

However, as any police officer will tell you, sometimes someone is arrested who is not guilty of any crime. It could be a case of mistaken identity or of someone being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Perhaps someone falsely accused an innocent person or simply lied to the police. When the mistake or false accusation is discovered, the innocent person is free to go, but the record of the arrest can haunt him or her for the rest of his or her life.

Today, we are announcing the introduction of the Clear Your Good Name Act, which would require the expungement of voided arrest records in order to clear the names of innocent people.

The bill defines a "voided arrest" as any arrest followed by the release of the person without the filing of formal charges, by dismissal of proceedings against the person arrested, or by a determination that the arrest was without probable cause. The bill would require expungement of voided Federal arrest records and would provide a financial incentive to States to provide for expungement of voided State records. Some States have enacted laws requiring the expungement of voided arrest records, and we want to encourage other States to follow their lead. This bill would make States with expungement statutes eligible to receive a 10-percent increase in crime control funding. Specifically, it would increase the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance programs. For 2001, Congress appropriated \$569 million for these programs. If every State passed an expungement law, the cost would be \$56 million. These funds are used to reduce drug demand, improve effectiveness of law enforcement operations, and assist citizens in preventing crime.

When people are mistakenly arrested and then released after it is determined that they are innocent, they should not have to carry the burden of the mistaken arrest with them for the rest of their lives. We know that arrest records can prejudice opportunities for schooling, employment, professional licenses, and housing. But innocent individuals who have done nothing wrong should not be marked for life.

Lt. Manny Gomez is a perfect example of how an innocent person with a voided arrest record was unfairly denied access to a job. Before I tell his story I want to say a few words about Lt. Gomez. He came to my office two years ago to inform me of this problem, and has worked diligently with my staff and with other Members of the House and Senate to correct an injustice. He has been called "tenacious" by the NY Daily News, and has been profiled in the New York Times. He has worked with the NY City Council and with the NY State Assembly to pass expungement legislation. He is an example of a crusader who stays focused, works hard, and demands results. We are lucky to have him as a champion of this cause.

This is his story. In 1995, Lt. Gomez, two army duffel bags by his side, was approached by police officers in the train station because he happened to fit the description of someone they were looking for. He told them he was not the person, but he went voluntarily to the police station. Within five minutes another offi-

cer determined that indeed he was not the person they were looking for, and he was released after he gave the police his name and address. He was unaware that the encounter generated what is called a voided arrest record. Years later when he applied for a job at the police department, he told them—what he believed to be true—that he was never arrested. Unfortunately, the voided record had not been expunged, and the police found the record and accused him of not being truthful. The case of mistaken identity had come back to haunt him, and he was not allowed to become a police officer. He was never aware that he was arrested, so he then began searching for the reason for the record. After he investigated his case and discovered what had happened, he found that there was no law to provide for the expungement of voided arrest records, even if the person was completely innocent of all charges. After a lengthy battle over several years he was finally able to explain the situation to the police department. The police department has since realized that it was in error and will allow him to become a police officer. Unfortunately, not everyone is as capable as Lt. Gomez, and many people are unfairly harmed by voided arrest records that are never expunged. Thus the need for this bill.

I am hopeful that with a strong coalition working together we can pass this legislation and enable innocent people to clear their good names and go about their lives free from the harmful effects of a mistaken arrest.

ENERGY AND GLOBAL WARMING

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my deep concern about the direction President Bush is taking on energy and global warming.

The overwhelming majority of climate scientists agree that the earth's atmosphere is warming, and human activities, especially combustion of fossil fuels, are contributing to the warming trend.

Robert Watson, chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, has said, "We see changes in climate, we believe humans are involved, and we're projecting future climate changes much more significant over the next 100 years than over the last 100 years."

Coastal areas, such as my district of San Francisco, will face serious challenges from global warming. Sea levels are rising both because ice sheets are melting and because the ocean is expanding as it absorbs heat from the atmosphere. The projections for the rise in sea level between 1990 and 2100 range from a low of 3.54 inches to a high of 34.64 inches—close to three feet.

President Bush says, "My Administration takes the issue of global climate change very seriously." During his campaign, he pledged to reduce emissions from electric utilities, including carbon dioxide. Last week, responding to a concerted campaign from the electric utility and fossil fuel industries, he broke that prom-

ise. The environment, and the human communities around the world that will be harmed by climate change, will suffer the consequences.

Instead of encouraging the U.S. to reduce our dependence on the fossil fuels that cause global warming, by using energy more efficiently

The Administration has made drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge the centerpiece of their energy policy. They say we need oil from the Refuge to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. They even point to the electricity shortages in California as a reason to drill for oil in the Refuge. But oil is used to generate less than one percent of California's electricity, truly a negligible amount.

Not only would oil from the Refuge do nothing to help California, but it would also do very little to increase America's energy supply. Over the next half century, the coastal plain of the Refuge would contribute less than 1 percent of the oil consumed in the U.S.

The Administration is using the energy crisis to score victories against the environment, both on climate change and drilling in the Arctic Refuge. If they can roll over environmental protection in these areas, none of our environmental laws and regulations will be safe from attack.

I call on President Bush to stand up for the American people and the environment. We must move quickly to counter global warming—our future depends upon it.

CELEBRATING GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

SPEECH OF

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 20, 2001

Mr. GILMAN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of the celebration of Greek independence, and I thank our colleagues, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) and the gentlelady from New York (Mrs. MALONEY), for reminding us of the important role Greece has played in the past and plays now.

It is important that we join together to celebrate the 180th anniversary of Greek independence and to pay tribute to a nation which is considered the birthplace of democracy. Lest we forget, the world owes a great deal to the nation that first developed the concept of majority rule, a concept that is at the very heart of our own institutions.

In 1821, Greek patriots rose up against the Ottomans, who for nearly 400 years had curtailed their basic civil rights. The struggle of the Greek patriots won the support of many in Western Europe and in the United States. The French, the British, and the Russian governments, strongly identifying with the descendants of a nation that had so strongly influenced Western civilization, intervened on behalf of the Greeks, forcing the Ottoman Empire to recognize Greece as an independent state in 1829.

Our nation has greatly benefited from the contributions of Greek immigrants who have substantially contributed their toil, their knowledge and their skills to our American society.