am proud to be a life member of the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and thank the thousands of volunteers that dedicate well over a million hours of service each year to make the rodeo and its scholarship program operate as smoothly as they do.

The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo would not be the success that it is today without the hard work and dedication of its volunteers. The current 26,000+ volunteers serve on more than 100 different Rodeo committees.

Their service to our community is greatly appreciated.

And so it is with great pleasure that I recognize the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo for their success and dedication to education and to the Volunteers that make the show possible.

## NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH

### HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, since President Ronald Reagan declared the first celebration in 1983, the Eye Bank Association of America (EBAA) and its 97 member eye banks have designated March as National Eye Donor Month—an opportunity to honor eye donors and corneal recipients, and increase awareness of the need to donate eyes.

Through corneal transplants, over 1,000,000 people have had their sight restored since the EBAA's inception in 1961. This is precisely why it is so important to educate the general public about the donors and their families who afford life-changing corneal transplantations for over 50,000 people annually.

Of the EBAA's 97 member eye banks, five are located in Pennsylvania, and they have a deep-rooted commitment to restoring sight by providing corneas for sight-saving transplant procedures. In 2010, charitable eye donations made by Pennsylvania residents allowed our state eye banks to provide in excess of 2,900 corneal transplants to help our fellow Pennsylvanians regain their sight, and almost 1,200 corneas for research and educational purposes.

The Pennsylvania eye banks' efforts have not gone unnoticed, changing the lives of thousands of Pennsylvanians through the selfless gifts of donors and their families.

The Center for Organ Recovery & Education in Pittsburgh will soon offer surgeons pre-cut corneal tissue, which will greatly enhance post-operative recovery time for those recipients undergoing Endothelial Keratoplasty.

In Hershey, the Gift of Life Eye Bank educates the public about eye donation and coordinates the recovery and allocation of corneas for transplant. Serving the eastern half of Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and Delaware, the Gift of Life Eye Bank also supports research into the causes and cures of blinding eye conditions.

Located in the City of Brotherly Love, the Lions Eye Bank of Delaware Valley recently acquired the latest technological device to prepare donated cornea tissue for the most modern, highly-effective surgical techniques.

For over 52 years, the Lions Eye Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania in Erie has been dedicated to sight restoration. In November 2011, they accomplished a first; procurement of a cornea from a living donor and successful transplantation into a young man from Philadelphia.

Celebrating 55 years of eye banking, the Northeast Pennsylvania Lions Eye Bank in Bethlehem is a charter member of the EBAA, and to date, has placed over 25,000 corneas for transplantation.

Even with the tremendous advancements eye banks have made in corneal transplantation, much remains to be done to offer more people the opportunity to receive life-changing corneal transplants.

I encourage all Americans to register to become eye donors. Inform your family of your wishes; designate yourself as a donor on your driver's license; and register as an eye donor through your state donor registry.

I urge my colleagues to work with their local eye banks and the EBAA to promote the importance of eye donation and its life-enhancing effects on corneal recipients.

During March 2012, let us remember the donors whose gifts of sight make corneal transplants possible, celebrate the corneal recipients whose lives are forever changed and work with the EBAA and its member eye banks to continue restoring sight worldwide through public education and ongoing advancements in corneal transplantation.

## A TRIBUTE TO CHARITY STRASZHEIM

### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Charity Straszheim of Story City for receiving a coveted Fullbright award to study and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fullbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fullbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fullbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Pamela's host country for the 2011–2012 academic year is the Czech Republic.

To receive a Fullbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent future leaders like Charity from the great state of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the United States Congress will join me in congratulating her for receiving this prestigious award. I wish her the best of luck in her studies and future career.

## IN MEMORY OF JAMES LENARD MALLON

### HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with the Hon. KAY GRANGER to honor and remember Mr. James L. Mallon, a baseball coaching legend at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. Coach Jim Mallon passed away on Sunday, February 28, 2012 following complications from heart surgery.

After five years with the San Francisco Giants organization and the completion of his Masters degree from Baylor University, Coach Mallon began his collegiate coaching and teaching career at Southwestern University in 1971. Under his leadership, his teams won multiple championships. Most notably, in 1984, his team finished third in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) World Series. During his 33 years, he had an impressive record of 1,197 wins against 601 losses. In 2005, he received the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award from Southwestern University and was inducted into the NAIA Hall of Fame in 1992 and the Hall of Fame at Southwestern University in 2010.

Aside from his successful career, Coach Mallon positively impacted the lives of countless students. Those he coached knew firsthand of his passion for baseball, his caring nature, and the candid yet valuable advice he offered, which guided so many of them through life in the face of difficulties. He was loved, admired, and respected by all who knew him. Indeed, Southwestern University and the baseball community have suffered a great loss. Coach Mallon is survived by his loving wife, Jane; his sons, Jeff and Jarret; and a multitude of friends throughout the State of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, we ask the House of Representatives to join us in mourning the loss of Coach Mallon and in offering his family and friends our sincere condolences. May the peace of God be with those he loved and sustain them through this hour of sorrow.

