

Peace Park has helped replace gunfire, land mines and death with peace, understanding and life.

In addition to advocating for and facilitating the creation of more parks, the Peace Parks Foundation also plays a crucial role in community development. The Foundation encourages new ways to utilize the natural resources on a sustainable basis and the development of tourism facilities. Last year the Foundation through its partnership with the Southern African Wildlife College and other supports secured scholarships for 29 students drawn from wildlife departments and field programs in nine Southern African countries. These scholarships allow the students to attend the Southern African Wildlife College and train to become conservation managers.

I applaud the courage and vision of the Heads of State of the Southern African Development Community, who are patrons of the Peace Park Foundation. These leaders are re-writing the textbooks on political border conflicts and helping to bring about sustainable peace and alleviate poverty in these rural areas. It is clear that peace parks go well beyond the conservation of biodiversity and play a major role in confidence building between countries and within regions.

Today I am introducing a Concurrent Resolution to honor the Peace Parks Foundation. I want to thank the 12 Representatives who are joining me today in introducing this Resolution. I urge all of my colleagues to join us in honoring a truly visionary organization.

I close with the remarks of Nelson Mandela who said: "I know of no political movement, no philosophy, no ideology, which does not agree with the peace parks concept as we see it going into fruition today. It is a concept that can be embraced by all."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, on December 11, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall votes numbered 483, 484, and 485.

Rollcall vote 483 was on passage of H. Con. Res. 281, legislation which honors Johnny Micheal Spann, a paramilitary officer in the Central Intelligence Agency, who was the first American killed in combat during the war against terrorism in Afghanistan, and recognizes him for his bravery and sacrifice.

Rollcall vote 484 was on passage of H.R. 3282, legislation which designates the federal building and United States courthouse located at 400 North Main Street in Butte, Montana, as the "Mike Mansfield Federal Building and United States Courthouse."

Rollcall vote 485 was on passage of the Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on Rollcall vote 483, "yea" on Rollcall vote 484, and "yea" on Rollcall vote 485.

PUBLIC HEALTH SECURITY AND BIOTERRORISM RESPONSE ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2001

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, the tragic events of September 11 and the Anthrax scares that followed demonstrated the level of neglect under which our public health infrastructure has been operating. We no longer have the luxury of debating the "what ifs" in regards to bioterrorism. The threat remains very real. Our constituents demand that we take action to offer adequate domestic defense against bioterrorism. We must begin the process of improving and expanding our public health system, and can do so today with passage of this bipartisan legislation developed by the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

There are a number of very important provisions in this bill which will ensure that a national stockpile of medications is maintained, our food and water are protected, and toxic substances are carefully tracked. While we continue to develop improvements to our national response system, we have a responsibility to provide the resources to our state and local health officials and facilities to improve their ability to respond to bioterrorism. This bill is a downpayment to the states and local communities. It recognizes that each of our communities has distinct needs and that they require not only the funding to improve their systems, but the flexibility to address their public health concerns.

Like many of my colleagues following the terrorist attacks, I met with public health officials in my state. Common themes expressed centered on the lack of coordination and communications from federal officials, and the need for additional resources to expand planning and preparedness for future events. Enhancing the health workforce, laboratory and hospital bed capacities also were cited as needed improvements. I am happy to say that this bill begins to address these important issues.

As a critical piece to strengthening our domestic defense, the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Response Act will enable state and local governments and health care facilities to immediately address the protection of the health and welfare of our citizens. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

IN HONOR OF RETIRING REDONDO BEACH POLICE CHIEF MEL NICHOLS

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a good friend, Mel Nichols, who retires later this month after eight years as Chief of the Redondo Beach Police Department. My

district office is located in Redondo Beach, and Mel and his department have kept my staff and local residents well protected.

I met Mel as he was leaving the San Diego County Sheriff's Department, where over three decades he rose from Sergeant to Assistant Sheriff. Mel accompanied me on a visit to the Mexican border, where we observed the value of technology in the fight against illegal immigration. I was pleased, subsequently, to help obtain night vision goggles for Mel's department.

Mr. Speaker, of particular value to me has been Mel's involvement in the South Bay Chiefs' Association, of which he served as Chairman from 1996-1998. This organization encompasses nine South Bay cities most of which lie completely in my district, California's 36th Congressional District. Although no longer the Chairman, Mel continues to be heavily involved in this association, which has been a helpful outlet for me to communicate with the chiefs in my district.

In the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks, Mel took it upon himself to launch within the South Bay Chiefs Association a Terrorism Response Advisory Group, and tasked one of his staff to pull it together. This Advisory Group, comprised of select experts in a variety of law enforcement disciplines from agencies throughout the greater South Bay area, is already working to explore and identify the appropriate local law enforcement response to the possibility of increased terrorist activity in our region. This includes training, contingency planning, threat assessments, liaison with federal and military agencies, resource availability, and intelligence.

Mr. Speaker, this could not be more important. The group hopes that its findings and recommendations will become a model for other regions across the nation in how our local law enforcement agencies can best work in concert with county, state and federal agencies.

This vitally important advisory group will be Mel's legacy. I know Mel will not forget this community that he loves, and I wish him and his family well in their future endeavors.

THE CLAN CURRIE SOCIETY

HON. MICHAEL FERGUSON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 12, 2001

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to honor the Clan Currie Society of New Jersey.

For more than 15 years, the Society has promoted Scottish heritage and culture through their community-based arts programs and education outreach efforts.

Mr. Speaker, the Clan Currie Society encourages both Scots and also those of non-Scottish roots, to embrace this great culture's values, art forms and sense of civic responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have been invited to join the Society for their Pipes of Christmas musical celebration. I thank Mr. Robert Currie for that kind invitation, and look forward to next Sunday, December 16, when