

for the Montgomery County Task Force on Mentoring on its 10th anniversary. In late 1991, after completing a study, the Montgomery County Human Relations Commission concluded that a broad and determined mentoring program could vastly improve the current situations of the County's young males. Following a September 28, 1991 conference titled "Black Males in Crisis—Is Mentoring a Solution?" the Task Force was founded on December 16, 1991.

Functioning under the core belief, as stated by Jonathan Alter, Senior Editor of Newsweek, that, "no one succeeds in America without some kind of mentor—a parent, teacher, coach, older friend—to offer guidance along the way," the task force has grown into an umbrella organization for dozens of non-profit organizations providing mentorships for high risk youths. Annually the task force helps a significant number of children and young adults within Montgomery County.

Another of the Task Force's core beliefs: "reaching out together as a united community, we will make a difference," should become a mantra for all Americans. Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Montgomery County Task Force on Mentoring, for their commitment to improving our community.

My thanks to Mr. John Smith, president of the task force and to all of its members for the outstanding and valuable service they provide to the citizens of Montgomery County.

MOTOR VEHICLE OWNERS' RIGHT TO REPAIR ACT

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 3, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, on August 2, 2001, I introduced HR 2735, "The Motor Vehicle Owners' Right to Repair Act of 2001" to ensure that all motoring consumers have the freedom of choice of where, how and by whom to have their vehicles repaired, maintained and to choose the parts of their choice. I introduced HR 2735 to offer protection to consumers who will suffer from high, non-competitive prices.

But since the introduction of HR 2735, my state of New York and the United States have been changed forever by the devastating attack of September 11th on American lives, our way of life, and our economic foundations. It is now more important than ever for the passage of HR 2735, which will bring economic relief to consumers and small business.

Since September 11th, many citizens have chosen to drive their vehicles to work, to recreation and to vacation sites, rather than take other means of public transportation. This means that consumers will be spending an ever-increasing amount of time in their vehicles. And, that means that these vehicles will need more repairs and parts replaced.

Another consequence of September 11th is the attack on America's economic foundation. Many businesses will close their doors due to the inability to continue to provide consumer services. Now, more than ever, we in Congress must work to bolster business, not

hinder it with the economic chains of monopolies. Passage of HR 2735 will keep the doors open for many in the automotive aftermarket, allowing the domino effect of recovery to continue.

HR 2735 will open the door to motoring consumers who are away from home, whether for business or pleasure, to have unforeseen repairs and parts replaced at the shop of their choice and with the parts of their choice. HR 2735 will allow motoring consumers to dispense with fears of being caught in strange localities or being forced back to dealerships. Consumers will be able to make competitive choices.

For several years, Congress mandated that vehicles come manufactured with a computer system to monitor vehicle emissions. As vehicles have advanced, so have the computer systems installed which now control vital systems such as brakes, ignition, ignition keys, air bags, steering mechanisms and climate control. What began as a clean air measure became an unintended "vehicle in itself" to a repair and parts information monopoly by car manufacturers.

The end result is that motorists have become chained to the car manufacturers and their car dealers in order to have their vehicles repaired and parts replaced. Instead of exercising America's free-market ability to choose the automotive technician, shop and parts of their choice—or even work on the vehicles themselves, this lock-out of information has forced motorists to return to car dealers and forced them in many instances into paying higher, noncompetitive costs. Simple tasks such as having an ignition key duplicated can cost \$45 or more.

Passage of HR 2735 is essential to the economic structure of the vehicle independent repair industry, as well as the limited budgets of many consumers and their safety.

Passage of HR 2735 will allow motorists who do not live near car dealerships to have their vehicles quickly and efficiently repaired, without being forced into driving a great distance in a problematic car to a dealership, jeopardizing their safety and that of others. It will allow motorists to work on their vehicles and will allow motorists to save money.

Passage of HR 2735 will empower motorists and will not restrict their choices of repair shops, including the desire of those who wish to go to car dealerships. It will allow motorists to actually own the repair and parts information to their own vehicles and to be the ultimate decisionmakers—instead of the car manufacturers—of their own vehicles.

Now more than ever is the time for Congress to keep consumers and small business sound, not pigeon-holed into unnecessary and expensive monopolies. Freedom to choose and to compete is the American Way.

POMONA VALLEY WORKSHOP'S 35TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 3, 2001

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute and honor the accom-

plishments of the Pomona Valley Workshop on its 35th Anniversary of dedicated service to individuals with developmental disabilities in Western San Bernardino County and Eastern Los Angeles County.

The Pomona Valley Workshop is one of the largest employers in the city of Montclair and strives to maintain the highest of standards in its provision of traditional and innovative services. As an active member of the local community, the Workshop's efforts to improve the public's understanding of issues which affect persons with disabilities have resulted in strong community support and volunteer efforts.

I salute the Pomona Valley Workshop on the outstanding role it has played in assisting adults with disabilities achieve their highest level of employment and community integration. I wish them continued success in their exemplary endeavors.

ATTACKS ON SIKHS SUBSIDING— STILL UNDER SIEGE IN INDIA

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 3, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the attacks on Sikhs and other Americans in the wake of the September 11 attacks have subsided. While there are still some incidents, Sikhs, Muslims, and other Americans are safer now than they were a week or two ago. That is good news.

However, Sikhs continue to be under assault in India. The Indian government holds over 52,000 Sikhs as political prisoners. It has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984. A few months ago, Indian troops were caught red-handed trying to set fire to a Gurdwara (a Sikh temple), but Sikh and Muslim villagers prevented them from carrying out this atrocity.

This is part of a long pattern of violation of the rights of Sikhs and other minorities by the Indian government. The attacks on Sikhs in America, which are terribly unfortunate and should be condemned by all, have been incidents carried out by individuals. That is a key difference. Much of the problem is that since the Sikhs don't have their own country, Americans and others don't know who they are. This is one more reason why a free Khalistan is essential.

Khalistan is the Sikh homeland which declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987. This week marks Khalistan's independence anniversary. It will also see the annual convention of the Council of Khalistan, the government pro tempore of Khalistan which leads its independence struggle.

Given India's apparent reluctance to cooperate with the United States in our war on terrorism, American support for a free Khalistan and for freedom for the Kashmiris, for predominantly Christian Nagaland, and for all the other nations seeking their freedom is more urgent than ever. We must do what we can to extend the glow of freedom all over the world. We can help that along by maintaining our sanctions on India, by cutting off our aid to India until human rights are respected, and by