

24,000 residents. The \$20 billion cost of expanding Gary would make it virtually impossible for an airline to charge reasonable fares, whereas, the cost of the Peotone site would result in ticket prices comparable to O'Hare.

The Proposed South Suburban Airport would be safer due to its parallel-runway design and ability for future growth. Further, the South Suburban Airport is less expensive than other options. The cost of an inaugural South Suburban Airport is approximately \$560 million, compared to \$1.5 billion for building one runway at O'Hare. The third airport can also be built sooner than adding an additional runway at O'Hare. The airport can be operational in 4 to 5 years, but it would take 8 to 15 years to design and build an additional runway at O'Hare. The South Suburban Airport would be cleaner than the existing airports as it would be sufficient in size to absorb noise and air pollution. It has road and rail access, but less ground congestion.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to clarify why I missed Roll Call Votes on April 24, 2001 and to further explain the importance of the proposed South Suburban Airport.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COUNTY
GOVERNMENT

HON. JOE BARTON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of National County Government Week, I rise today to speak on the importance of county government and to highlight the numerous contributions county governments make in the everyday lives of citizens. Today, counties fill an especially challenging role as they continue to meet the complex demands of modern society.

In Texas, we have 254 counties that serve the needs of more than 18 million Texans. The responsiveness of county government to the needs of the community is a long-standing tradition in Texas. Texas law mandates, with certain exceptions, that all county courthouses be centrally located so that each citizen can travel to the seat, vote, and return home in a day. Most county seats fall within five miles of the county's center.

The structure of Texas county government has its roots in the "municipality," the local unit of government under Spanish and Mexican rule. These large areas, embracing one or more settlements and rural territories, are the foundation of the governmental organization of our present day counties. The Texas Constitution declared counties as the functional agents of the state, or as an "arm of the state." Unlike cities, the areas of responsibility authorized to counties are specifically spelled out in laws passed by the Legislature.

Texas counties range in size from less than 100 residents to more than three million. Major responsibilities include county development planning; building and maintaining roads and recreational facilities; and in some cases, county airports; constructing and operating jails; operating the judicial system; maintaining public records; collecting property taxes;

issuing vehicle registration and transfers; and registering voters. Counties also provide law enforcement, conduct elections and provide invaluable health and social services to indigent members of the community. In this way, the county structures, more than any other form of government, plays a central role in the everyday functions of communities.

At the heart of each county is the commissioners court. These members of the court collectively conduct the general business of the county and oversee financial matters. Each Texas county has four precinct commissioners and a county judge who serve on this court. Functions of the county, run by individuals employed by the commissioners court, include such departments as public health and human services, personnel and budget, and in some counties, public transportation and emergency medical services. Elected officials, found in most counties, include county attorneys, county and district clerks, county treasurers, sheriffs, tax assessor-collectors, justices of the peace, and constables.

In the last twenty years, a growing number of federal and state responsibilities have been delegated or mandated to the local level, confirming the importance and necessity of local county governments in Texas. Each day, counties deliver a long list of services and work to respond to the ever-changing needs of our dynamic state.

Counties across America provide solutions at the local level that help bring communities together. I believe this traditional form of local county government, which fulfills a multitude of services to communities, is truly indispensable to its citizens.

NATIONAL COUNTY GOVERNMENT
WEEK

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of National County Government Week, I rise today to honor the contributions and achievements of our county governments.

We have the opportunity this week to reflect upon the importance of our county governments and show our appreciation for our county officials. As a former mayor, I am very familiar with the role of county government and the need for government at all levels to cooperate in order to best serve Americans, and I appreciate the hard work done at the county level.

I have the privilege of representing the three South Florida counties of Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach. These county governments serve a diverse population. This population is truly a microcosm of our state and our country. The needs facing these communities can be found in other parts of the country as well. County government has been successful in addressing these needs, and we in Congress can learn a lot from them.

The backbone of county government is the people who provide the vital services that are essential to our health, safety, and well-being. The school teachers, the social workers, the

firefighters, the police, and others who are devoting their lives to public service help form the fabric of our government.

County government is the government closest to the people. It is often the face of government to most of our population. It is our obligation as Members of Congress to help support county governments all across the country in order that they may more effectively serve Americans.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL TO MAKE
LEAF TOBACCO AN ELIGIBLE
COMMODITY FOR THE MARKET
ACCESS PROGRAM

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues from other tobacco producing states to introduce a bill to put an end to discrimination against tobacco farmers. For almost eight years, hard-working, God-fearing, taxpaying tobacco farmers have been denied access to the funds provided by the federal Market Access Program, commonly known as MAP.

More than \$90 million in MAP funds are available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to promote U.S. agricultural products overseas. Under MAP, agricultural industry trade associations, cooperatives, and state or regional trade groups each year are invited to submit proposals to USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) to conduct approved foreign market development projects for various U.S. agricultural, fishery and forestry products. Examples include consumer promotions, market research, technical assistance, and trade servicing. MAP funds have been used to promote a wide range of products from sunflower seeds to catfish and cotton to hops for use in making beer.

Since 1993 USDA has been prohibited from using MAP funds to promote tobacco leaf sales overseas. This is patently unfair, and it is time for this discrimination to end. The future of American agriculture is tied to international trade. Currently, 25% of farmers' gross income comes from exports. The futures of thousands of Tar Heel tobacco farm families depend on exports, and I am not going to stand by and watch other commodities benefit from federal funds to access these markets while tobacco farmers are left out in the cold.

It is high time that tobacco is treated like the legal product that it is, and this legislation is a step in the right direction. I call on President Bush, Secretary Veneman, and my colleagues to support this bill and give our struggling tobacco farm families an opportunity to not just survive, but thrive.