## RECOGNIZING DR. WILLIAM EISENHARDT

### HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague Congressman MIKE THOMPSON to recognize Dr. William Eisenhardt, President of the California Maritime Academy, as he retires after nearly 46 years of public service and 11 years as President of the Academy.

Dr. Eisenhardt is a native of Baltimore, Maryland, and a 1966 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, where he earned academic stars in engineering. During the Vietnam War, he served as a naval flight officer, earning the Air Medal and Navy Commendation Medal among other personal and unit decorations. After his active duty service he attended Duke University, where he earned his Masters and Ph.D. degrees while also teaching as a visiting professor.

Before coming to the California Maritime Academy, Dr. Eisenhardt spent 18 years at the Maine Maritime Academy as a faculty member, Commandant, and then Provost. Upon leaving, he was awarded an honorary doctorate of science in recognition of his accomplishments in international maritime education and his service to the Maine Maritime Academy.

Dr. Eisenhardt is a career educator with a lifelong dedication to maritime education. He began his 11 year Presidency at Cal Maritime in July 2001 and his accomplishments are numerous. Under his leadership, the Cal Maritime Academy has increased its exposure to a variety of external audiences. Dr. Eisenhardt's efforts have resulted in Cal Maritime being listed by both U.S. News and World Report and

Forbes magazines as among the top public colleges in the country. During his tenure, Dr. Eisenhardt has doubled and diversified the academic offerings and enrollment at Cal Maritime. The campus has now become the most culturally diverse maritime academy in the U.S. with 20 percent of the cadets being women and over 30 percent from minority groups.

Cal Maritime's operating budget has also increased by nearly 50 percent and major capital improvements have exceeded $39 million with another $46 million in the planning and construction phase. Dr. Eisenhardt has overseen a five-fold expansion in charitable giving to the campus from alumni, industry, parents and friends. He was also responsible for securing the largest charitable donation in the Academy's history: $3 million from the American Bureau of Shipping, used to establish the ABS School of Maritime Policy and Management. Cal Maritime also boasts the world's finest Maritime Simulation Center, a new $15 million facility for which he led the planning and development. In the 2008–2010 academic years the Academy was awarded just under $11 million in federal grants and special project allocations, the most ever in the history of the institution.

Dr. Eisenhardt currently serves as a board member of the Solano County Economic Development Corporation and is the former Chair of the Council of State Maritime Academies & Colleges Consortium. He was active in the founding of the International Association of Maritime Universities and currently serves on its Executive Board. In addition, he serves on the Board of Directors of the San Francisco Marine Exchange and the Northern California Maritime Security Committee wherein he was awarded a U.S. Coast Guard Certificate of Merit in 2005 for providing leadership in helping to set up maritime security protocols.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring Dr. William Eisenhardt for his tireless and dedicated service to his country and higher education. I also join his wife Kathryn, two daughters Elizabeth and Kristin, colleagues, and friends in congratulating him on a successful and fulfilling career, and a very well-deserved retirement.

## A TRIBUTE TO DOCTOR JIMMY SENTEZA

### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Dr. Jimmy Senteza of Urbandale for receiving a coveted Fullbright award to lecture and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fullbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fullbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fullbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Jimmy's host country for the 2011–2012 academic year is Uganda where he will proudly be representing Iowa's own Drake University.

To receive a Fullbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Dr. Senteza from the great state of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating him for receiving this prestigious award and I wish him the best of luck in the future.

## TEXAS INDEPENDENCE DAY

### HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, throughout history, people who have been abused by oppressive dictators have stood up and risked their lives in the name of freedom and independence.

Freedom fighters are the most powerful catalysts for change and their potential to alter history is unlimited.

This country knows the power of revolution better than any other. On July 4, 1776, after fighting for independence from Britain, the founding fathers signed the Declaration of Independence.

But there is another independence day that is not to be forgotten. For Texans, July 4th is not the only day to celebrate independence. This Friday, March 2, we will celebrate the 176th anniversary of Texas Independence.

Texas, a part of Mexico, had enjoyed the privileges of citizens under the Mexican Constitution of 1824.

Trouble started when Santa Anna became dictator of Mexico and abolished the Constitution and took away civil rights.

This led to the outbreak of revolution in October of 1835, both from Tejanos, Texans of Spanish and Mexican descent, and people from the United States.

Santa Anna with his three armies invaded Texas to put down rebellion. So on March 1, 54 Texians, including Lorenzo de Zavala, Thomas Rusk, Antonio Navarro and Sam Houston, gathered in the small village of Washington-on-the-Brazos.

Inspired by the American Revolution and the United States Declaration of Independence, the delegates drafted a Declaration of Independence overnight.

The declaration was signed on March 2 and the Republic of Texas was officially established.

As these determined delegates declared independence, Mexican dictator Santa Anna and several thousands of enemy troops closed in on an old beat-up Spanish mission that we now call the Alamo.

But Texas defenders stood defiant, stood determined. They were led by my hero, a lawyer by the name of William Barrett Travis who was just 27 years old.

