

being conducted in conjunction with their ongoing campaign, "Listen to the Cries of the Children." Hear O' Israel works to make a difference in the lives of the physically challenged, the elderly, neglected children, and battered women across Houston. They work to give these men and women a stronger sense of self-worth and instill in them the need to treat others with compassion and respect. National Mercy, Love and Compassion Month has been endorsed by Houston Mayor Lee Brown and every member of the City Council, which further demonstrates the high regard for Hear O' Israel in our community.

Hear O' Israel International Inc., a non-profit, non-denominational organization works to increase public awareness of those that are less fortunate. "Listen to the Cries of the Children" is designed to strengthen unity amongst families and further public awareness of the negative consequences that drug abuse, family violence, child abuse, and gang activity have on children.

National Mercy, Love and Compassion Month is a campaign to call attention to the plight of children who do not have access to adequate food, shelter, clothing, and health care. As a symbol of compassion for suffering children, Hear O' Israel International Inc., encourages supporters to adopt a family or an individual in need as a gesture of support in resounding the alarm for those who have been forgotten and many times rejected by our communities.

Again, I would like to recognize Hear O' Israel International Inc., for its efforts to improve and enhance the quality of life for our children, and extend my personal best wishes for a successful and rewarding campaign.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND BOOKER  
T. SEARS, JR., D.D.

**HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 21, 2001*

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Reverend Booker T. Sears, a remarkable spiritual counselor and community leader, on his 16th anniversary as Pastor of Goodwill Baptist Church in the Bronx, New York.

Reverend Sears was born and raised in Columbia, South Carolina, as the eldest of four children born to the late Dr. and Mrs. Booker T. Sears Sr. Nurtured by a large family, Reverend Sears went on to pursue higher education in his hometown. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion and Philosophy from Benedict College and his Doctorate of Divinity degree from the Columbia Bible Institute. Reverend Sears spent 23 years pasturing congregations in South Carolina before bringing his gifts and compassion to the South Bronx.

Mr. Speaker, since his arrival to New York's religious community 16 years ago, Reverend Sears has left an undeniable mark. He is the Second Vice President of the Baptist Ministers Conference of Greater New York and Vicinity, an active member of the United Missionary Baptist Association, the Empire Missionary Baptist Convention, the National Baptist Con-

vention U.S.A., Inc., the Ministers Prayer Alliance, along with a number of other esteemed religious organizations and community organizations.

The man I am honoring today has been an example of leadership for his congregation and many community members. Worshipers at Goodwill Baptist Church describe Reverend Sears as not only their religious guide, but as their friend, confidant, and teacher.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Reverend Booker T. Sears Jr., D.D. for his 16 years of dedicated service to the Goodwill Baptist Church congregation and South Bronx community.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEWARK  
BETH ISRAEL ON ONE HUNDRED  
YEARS OF SERVICE

**HON. DONALD M. PAYNE**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 21, 2001*

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my colleagues here in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in paying tribute to Beth Israel Medical Center in Newark, New Jersey as staff and supporters celebrate 100 years of service to our community. Newark Beth Israel experienced its humble beginning a century ago, when a small group of women known as the Daughters of Israel raised \$4,000 to open Beth Israel Hospital on the corner of Kinney and High Streets in Newark.

The Beth quickly outgrew its original quarters and moved to its present location in 1928. In the ensuing decades Newark Beth Israel grew and changed in order to adapt to the community's needs, and was the site of numerous medical breakthroughs. During a Founders Day celebration which officially marked the 100th anniversary of the signing of the hospital's original charter, employees and physicians were joined by Paul A. Mertz, Executive Director; Robert Marks, Chairman of the Board of Trustees; and Lester M. Bornstein, former President of The Beth in signing replicas of the original charter. Victor Parsonnet, M.D., signed a replica of the original charter next to the name of his grandfather, Victor Parsonnet, M.D. Dr. Parsonnet's two grandfathers (the other is Max Danzic, M.D. were among the founders of Newark Beth Israel Hospital in 1901. Lester Bornstein, former President of Newark Beth Israel who served the medical center for 36 years, also signed the charter. The charter is being displayed in the lobby during the Centennial events.

Throughout this year, there will be numerous events scheduled to celebrate the Centennial, including monthly historical displays; a parade in conjunction with the center's Annual Fall Health Fair; a commemorative quilt with the theme "A Century of Caring"; in-hospital theme days, held once a month to celebrate each decade of the 20th century; group outings and contests for employees and physicians; and an Alumni Day to welcome back retired and former employees of the Medical Center. The Centennial celebration will also include several major events: Visionaries in

Medicine Science: A Series of Symposia Celebrating the Centennial of Newark Beth Israel Medical Center presenting on the topics "Healthcare and Cultural Diversity," "Cardiovascular Disorders," "Dentistry," "Pediatrics," "Nursing," "Renal Medicine" and "Genetics and Molecular Biology."

Mr. Speaker, in celebration of the important role that The Beth has played in our community throughout the decades, there will be a Centennial Gala at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center on Saturday, October 6, 2001. Let us join in offering our congratulations and best wishes for continued success to the entire Newark Beth Israel community—the medical and nursing staffs, the ancillary services and administration, the Auxiliary and of course, the many dedicated volunteers who give so generously of their time and talent.

TRIBUTE TO AURELIO VALDEZ

**HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 21, 2001*

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Aurelio Valdez for over a decade's worth of hard work and community service. For 27 years, Aurelio Valdez strove to improve the lives of an often overlooked segment of our American society, the mentally handicapped.

As the Superintendent of the Corpus Christi State School, Mr. Valdez labored to reconnect the Texas citizenry with the lives of the mentally impaired residents of the school. For 12 years, Mr. Valdez worked as the Superintendent of the Corpus Christi State School, and during that time, he helped to provide normalized living conditions for the school's three hundred eighty-seven resident students.

By helping to change people's perceptions of those suffering from mental illness, Aurelio became not only a respected educator and healer, but an architect of a unified Corpus Christi community.

Aurelio joined the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation in 1974, and has received constant praise for his contributions to the improvements in care for those suffering from mental retardation and mental disease. He is noted around the State School as an innovator and a leader. Ray is one of those special people who sees what he is doing less as a job, and more as a labor of love.

A hero in the shadows, Aurelio urged his employees to step into the limelight and take credit for the work he encouraged from them. This life-long caregiver retires not only with the respect and admiration of his colleagues, but with a vow that he will continue to assist the mentally challenged in reaching their goals.

I am proud to have had the opportunity to serve with such a dedicated servant of the people on a number of health and education issues. With his retirement, Corpus Christi and the rest of Texas lose a leader, an inspiring educator, and a shining example of an American patriot.

I ask my colleagues to join me today in honoring a great and generous man, Aurelio