

## HONORING SUSAN LOHR—

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 12, 2000*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this moment to congratulate Susan Lohr, on her recent award. Susan is one of two recipients of the Cranmer Award, sponsored by Colorado Open Lands. Susan is the co-founder of Gunnison Ranchland Conservation Legacy, an organization that works to preserve family-owned ranchland in southern Colorado. Together with ranchers and community leaders the organization is attempting to preserve and protect over 20,000 acres of land.

Susan is no stranger when it comes to conserving farm and ranchland. She is currently president of a private land conservation consulting firm, Lohr Associates. She also recently retired as Director of the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory, where she worked for over a decade. Susan serves the Legacy in the capacity of Founding Director and Board Member Secretary/Treasurer.

Susan has worked very hard to ensure that family ranchlands are protected throughout southern Colorado. This dedication has helped a great number of people preserve thousands of acres of land and for that she deserves the recognition of this body. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the State of Colorado and the US Congress I congratulate Susan on this prestigious and well-deserved award.

Congratulations!

## FLAWED ELECTIONS IN BELARUS

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 12, 2000*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, this Sunday, October 15th, Belarus will hold parliamentary elections. Based on the run-up to the elections, the possibility of free and fair elections simply does not exist. Belarusian strongman Alyaksandr Lukashenka—who illegally extended his own term in office—is once again attempting to dupe the international community into believing that there are viable electoral processes in today's Belarus. The reality is different.

The Lukashenka regime has not met any of the four conditions that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe set back last spring—namely, a democratic election law, an end to human rights abuses, access by the opposition to the state media, and genuine powers granted to the parliament. As a result, on August 30, the OSCE and other institutions decided not to send a full-fledged international observation team to Belarus. This decision could have been revisited if the situation in Belarus had improved. However, since August 30, the Lukashenka regime has denied registration to many opposition candidates on highly questionable grounds; detained, fined, or beaten over 100 individuals advocating a boycott of the elections; burglarized the headquarters of an opposition party; and con-

fiscated 100,000 copies of an independent newspaper. My friend, opposition leader Anatoly Lebedka was physically assaulted during a commemoration of the one-year anniversary of the disappearance of opposition leader Viktor Gonchar and his associate Anatoly Krasovsky. I might add that another leader of the opposition, former Interior Minister Yuri Zakharenka, remains missing after having disappeared 17 months ago, and two leading opposition members, Andrei Klimov and Vladimir Koudinov, remain imprisoned on politically motivated charges.

Mr. Speaker, governmental interference in the election process appears to be rampant. There are reports that regional and local government executive committees have been threatened to ensure that government supported candidates will be elected. The registration process also showed strong signs of arbitrariness, with the rejection of a large percentage of candidates, especially opposition candidates. According to today's Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty East-Central Europe Report, Belarusian authorities—in an attempt to counter the opposition's call for an election boycott—have begun urging early voting and even threatening reprisals if voters fail to go to the polls. Furthermore, in Brest, the government-controlled local press is publishing election materials devoted solely to one candidate. All of these and other incidents, Mr. Speaker, have contributed to an atmosphere highly obstructive to free and fair elections.

Given the pre-election atmosphere, the international community will be hard-pressed to recognize the new parliament, which succeeds the old, Lukashenka hand-picked parliament that was not recognized by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and much of the international community. Moreover, the current election environment does not in any way inspire confidence that the presidential elections scheduled for next year will be democratic. Mr. Lukashenka would do well to keep in mind that, with the fall of Slobodan Milosevic, he becomes increasingly isolated as Europe's sole remaining dictator.

## HONORING MR. JOHN HERNANDEZ

**HON. KAY GRANGER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 12, 2000*

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to John Hernandez, one of Fort Worth, Texas' finest sons, in honor of his receiving the Ohtli Award from the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs for his lifetime service to the Hispanic community. There is no person more deserving than John Hernandez.

The Ohtli Award recognizes individuals of Mexican descent who live outside of Mexico who have dedicated the better part of their lives to "opening up new paths" to make it easier for future generations to follow in their footsteps. Mr. Hernandez has done this and much more for the Hispanic community of Fort Worth.

Born in Fort Worth in 1931, Mr. Hernandez graduated from Laneri Catholic High School in 1951. Six years later, in 1957, he married his

wonderful wife, Jeanette. Together, they have dedicated their lives to faith, family, and community.

Mr. Hernandez has tirelessly served Fort Worth's Hispanic community. He is a Board member of the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and served as its Chair from 1991–1992. Mr. Hernandez currently serves as the Chair of the North Texas Unity Council of La Raza and as a Board member and Second Vice Chair of the Red Cross. He is a member of the University of North Texas School of Community Service's Board. Mr. Hernandez also serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth and a Council Member at All Saints Catholic Church. As a Scout Master and Executive Board member of the Longhorn Council, he has been actively involved with the Boy Scouts of America for almost two decades. These are just several examples of his invaluable contributions to our community.

Paving the way for others to follow, Mr. Hernandez has helped tear down the walls of discrimination. He has always been a crusader for the betterment of the Hispanic community, never seeking the glory for himself, but instead for those around him. Our community is stronger for his presence and forever blessed for his dedication and devotion.

I would like to congratulate Mr. Hernandez, his wife of 42 years, Jeanette, his eight children, and fifteen grandchildren and wish them all continued happiness and success in their endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Hernandez embodies the spirit of community responsibility we all strive towards. His life's work makes America a better place to live in every day.

## CONGRATULATING JUDGE ROMAN S. GRIBBS UPON RETIREMENT

**HON. FRED UPTON**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 12, 2000*

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the end of an era in the government of my home state of Michigan. With the retirement of Judge Roman S. Gribbs, the people of Michigan are losing more than just a Judge, they are losing a man who has dedicated his life to serving the people. His dedication and work over the years for the people of Michigan has been truly admirable and aspiring to many.

With over 45 years of service to his community, Judge Gribbs has left his mark on a countless number of lives. This loving husband and father of five children, began his career as professor at the University of Detroit in 1954. His distinguished career included many different positions within the legal profession. His jobs ranged from Assistant Prosecutor to Sheriff of Wayne County by 1969. He was elected Mayor of the city of Detroit serving from 1970–1974, during which he was elected as the President of the National League of Cities.

In the 25 years since he left the Mayor's office, Judge Gribbs has dutifully served the citizens of Michigan, first on the Third Judicial