The Alamo and its 186 Texans were all that stood between the massive army of invaders and the people of Texas.

The Alamo defenders who entered the Alamo on February 23, were a rag-tag group of relentless patriots, made up from nearly every state in the Union and 13 foreign countries, including Mexico.

Their ages were 16 through 67, at least 9 were Tejanos, and they were all volunteers. They were mavericks, revolutionaries, farmers, shopkeepers, and freedom fighters; and they came together to fight for something they believed in: freedom.

These freedom fighters held off an entire army of several thousand for 13 days. They would not relent.

During the bloody siege, Travis penned what would become the most famous letter in Texas history.

He said: ''I am determined to sustain myself for as long as possible and die like a soldier who never forgets what is due his honor and that of his country.

''Victory or death.''

Unfortunately, Travis' call for help was not answered in time.

After thirteen days of glory at the Alamo, Commander Travis and his men sacrificed their lives on the altar of freedom and the Alamo fell on March 6, 1836.

Because heroes like Travis, Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie held out for so long, Santa Anna's forces took such great losses they became battered, demoralized and diminished.

Captain Juan Seguin and his company of Tejanos joined General Sam Houston who had the time he needed to devise a strategy to rally other Texas volunteers and defeat the invaders.

In the middle of the afternoon on April 21, 1836, General Sam and his boys routed a larger Mexican army yelling, ''Remember the Alamo!'' The rest is Texas history.

The war was over, and the Lone Star flag was visible all across the broad, bold, brazen plains of Texas.

Texas remained a nation for 9 years—some Texans wish Texas was still its own nation. Texas claimed land that now includes part of New Mexico, Oklahoma, Colorado, Kansas, Wyoming, even up to the Canadian border.

In 1845, Texas was admitted to the Union by only one vote when a Louisiana Senator changed his mind. By its admission into the United States, Texas may divide into five States, and the Texas flag is to fly even with the U.S. flag and not below it.

Texas Independence Day is a day of pride and reflection in the Lone Star State. This week we remember that Texas was a glorious nation once and won freedom and independence because some fierce volunteers fought to the death for liberty over tyranny.

Freedom has a cost. It always does. It always will.

And as we pause to remember those who gave their lives so that Texas could be a free Nation, we must continue to remember those Americans that are currently fighting in lands across the seas for our Nation.

There are freedom fighters all over the world today who are fighting the same fight against tyrants. It is history like ours that gives them hope for success.

Celebrate Texas independence today and pay tribute to all our Texas heroes like William Barrett Travis.

His legacy embodies the spirit of Texans that is so admired and envied all around the world today.

And that's just the way it is.

## INTRODUCTION OF EL YUNQUE NATIONAL FOREST PRESERVATION ACT

### HON. PEDRO R. PIERLUISI

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation designed to preserve and protect El Yunque National Forest in Puerto Rico. El Yunque, which is the only tropical rainforest administered by the U.S. Forest Service, is a source of great pride for the people I represent and a major economic driver on the Island. Over one million people from all over the world visit El Yunque each year—to walk along its beautiful trails, to sample its eco-tourism pleasures, and to gain a greater understanding of its ecological importance. El Yunque is featured on a quarter released into circulation last month as part of the U.S. Mint's "America the Beautiful Quarters Program," and a public launch ceremony to mark this occasion is scheduled to be held in El Yunque on March 14.

To protect El Yunque's rich biodiversity and to provide a buffer zone against encroaching urbanization, forest administrators need to acquire a number of parcels of land. Thus, my legislation would require the Federal Government to use funds currently generated by activities within El Yunque for investment back into El Yunque for land acquisition purposes.

I hope my colleagues will join me in taking this commonsense step to protect a national treasure.

## A TRIBUTE TO PAMELA MADSEN

### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Pamela Madsen of Ames for receiving a coveted Fullbright award to study and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fullbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fullbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fullbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Pamela's host country for the 2011–2012 academic year is India.

To receive a Fullbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent future leaders like Pamela from the great state of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the United States Congress will join me in congratulating her for receiving this prestigious award. I wish her the best of luck in her studies and future career.

## CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOY SCOUT TROOP 840

### HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I celebrate the 25th anniversary of Boy Scout Troop 840. The troop is located in Coppell, Texas, and has a successful history of developing boys into strong, responsible men.

Troop 840 was founded in 1987 and was chartered by the Coppell Fire Department, where it met at a fire department facility. The troop quickly outgrew the facility and moved to Mockingbird Elementary School in 1988. In 1989, the Sandy Lake Baptist Church took over the charter and provided the troop's meeting place. In 2007, Troop 840 was relocated to Valley Ranch Baptist Church as their new charter organization.

During the 25-year history of Troop 840, the Scouts have had seven Scout Masters. The Scout Masters in chronological order include Gary Brewer, Bob McCarty, Forrest Broom, Terry Tyler, Waid Davis, Chris Witt and, currently, Terry Smith. Forrest Broom served as Scout Master for one extra term between Terry Tyler and Waid Davis.

