

March 23, 1999

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY—178
YEARS OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 1999

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my colleagues and the people of Illinois' 9th Congressional District to celebrate the 178th year of Greek independence.

Much like the United States, Greece's independence did not come easily. Greece had to struggle for several years in its battle for independence from the Ottoman Empire. The perseverance that ultimately led to freedom for Greece is a symbol of the solid character of her people.

I am happy to commemorate the independence of a nation that has contributed so much to the inception and development of the United States.

Our Founding Fathers drew significantly on the democratic principles of the ancient Greeks, and our representative government is an extension of their philosophy, values, and wisdom. Their contributions have translated into an invaluable gift to the United States and other nations around the world, which enjoy the benefits of a democratic society.

Today we celebrate Greek independence and those of Greek heritage who are living in the United States. They have brought so much flavor and beauty to our country.

In my district, the beauty of Greek culture is not hard to find. It can be seen in the work of artists, felt in the drama of the theater, and tasted in the many Greek delicacies that Americans have grown so fond of.

Greece has been a steadfast ally to the United States since the last century. As we approach the 21st century, I look forward to our nations' continuing cooperation and our peoples' lasting friendship. Once again, I wish to congratulate the people of Greece and all Greek-Americans on this special day.

TRIBUTE TO LAGUNA WOODS,
CALIFORNIA

HON. CHRISTOPHER COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 1999

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements of the retired citizens of the newly founded city of Laguna Woods, formerly known as Leisure World of Laguna Hills, CA.

As California's 472nd city, Laguna Woods represents the Nation's first city designed exclusively for retired homeowners.

Laguna Woods is a 3.2-square-mile senior community that lies adjacent to Laguna Hills in what are now the last remaining natural coastal canyons open to the public from Los Angeles to San Diego. With nearly 35,000 trees growing within the city, it is appropriate that Laguna Woods has already been titled "one of the jewels of Orange County."

The tireless efforts made by the citizens and homeowners' association of Laguna Woods are to be commended. March 24, 1999 will

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serve to remind us of the beginning of a community that will benefit retired homeowners and communities throughout our nation. It is my distinct honor to congratulate the citizens of Laguna Woods and to welcome them as California's next great city.

FORTY-THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF
TUNISIAN INDEPENDENCE

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, Saturday, March 20, 1999, was the forty-third anniversary of independence of the Republic of Tunisia. With increasingly strong ties between our two governments, the American people congratulate the people of Tunisia on this historic anniversary. For the last forty-three years, Tunisia has been a model of economic growth and the advancement of women in society.

It may be difficult for many Americans to appreciate Tunisia's situation. Its only two neighbors are Algeria, which has been racked by civil war for several years, and Libya, whose dictator has supported the most nefarious and subversive kinds of terrorism. Mr. Speaker, this is not a good neighborhood.

Nevertheless, Tunisia has maintained internal stability—not without its own controversies—in the face of external chaos. At the same time, years of hard work have produced one of the highest standards of living in the region. Tunisia is one of the few countries to graduate successfully from development assistance and join the developed world. For these accomplishments, Tunisia should be applauded and supported.

In 1956, the United States was the first great power to recognize the independence of Tunisia. Upon receiving Ambassador Mongi Slim, President Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "At the dawn of a new era in the history of Tunisia, we ask you to consider us as friends and partners."

Mr. Speaker, in commemoration of 43 years of independence for Tunisia, I urge my colleagues reflect on our strong commitment to Tunisian people, who are still our friends and partners in North Africa.

THE MORRIS K. UDALL
WILDERNESS ACT

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 1999

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I once again stand before Congress to introduce the "Morris K. Udall Wilderness Act." This bipartisan legislation truly shows that both Democrats and Republicans alike can come together and work on the important conservation issues facing Congress today and strive to preserve America's last great frontier, the 1.5 million acre coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Although the introduction of the Morris K. Udall Wilderness Act brings anticipation for the

year to come, it is not a cause to celebrate for tomorrow marks the ten year anniversary of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. Ten years did not heal the wounds inflicted on Prince William Sound, and neither did it lessen our memory of this terrible event. Yet a decade later, despite the lessons that should have been learned, powerful, special interests seek to plunder this wilderness, and threaten the existence of an entire ecosystem for oil that will yield no return at today's oil prices.

