September 21, 2001
We triumphed then. We will triumph now. So help us God.

SEPTEMBER 11TH, 2001 TRAGEDY IN AMERICA
HON. SANDER M. LEVIN
OF MICHIGAN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Friday, September 21, 2001
Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, since September 11, we are solemnly reminded each day what it means to be a firefighter. Like so many others in public life they serve the community, but they do so at great risk of peril to their own health and lives.

So I am particularly pleased and proud to rise today in recognition of the careers of two distinguished firefighters from Sterling Heights, Michigan upon their retirement and as they embark upon a new phase of their lives.

Captain Kerry Wolgast began his firefighting career in Sterling heights in 1979. Since then, he has obtained numerous certifications ranging from Hazardous Materials First Responder to Terrorism Awareness. He was promoted to Lieutenant in 1994, and then to Captain in January of this year. He retired on September 17, 2001. Fire Inspector Andy Wallace began his career in Sterling Heights in 1980. Inspector Wallace has also obtained numerous certifications ranging from Criminal Justice Training to Fire and Arson investigation. He was promoted to Lieutenant in 1995 and Fire Inspector in 1997. He will retire on January 16, 2002.

We are grateful for the service Captain Wolgast and Inspector Wallace have provided the community and citizens of Sterling Heights over their long careers. Both have served the public well and have received letters of thanks and commendation from the community in response.

I send to them and to their families my best wishes for a healthy, happy and productive retirement.

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF ARMENIA’S INDEPENDENCE
HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG
OF MICHIGAN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Friday, September 21, 2001
Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Armenia’s independence from the Soviet Union. This anniversary marks an important turning point for Armenia and an opportunity to highlight the U.S.-Armenian relationship. As our country continues to mourn the victims of last Tuesday’s tragic attacks, so too do the Armenian people. Armenian President Robert Kocharyan expressed his condolences to President Bush along with an offer to send experienced rescue workers to help the relief efforts in New York and at the Pentagon. The government of Armenia also pledged to support America’s anti-terrorist campaign.

Since the dawn of history, Armenians have held to their land despite repeated occupa-

tions, oppression and genocide. They have retained their distinct heritage, language, culture and religion. In fact, this year Armenia—the first Christian nation—celebrates its 1700th anniversary of Christianity. But part of the celebration, the Pope will visit Armenia.

On September 21, 1991, with the fall of the Soviet Union, the long awaited dream of an independent Armenia became a reality as the Armenian people held a referendum to decide their future. An extraordinary 94 percent of Armenia’s eligible voters turned out to support independence. I might note that one of our colleagues, the gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. SENSENIBRENNER, was in Armenia on this historic occasion.

Although the Republic of Armenia struggles against the impact of an ongoing blockade by its neighbors to the east and west, which has devastated the economy, Armenia continues to make economic strides. Armenia also continues to reach out to its neighbors without preconditions. Unfortunately, Armenia’s numerous proposals—from opening borders, restoration of rail and road links in the Caucasus, energy swaps, agreeing to the U.S. proposal to open mutual information centers in Turkey and Armenia among others—have all been rejected.

I am pleased to note that some progress has been made in promoting improved Armenian-Turkish relations with the recent establishment of the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission (TARC). The commission is an important step toward fostering a new era of mutual understanding and good will between Armenians and Turks. This commission provides a forum for direct dialogue to address issues that continue to divide the people of Armenia and Turkey.

Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, “the greatest thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving.” Armenia, like many other countries of the former Soviet Union, is still struggling to overcome many obstacles, but I believe it is head-
ed in the right direction. And with the ongoing support of the United States, we can ensure that Armenia’s young democracy will flourish. I am confident that the strong and natural bonds that exist between Armenians and Turks. This commission provides a forum for direct dialogue to address issues that continue to divide the people of Armenia and Turkey.

I am extremely proud of these firefighters and our communities for the compassion shown to the victims of this horrific act of terror. The brave sweat, and tears shed throughout our history in the quest for life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness have never been in vain. That is why I am certain the American people will rise to the occasion and triumph in these most trying of times. Together, there are no difficulties we cannot overcome as the greatest example of freedom and democracy in the world.

COMMONWEALTH OF THE MARIANA ISLANDS STANDS STRONG FOR U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY
HON. RANDY “DUKE” CUNNINGHAM
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Friday, September 21, 2001
Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the citizens of the Commonwealth of the Marianas Islands (CNMI) for their support of the United States Armed Forces. In particular, I want to thank the members of the House of Representatives of the CNMI and their Speaker, Ben Fitial. Recently, that body passed a resolution, authored by Speaker Fitial, calling for the U.S. Navy’s continued use of Farallon de Medinilla Island for essential training exercises.

Of all the targets in the Western Pacific available to forward deployed U.S. units, only Farallon de Medinilla offers the target fidelity, access and maneuver space required to maintain the Navy’s war-fighting capabilities. Rear Admiral Tom S. Fellin of the U.S. Navy has said that “Farallonde Medinilla . . . plays a special and unique role in national defense. Its location provides access frequency that supports established training requirements. In addition, the air and sea space in the Farallone provides sufficient room for the many different attack profiles necessary to replicate training opportunities in the CNMI.”

The men and women in our military need places like Farallon de Medinilla in order to keep our forces the most effective in the world. Shutting them down will cost lives. But Puerto Rico’s highly publicized and successful effort to end Navy training on its Vieques Island has inspired activists elsewhere to press for an end to military training in their backyard. Small groups of military extremists are now plotting to attack training facilities at Farallon de Medinilla Island and in Okinawa. Not only am I concerned about the implications of those efforts for our military