Troop 840 was recognized with the 2011 Western Star Friends of Scouting trophy for contributing more money to the 2011 Western Star Friends of Scouting Campaign than any other Boy Scout unit in Coppell and Irving. The troop also received the 2011 Western Star Camporee trophy, which it also won in 2006, 2007 and 2010.

Troop 840 is operated as a boy-led troop. The program is focused on leadership, responsibility and active involvement. The Scouts design the agenda and take a leading role in organizing all camp-outs and troop activities. Over the troop's history, it has developed 103 Eagle Scouts and thousands of service hours in assisting the City of Coppell and surrounding communities.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating Boy Scout Troop 840 for its 25 years of developing fine young men and community involvement.

## CONGRATULATING LISSA SILK FOR HER DEDICATION TO BRINGING AWARENESS TO DISTRACTED DRIVING

### HON. FRANK C. GUINTA

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I congratulate Lissa Silk for all the work she is doing to bring awareness to the issue of distracted driving. As Miss Manchester 2012, Lissa has committed herself to raising awareness for Drive Against Distraction and educating others on the serious consequences distracted driving can have on everyone. Whether it be talking or texting on your cell phone while driving, or responding to another person in your vehicle, the consequences of these actions and lives being impacted is very real and in some instances deadly.

Lissa's interest with this cause came from many personal experiences with distracted driving. Her mother Barbara was seriously injured by a driver who was talking on their cell phone, and Lissa and her sister were also involved in an accident where the other driver ran a stop sign because they were not paying attention.

Working with the Rochester and Dover Police Departments, as well as many High Schools and Driver Education Classes, Lissa has committed herself to educating others on distracted driving by sharing her personal stories. She has also reached out to the nation's Governors about enacting no texting while driving legislation. Our own Governor, John Lynch, will be recognizing April as New Hampshire's official Drive Against Distraction Awareness Month thanks to Lissa's efforts.

Lissa's commitment to educating others and preventing the unnecessary consequences of distracted driving are commendable. I congratulate Lissa for all of her accomplishments and for her outstanding commitment and leadership to this cause. I wish her all the best for continued success in the future.

## A TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL KNUDSON

### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Michael Knudson of Decorah for receiving a coveted Fullbright award to study and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fullbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fullbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fullbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception.

Michael's host country for the 2011–2012 academic year is Norway.

To receive a Fullbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent future leaders like Michael from the great state of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the United States Congress will join me in congratulating him for receiving this prestigious award. I wish him the best of luck in his studies and future career.

## MOTHERS AND OTHERS AGAINST HUNGER YORK COUNTY SHELTER PROGRAMS

### HON. CHELLIE PINGREE

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Ms. PINGREE of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize an incredible program in Maine, the ''Mothers and Others Against Hunger'' through the York County Shelter Programs.

The York County Shelter Programs is a homeless services provider in Alfred, Maine, that has been in operation for more than thirty-one years and continues to be an essential part of York County—over the years caring for thousands of Mainers.

Maine is a state that has struggled with food insecurity and ''Mothers and Others Against Hunger'' is making great strides in eradicating hunger in Maine. Projects like this demonstrate Maine's unbreakable community bond in our fight against hunger in Maine today.

## SUMGAIT POGROMS

### HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, once again this year I rise to mark an important date that remains strong in the memories of the Armenian and American people. It is always with great emotion that I commemorate the Sumgait pogroms where the murder of hundreds of Armenians stood out as a particularly atrocious event in a long history of hostility against the Armenian people. This anniversary above all reminds us of our duty to act. Year after year, it strengthens our determination to obtain justice and peace.

Beginning on the evening of February 27th, 1988, hundreds of Armenians were brutally murdered, some of them burned alive and thrown from windows. Women and children were raped and maimed by Azerbaijani rioters. Apartments were robbed, shops demolished, and thousands of people became refugees. Despite Sumgait's proximity to Baku, police turned a blind eye to this dire situation, allowing the pogroms to go on for three days.

The truth is that for over two decades, authorities in Azerbaijan have made relentless efforts to erase all traces of these crimes. This state-sponsored denial is an insult to the memory of all men, women and children who perished on those fateful days; it is a daily affront to their descendants. The Congressional Armenian Issues Caucus is resolutely committed to ensure that those Armenians who lost their lives are not forgotten.

The need for the government of Azerbaijan to fully recognize the Sumgait pogroms is not only in the interest of historical accuracy but also necessary to ensure a peaceful future. The just recognition of these crimes is the first step towards an enduring and peaceful resolution of the regional conflict. Stability in the region is needed now more than ever. The specter of violence indeed still looms and many Armenian lives continue to be subject to threats by the Azerbaijani government. Ceasefire violations by Azerbaijani armed forces at the contact line with the Nagorno Karabakh Republic have shown this to be true. President Aliyev recently announced that Azerbaijan is buying up modern weaponry to occupy the Nagorno Karabakh Republic.