Thanks to the late Chairman Mo Udall's perseverance and dedication to the environment, the Arctic Refuge has been spared from the oil companies and the scarring effects of oil and gas exploration. We must remain united and continue his legacy to fight for the permanent preservation of the Arctic Refuge's coastal plain. Preventing the exploitation of the coastal plain is one of many solutions that can be employed today to protect Alaska's natural beauty and to prevent another tragedy similar to the one that occurred in Prince William Sound ten years ago. The exploitation of the coastal plain's virgin land threatens the existence of a 1,000 generation old culture, the Gwich'in of Northeast Alaska who rely on the 150,000 strong Porcupine Caribou herd—one of the world's largest and North America's last free roaming herd. The displacement of this herd as result of oil exploration and development could throw nature's delicate balance into a tailspin. Bringing this balance to equilibrium is further complicated because of the extremely long recovery period of the Arctic. In addition to the Porcupine Caribou, the Arctic Refuge is home to more than 200 species of wildlife ranging from muskoxen to polar bears. If we destroy a species, it could send a shockwave through the entire ecosystem and impact every species in its footprint—a devastating biological echo.

The United States, as a world leader in preserving lands of significant and symbolic value, cannot let this sort of degradation occur to its land or wildlife. We have only one chance to save the beauty of this natural landscape, the crown jewel of America's wilderness system, for generations of younger Americans. Once it is gone, it is gone forever—nature can never truly recover from such adverse actions visited upon its fabric, an attack upon the scope and breadth of life that, for now, call this place home.

THE POISON CONTROL CENTER ENHANCEMENT AND AWARENESS ACT OF 1999

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 1999

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleague Representative ED TOWNS in introducing the "Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act." I am also pleased to note that Rep. BILIRAKIS, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Health and the Environment, which has jurisdiction, is an original cosponsor of this bipartisan bill.

Poison control centers provide vital, very cost-effective services to the American public.

Each year, more than 2 million poisonings are reported to poison control centers throughout the United States. More than 90 percent of these poisonings occur in the home, and over 50 percent of poisoning victims are children under the age of 6. For every dollar spent on poison control center services, seven dollars in medical costs are saved.

In spite of their obvious value, poison control centers are in jeopardy. Historically, these centers were typically funded by the private and public sector hospitals where they were located. The transition to managed care, however, has resulted in a gradual erosion of this funding. As this funding source has been drying up, poison control centers have only partially been able to replace this support by cobbling together state, local, and private funding sources. The financial squeeze has forced many centers to curtail their poison prevention advisory services and their information and emergency activities, and to reduce the number of nurses, pharmacists, and physicians answering the emergency telephones. Currently, there are 73 centers. In 1978, there were 661.

The "Poison Control Center Enhancement and Awareness Act" will provide up to \$28 million per year over the next five years to provide a stable source of funding for these centers, establish a national toll-free poison control hotline, and improve public education on poisoning prevention and poison center services. The legislation is designed to ensure that these funds supplement—not supplant—other funding that the centers may be receiving and provides the Secretary of Health and Human Services with the authority to impose a matching requirement. Further, to receive federal funding, a center will have to be certified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services or an organization expert in the field of poison control designated by the Secretary.

I encourage my colleagues to support this very cost-effective investment in the safety and health of the American public, especially our children. If you would like further information or would like to cosponsor this legislation, please let me know or call Jane Williams of my staff at 5-3761.