I stand here today to solemnly condemn all intimidations and acts of aggression against the Armenian people. The Congressional Armenian Issues Caucus will do its very best to ensure that basic rights to life, liberty and security are not violated. May the Armenian people never have to fear again such attacks. Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues stand with me in recognizing the Sumgait pogroms and the needless deaths of so many.

## CONGRATULATING RABBI SOLOMON SCHIFF

### HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, Rabbi Solomon Schiff is a dedicated husband to his wife Shirley, a proud father to three sons and doting grandfather of seven. He is a world renowned spiritual leader and humanitarian whose compassion knows no bounds. Rabbi Schiff is a masterful storyteller with a penchant for comedy whose words evoke inspiration and emotion, and he is one of the most ardent Miami Dolphins supporters anyone will ever meet.

Rabbi Schiff has led a remarkable life that has taken him from New York to Illinois, Iowa and to Miami; he has traveled the globe, from Israel to Jordan, Rome, Berlin and Warsaw all in an effort to promote human rights and to live up to his religious obligations. And he has now recently decided to put pen to paper and share his life story with us, publishing his memoir ''Under the Yarmulke: Tales of Faith, Fun and Football.''

In this touching, and often comical retelling of his life, Rabbi Schiff shares with us his encounters with Presidents and Prime Ministers; Kings and world leaders; the Dalai Lama and the Pope; and an untold number of people of all faiths and walks of life. He has given the opening prayer on both the House and Senate floors, and has given the benediction at the White House and even on the home field of his beloved Miami Dolphins.

Though all of this would be more than enough for one man to be proud of, Rabbi Schiff takes the most pride in living out his own motto: ''Live and help live.'' And in his memoir, Rabbi Schiff shares with us some of the many ways he has struggled to help so many fight for justice worldwide. It is a truly inspirational story, and I commend him on all of his achievements.

Rabbi Schiff is a man of honor; he is a man of integrity and of compassion. But most of all, he is a man of action whose spiritual guidance and unwavering commitment to the betterment of peace and tranquility for all has carved an enduring legacy. He serves as a reminder to us all that we each have the capacity to make this world a better place.

We in South Florida have had the pleasure of having Rabbi Schiff working to unite the communities of all faiths for over 50 years now. He has been a pillar of the community, and a beacon of inspiration. We congratulate Rabbi Schiff on all of his achievements and accolades over the years, and we thank him for all of his efforts in South Florida and across the globe. We thank Rabbi Solomon Schiff for sharing these touching moments with us, and wish him all the best as he continues to write the next chapters of his life.

## COMMENDING THE HONORABLE ERNEST OROS FOR A LIFETIME OF DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVICE

### HON. LEONARD LANCE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Honorable Ernest Oros for his lifetime of dedicated public service. Ernie was born and raised in Phillipsburg, New Jersey and currently resides in Colonia, New Jersey, part of Woodbridge Township. From a young age Ernie felt called to serve the Nation he loves. Ernie joined the United States Marine Corps as a young man where he was deployed overseas with the Second Marine Division. He served in Guam, Saipan and Japan and was honorably discharged as a Corporal in 1946.

Ernie continued his public service on the Woodbridge council where he championed the creation of the Czick-Varga Memorial Park to honor local veterans who gave their lives to defend our Nation. He was a party leader on the local and county Republican committees and was elected to the New Jersey General Assembly in 1991 where he served two distinguished terms as an advocate for Middlesex County and New Jersey taxpayers.

Ernie became a small business owner with his brother, Lester, where he was known as a caring and effective leader, and is now enjoying a well earned retirement with his wife Betty, children and grandchildren.

I join Assemblyman Oros's many friends in congratulating him for his enormous public service to Woodbridge Township, Middlesex County and the state of New Jersey and his dedication to his family and our larger American society.

## A TRIBUTE TO CATHERINE AND JENNIFER COMPTON

### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Catherine and Jennifer Compton of Ames for each receiving a coveted Fullbright award to study and conduct research abroad this academic year.

The Fullbright Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs. This program is known as America's flagship international exchange program. First established by Congress in 1946, the Fullbright Program has served the purpose of building mutual understanding between American citizens and the rest of the world. Appropriations from the United States Congress, participating foreign governments, and private sector contributions fund the Fullbright Program. The program has exchanged over a quarter of a million people in more than 155 countries, since its inception. Catherine's host country for the 2011–2012 academic year is Germany, while Jennifer will be hosted by Jordan.

To receive a Fullbright award is truly a great honor. Recipients of this award must demonstrate significant leadership potential in their chosen field and are selected on the basis of their academic or professional achievement. The experiences provided by this program ensure that tomorrow's leaders are both knowledgeable about the world and well-rounded.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent future leaders like Catherine and Jennifer from the great state of Iowa in the United States Congress. I know my colleagues in the United States Congress will join me in congratulating them for receiving this prestigious award. I wish them the best of luck in their studies and future careers.

## RECOGNITION OF BELVA DAVIS, NEWS PIONEER

### HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Belva Davis, an icon of San Francisco Bay Area journalism for nearly half a century. Ms. Davis has announced that she will step down as host of public television's, "This Week in Northern California". Her final broadcast will be November 9, 2012. She is the winner of dozens of journalism awards, including eight local Emmys.

Her retirement will mark the end of her 19-year career as anchor of the program. After her departure, for the first time since 1964, Bay Area television viewers will be without coverage from the journalist who used grace and brains to face down the era's virulent racism and sexism and become the first black woman TV journalist in the Western U.S.

Ms. Davis has covered many high profile historical news events locally, nationally, and internationally. She has interviewed world leaders and U.S. presidents, as well as anchoring news programs on KPIX–TV and KRON–TV. She has been involved in numerous civic projects and helped shepherd San Francisco's Museum of African Diaspora into existence.

In her 2010 autobiography, Never In My Wildest Dreams: A Black Woman's Life in Journalism, Ms. Davis tells of being born into poverty in Depression-era Louisiana and growing up in Oakland and Berkeley.

The book opens in 1964, when Ms. Davis is a young radio reporter covering the Republican National Convention. She describes a menacing crowd screaming racial slurs and chasing her and her news director, Louis Freeman, from San Francisco's Cow Palace.

Many members of the African American community respected Ms. Davis's journalism. Comedian Bill Cosby recalls watching Davis on TV from his houseboat, "We looked forward to seeing her prove the stereotypical ugliness of those days to be wrong," Cosby wrote in the foreword to Davis' memoir.

Today, her program "This Week in Northern California" is a must-watch for local new junkies. John Boland, president of KQED, called Davis a trailblazer "who has opened up so many doors for women and African Americans in television and beyond"

During her years as a journalist, I was fortunate to be interviewed by Ms. Davis and I respect, and treasure, my relationship with her. I am pleased to join Belva Davis's friends, admirers and colleagues in commemorating her distinguished journalism legacy.

## A TRIBUTE TO CURT TOMASEVICZ AND TEAMMATES

### HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a Nebraskan who has made the record books, Curt Tomasevicz. Curt was part of the USA's bobsledding team which consisted of pilot Steven Holcomb, and pushers Justin Olsen and Steven Langton. Together they won the International Bobsledding and Tobogganing Federation World Championships in Lake Placid, NY over the weekend.

Thanks in no small part to Curt's efforts, the U.S. claimed five medals, including four gold, to mark the most successful World Championship showing in the history of the program. The American team validated its reputation as the fastest push team in the world by dominating off the block and reaching speeds in excess of 80 miles per hour.

Curt is no stranger to success. In 2010, he won a gold medal at the Vancouver Olympic Games and was also a 2003 Academic-All Big XII selection on the University of Nebraska football team.

Curt embodies the Nebraska spirit. He remains committed to working hard, helping his teammates, and never quitting. Curt has made Shelby, Polk County, and the State of Nebraska proud with his character, work ethic, and passion for sport.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in congratulating Curt and his teammates for their historic achievement.

## HONORING THE ARMENIAN VICTIMS IN SUMGAIT

### HON. ROBERT J. DOLD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, this week it is important that we not forget the 24th anniversary of the tragic pogroms against Armenians living in Soviet Azerbaijan. Driven by the anti-Armenian movement in the region, mobs committed violent human rights violations against Armenians of all ages living in the town of Sumgait. Today, I stand with the Armenian community around the world to remember all those who were taken from their homes and from their families—simply because of their ethnic background. As we remember those who lost their lives in Sumgait, we must continue to guard against all discrimination, oppression, and targeted violence against ethnic groups around the world.

## OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

### HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 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 $15,488,891,296,248.02. We've added $4,862,014,247,334.94 to our debt in 3 years. This is debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

## A TRIBUTE TO LOGAN PEARCE

### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Logan Pearce of Mason City for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

The Eagle Scout rank is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about five percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance-based achievement with high standards that have been well-maintained over the years.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Logan completed a two-part project by building numerous bat houses to provide a more ecological solution to insect control, in addition to the placement of six fishing line recyclers to assist both the Cerro Gordo County Conservation Department and the Lime Creek Nature Center. The work ethic Logan has shown in this project, and every other project leading up to his Eagle Scout rank, speaks volumes of his commitment to serving a cause greater than himself.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man and his supportive family demonstrates

the rewards of hard work, dedication and perseverance. I am honored to represent Logan and his family in the United States Congress. I know that all of my colleagues in the House will join me in congratulating him in obtaining the Eagle Scout ranking, and will wish him continued success in his future education and career.

## IN HONOR OF BILLY POWELL

### HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the hard work of Mr. Billy Powell. Billy has been a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers 684 for sixteen years. IBEW 684 represents electrical workers in Stanislaus, Merced, Mariposa, and Tuolumne counties. It organizes electrical workers, works to secure just compensation and working conditions, provides equitable settlements of grievances, and strives to promote cordial relations between members and employers. Billy is currently the local's business manager and has served in that capacity for the past five years. He also serves as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Stanislaus and Merced Building Trades Council.