HONORING ST. JOSEPH'S
CATHOLIC ORPHAN SOCIETY

HON. ANNE M. NORTHUP

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 1999

Mrs. NORTHUP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of Louisville, Kentucky's most valuable institutions. For 150 years, the St. Joseph's Catholic Orphan Society has reached out to our most vulnerable children and provided them with food, shelter, education, and most of all love. The problem of neglected children in our society is not new. In the 1840's a plague of cholera and malaria struck Louisville, ending the lives of hundreds

of people leaving many children without parents. This epidemic led to the founding of St. Joseph's Catholic Orphan Society as a home and refuge to these children.

Throughout the past 150 years, St. Joe's has provided a variety of services to boys and girls of all faiths and races. Today, St. Joe's continues to understand the unique needs of today's children. The organization works hard to keep groups of siblings together as the search for a new and loving family moves forward. St. Joe's also provides 40 beds for children who are abused or neglected and recently started the Home Base program to provide care to help stop child abuse and neglect. A child development center which provides weekday care for 150 children, 20 percent of whom have disabilities such as autism or Down's Syndrome, was founded in 1982.

Since 1849, St. Joseph's has been a Louisville institution performing a job that is desperately needed by our society. Love and caring are critical to any child's well being and St. Joe's dedicated volunteers and caregivers not only provide for the physical needs of children, but they share their love and dedication. I am proud to honor St. Joseph's Catholic Orphan Society on its 150th anniversary.

DECLARATION OF POLICY OF THE
UNITED STATES CONCERNING
NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE
DEPLOYMENT

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 4. This legislation would state unequivocally our position as a nation is to develop and deploy a missile defense system. In fact, the Pentagon has for years already been working on such a defense barrier. I oppose this legislation precisely because its passage will impede progress on proliferation and nuclear arms control, all for the sake of a feel-good but impractical change in our national defense policy.

In January, the Clinton administration announced it would increase to \$10 billion the funds necessary to develop a national missile defense, through the budget year 2005. I share the concern of administration officials who report that "rogue nations" like Iraq, North Korea or Libya may have technology which would allow them to deliver fatal warheads atop long-range missiles. However, that is exactly what the Pentagon's increase would address—how to prevent these missiles from landing on American soil. Their research program, similar in philosophy to the Patriot Missile we saw used during the Gulf War, is one I support.

However, if the Congress passes this legislation, its policy effects will be far-reaching.

Progress in nuclear non-proliferation and arms reduction with Russia will be jeopardized, as their leaders have stated this policy change will abrogate the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. It makes no sense to me to send a dangerous signal to both our allies and treaty partners when in fact we are already underway in exploring the feasibility of a national missile defense system. The administration next spring will rule on whether the deployment of such a system is in our national interest, and therefore this legislation is premature in that regard as well. I intend to vote "no" on H.R. 4.

TRIBUTE TO MADONNA HIGH
SCHOOL

HON. ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 1999

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the achievements of a very special school located on the Northwest Side of Chicago: Madonna High School. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Madonna High School as it celebrates on March 25 fifty outstanding years in the education of young women.

Since 1949, Madonna High School has been working diligently to shape the minds of young women and create the leaders of tomorrow. Founded by the Franciscan Sisters at the St. Vincent Orphanage of Chicago, the school began with just three students and consisted of only four rooms. Today, after five decades of outstanding dedication and service to the communities of the City's Northwest Side, Madonna High School has become a nationally recognized institution with an enrollment over 300 students.

In fact, Madonna High School's commitment to excellence in education has won the recognition of numerous institutions. In 1987, they received a "For Character Award" from the University of Illinois-Chicago for building and reinforcing self-esteem in young women. In 1991, the school was honored by the U.S. Department of Education as "Recognized School of Excellence." Three years later, the Horatio Alger Association for Distinguished Americans recognized Madonna High School by awarding a scholarship to one of its outstanding students.

Mr. Speaker, Madonna High School has enriched the minds of its students, challenged their imaginations, and given generations of young women the skills and confidence they need to succeed. There is a record of which we all can be proud. I ask my colleagues to join me today in wishing Madonna High School a wonderful 50th Anniversary and in extending our best wishes as it begins a new era of excellence in education for the young women of Chicago.