In addition to his career and leadership in the electrical workers' field, he also supports the electrical workers apprenticeship program by serving as an instructor. Students are educated and trained at the Central Valley Joint Apprenticeship Training Center which is a jointly sponsored organization of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the National Electrical Contractors Association of Northern California. This five-year comprehensive program delivers a course education, hands-on lab experience, and on-the-job training to prepare graduates to perform at a high level in the electrical industry. The school has taken top honors in the Western States Electrical Contest in 2006, 2007, 2009 and 2011, a testament no doubt to the hard work of its students and the effective teaching of its instructors.

Billy is also a veteran of our armed forces having served with the United States Navy during the Gulf War. However, his heroism and dedication to our country extends far beyond his years of active duty. He is also committed to providing for our veterans here at home as well. He has employed twenty-five homeless or out of work veterans on projects in the Central Valley and is dedicated to placing even more at future work sites. In addition, he works with Helmets to Hardhats, a national program that trains veterans to transition into skilled, promising construction trade jobs. His efforts to aid our veterans are truly inspiring and I have no doubt that his commitment will assist many more deserving men and women in the future.

It is a great privilege to honor Mr. Billy Powell for his long career and leadership with the IBEW 684, his commitment to the education and training of a new generation of skilled laborers, and his devotion to our district, our country, and our veterans. His benevolence and leadership have truly set a positive example for all to admire and follow. It is an honor to know him, to work with him, and to call him my friend.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to recognize this fine individual for his work and his efforts here today.

## IN RECOGNITION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF BAY AREA FOOD BANK

### HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is an honor for me to rise today to recognize the 30th Anniversary of Bay Area Food Bank. For more than three decades, the Bay Area Food Bank has helped fight hunger in Florida, Alabama and Mississippi.

Bay Area Food Bank was founded in 1981 as a small organization that aimed to serve the needs of citizens of Mobile and the Eastern Shore area in Alabama who were impacted by high inflation and unemployment. With just $5,000 and only two permanent staff members, the Bay Area Food Bank distributed 77,000 pounds of food in its first year. Through the tireless dedication of staff and volunteers, Bay Area Food Bank has grown immensely. Today, they distribute as much food in one day as they did during their entire first year, and, over the course of their history, Bay Area Food Bank has distributed more than 100 million pounds of food to families throughout the Gulf Coast. In fact, Bay Area Food Bank distributes more than 2 million pounds of food annually from their warehouse located in my home county—Santa Rosa County, Florida. In 2011, Bay Area Food Bank distributed over 15 million pounds to 80,000 families in total.

While Bay Area Food Bank does an incredible job providing food for families in the Gulf Coast region, they also play an extremely vital role in the aftermath of disasters. In 2004, Hurricane Ivan devastated the Gulf Coast and left thousands of families without food and water. Many residents were left without power for weeks, and, during this trying time, Bay Area Food Bank's staff and volunteers increased their operations and distributed more than 1.5 million pounds of food in the first month after the hurricane. Just one year later, Hurricane Katrina provided another challenge for the Gulf Coast community. Many areas were decimated by the hurricane. During this time of need, Bay Area Food Bank once again increased their operations, distributing more than 1 million pounds of food and hurricane relief supplies per week for the first two months after the disaster. When the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill left thousands of families along the coast facing food shortages, Bay Area Food Bank again came to their aid. They conducted over 425 oil spill related mobile pantry distributions of more than 1.5 million pounds of food in 10 coastal counties in Florida, Alabama and Mississippi.

Mr. Speaker, for more than 30 years, Bay Area Food Bank and its dedicated staff and volunteers have served families in Florida, Alabama and Mississippi. They started off small, but through tireless work and determination they have expanded their reach into communities all along the Gulf Coast. They are truly an example of what can be achieved by a group of individuals who work together to serve the needs of their community. My wife Vicki and I congratulate Bay Area Food Bank on their 30th Anniversary, and, on behalf of the United States Congress, we thank the staff, volunteers and commercial partners that have helped to create a successful organization whose immense significance to the Gulf Coast community cannot be overstated.

## COMMENDING THE AZALEA CITY CHAPTER OF THE LINKS, INC.

### HON. DAVID SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, my fellow colleagues, I come before you today to recognize the dedicated work of the Azalea City Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, a national service organization dedicated to enriching the lives of African Americans and their descendents. In working towards their goal of honoring the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus, the Azalea City Chapter has put together an exhibit honoring past and present legislators.

Men and women of all stripes had a role to play in improving the lives of African Americans after Reconstruction. This detailed exhibit shines a spotlight on those trailblazers who carved a path for lawmakers like myself and others. Included among these inspirational figures is Senator Leroy Johnson, who was the first African American to be elected to a political office in the Southeast. Through his commitment and hard work, he became so powerful that he was the first to be named Chairman of a standing committee in the General Assembly. Let us not discount Representative Grace Towns Hamilton, who was the first African American woman to be elected to the Georgia Legislature. These legislators and others who are featured in the exhibit continue to serve as role models to aspiring young politicians today.

Please join me in commending the Azalea City Chapter not only on their exceptional hard work, but also for choosing the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus as the focus of their work.

## IN COMMEMORATION OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

### HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, this March as we celebrate Women's History Month, I would like to take a moment to recognize all the great female leaders of our past and present. Throughout history women have persevered in the face of great opposition and successfully broken barriers in the arts, education, government and corporate America.

This year's theme focuses on women's education and empowerment. It is important to note that the equal opportunity for women to learn alongside men is owed much to Title IX of the Education Codes of the Higher Education Act Amendments which passed in 1972 and was enacted in 1977. This legislation prohibited gender discrimination by federally funded institutions, and allowed women to fully

participate in all aspects of education effectively transforming the educational landscape of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, women have taken great strides throughout the years to gain equal treatment. Unfortunately, in matters involving healthcare, women still face challenges. Very recently, women faced attacks by the House Republican majority regarding access to birth control. More disconcerting, these attacks escalated beyond misguided attempts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and deny women access to contraceptives, to restricting women's choices in the area of reproductive health altogether. Medical decisions about a woman's health must be left to the discretion of the patient and her doctor, not employers or the government.

This is why I am proud to support President Obama's Affordable Care Act which will make a positive impact on women's access to health care and greatly decrease the number of women who are uninsured or ''underinsured.'' Studies have shown that women who have health insurance don't necessarily receive certain types of medical care because either the services they need are not covered by their policies, or they cannot afford the high deductibles or co-payments. The Affordable Care Act changes this unfortunate reality by assisting women in gaining access to basic preventive health care in order to prevent life-threatening diseases in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand here in celebration of women and their immeasurable contributions to this great Nation. As we pay tribute to the generations of women whose commitment to progress have proved invaluable to society, let us also renew our commitment to support women and the equal treatment of all in society, regardless of gender, race, or religion.

## WOMEN'S HEALTH WEDNESDAYS

### HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I wish the majority cared as much about creating jobs as they do about undermining women's reproductive rights.

Contraception is basic preventive women's health care. Simple as that. It should be affordable and widely available. Women should have access to it without a copay, no matter where they work.

Birth control saves lives. Women should give it up just as soon as men forfeit coverage for viagra.

Contraception is guided by sound science and best health care practices. The majority on the other hand is motivated by divisive and inflexible ideology.

The Republicans should take their own advice. They say they hate big government. Well, I can't think of any government bigger and more intrusive than the one that tells women how to conduct their personal lives and what to do with their bodies.

## RECOGNIZING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SYRACUSE RESCUE MISSION

### HON. ANN MARIE BUERKLE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Ms. BUERKLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 125th Anniversary of the Syracuse Rescue Mission.

Since being founded in 1887, the Rescue Mission has served the homeless of Central New York from three different community locations.

For 125 years, the dedicated staff and volunteers of the Rescue Mission have not only changed lives, but completely turned them around. The organization's mission is to help everyone move toward independence. They teach the unemployed skills needed to find a job, build housing for the homeless, provide assistance for addicts, and hold fundraisers and free meal programs for those in need. The Rescue Mission serves people with the dignity and respect that they deserve and understand that by helping an individual they are ultimately making their community a better place.

I congratulate the Rescue Mission on their 125th anniversary and sincerely thank everyone at the organization for their dedication and service to the Central New York community. I know that they will continue to demonstrate integrity and excellence through their benevolent deeds and that the Rescue Mission will continue to be a beacon of hope for many years to come.

## HONORING IBEW LOCAL 716 ON ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY

### HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 1, 2012*

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 716 for their 100 years of dedication to improving the life of not only its members but electricians across the Houston area.

As one of the largest unions in America, IBEW represents approximately 750,000 workers of a variety of occupations including construction, utilities, telecommunications, broadcasting, manufacturing, railroads and government. The hard work of IBEW members does not benefit them alone but also enhances the quality of life for electricians across the United States by securing adequate wages, high-quality health insurance, retirement, pensions and creating safer working conditions.

Since 1912, Local Union 716 has helped raise the standard of living for tens of thousands of electricians and their families. Local Union 716 has assisted its members during this difficult economic time by helping to ensure its members keep the jobs they have and help those without find employment. This union has continuously worked to not only uphold the goals of the national organization but also dedicate its services to improving the moral, intellectual and social conditions of their members and families. Through their apprenticeship program, the IBEW has trained and developed craftsmen into highly skilled professionals who know and understand the many facets of electrical work including the dangers and the safety precautions required to mitigate those dangers. The union has worked with the management staff of several companies to promote safe working conditions and improve company training programs.

Local Union 716 is also known in the community for promoting citizens to get out and vote. They have participated, along with several other organizations, in neighborhood block walking events to hand out door hangers and motivate their neighbors to take part in government by going to the polls and voicing their opinions.

And so it is with great pleasure that I recognize and congratulate the members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 716 for their success and dedication to improving life for its members and their community as a whole for 100 years.