April 26, 2001

COMMEMORATING ARMENIAN
GENOCIDE

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2001

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I join with my colleagues in commemorating the 86th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Along with the Armenian-American community in my district and with people of goodwill throughout the country, Congress today is observing the death of 1.5 million Armenians from the years 1915–1923.

As we gather today, many of my constituents over the weekend participated in solemn services held in the memory of the martyrs of the Armenian Genocide. Whether at St. Leon Armenian Apostolic Church in Fair Lawn, Saints Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church in Ridgefield, or at Saint Thomas Armenian Apostolic Church in Tenafly, thousands of Americans of Armenian descent will be joining together in Northern New Jersey this evening to ensure that the world does not forget the first crime against humanity of the 20th century.

And so let me offer my solidarity with those remembering the Armenian Genocide today. And let me also emphasize that we should today not only remember the martyred, but as well, the survivors of the Armenian genocide. Though few survivors of the Armenian Genocide are still living today, those who endured the horrors of 1915, are heroes for all time.

Today, the people of Armenia and her Diaspora are proudly looking to rebuild their country. From the ashes of despair born of the genocide, and from the ravages of seven decades of Communist rule, Armenians the world over are striving to secure a safe and prosperous future for Armenian and Nagorno-Karabagh.

As Armenian-Americans rebuild their homeland, and as they seek to secure an economically prosperous state, founded on firm democratic principles, I will stand by them.

Let me conclude my brief remarks today by encouraging the young people of America to never forget the tragedy and lessons of 1915. Because as George Santayana once remarked, “Those who forget history are condemned to repeat it.” And if no clearer evidence of these prescient words are necessary let us remind one another today that before commencing the Holocaust, Hitler himself stated, “Who today remembers the Armenians?”

As a Jewish-American and being ever mindful of the Holocaust, I join with my colleagues today in observing the Armenian Genocide. And I promise to stand firm against the shameful efforts of those who today seek to deny the Armenian Genocide.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

COMMEMORATING ARMENIAN
GENOCIDE

SPEECH OF

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2001

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join with my colleagues to remember a dark chapter in history and to honor and remember the 1.5 million Armenian Christians victims who lost their lives at the hands of the Ottoman Empire during 1915 to 1923. I would like to thank the Co-Chairs of the Armenian Caucus, the gentlemen from New Jersey, Representative FRANK PALLONE and the gentlemen from Michigan, Representative JOE KNOLLENBERG for organizing this special order commemorating the 86th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide—of one of the greatest tragedies of history and the first genocide of the 20th century.

Today, I join with Armenian-Americans in my congressional district, the Armenian-American community throughout the United States and the Armenian community abroad in mourning the loss of so many innocent lives. It is important that we remember and learn from history, because if we ignore the lessons of the past, we are destined to repeat history. Archbishop Desmond Tutu, in the Preface to the Encyclopedia of Genocide, published in 1999 by the Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide in Jerusalem, writes: “It is sadly true what a cynic has said, that we learn from history that we do not learn from history. And yet it is possible that if the world had been conscious of the genocide that was committed by the Ottoman Turks against the Armenians, the first genocide of the twentieth century, then perhaps humanity might have been more alert to the warning signs that were being given before Hitler’s madness was unleashed on an unbelieving world.”

The facts of the Armenian Genocide are clear and amply documented as demonstrated by official reports and accounts by the U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, Sr. In a July 1915 report to the Department of State, U.S. Ambassador Morgenthau, Sr., reported: “a campaign of race extermination is in progress under a pretext of reprisal against rebellion.” In describing the events in the Ottoman Empire during 1915 to 1923, Henry Morgenthau stated “I am confident that the whole history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this. The great massacres and persecutions of the past seem almost insignificant when compared to the sufferings of the Armenian race in 1915.”

As we gather on this day to remember the past and mourn those who lost their lives, their homes, their families and their freedom, let us pledge to do all that we can to ensure that the Armenian Genocide is properly recognized and remembered to prevent such atrocities from occurring in the future.

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U.S. MARINE OFFICERS’ GOLDEN
ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 26, 2001

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, this week, fifty veterans and retirees are gathering in Washington to celebrate the Golden Anniversary of their commissioning as officers of the United States Marines. Although their officers’ class (11th SBC) was a relatively small one at a little over 200 members, their backgrounds portray a remarkable tapestry of Americana. They came from hometowns in 34 States of the Union, the District of Columbia, and the Territory of Guam; and, they earned their baccalaureate degrees came from over 100 colleges and universities throughout the land.

In 1951, against the backdrop of a raging war in the Korean Peninsula, they volunteered to serve and took the oath to support and defend the United States of America. And defend it they did, sustaining their share of combat casualties, both wounded and killed in action. One of their members, Sherrod E. Skinner, was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously; another, John Word, received the nation’s second highest combat award, the Navy Cross. Others still, received the medals and decorations for heroism and valor shown on the awards list.

Although only a relatively few members of the class became career officers, many served and retired from the Marine Corps Reserve while pursuing careers in law, education, religious ministry, athletics, engineering, business, and politics. Among those who went into politics is someone well known to many of us, my predecessor, General Ben Blaz, who was elected to the Congress after retiring from the Marines. As a former Member of Congress, Ben will be escorting his comrades to this chamber where deliberations and decisions were made that committed them to combat in Korea and Vietnam.

There is a marvelous irony in my having the privilege to call my colleagues’ attention to the contributions that these courageous men of the Corps have made to our country, both in war and peace. During the Spanish-American War, a young man from Gastonia, North Carolina joined the Marines and was part of the contingent that was sent to Guam to formally occupy the island. He was so enchanted by the island and, I hasten to add, its lovely *senoritas*, that he chose to stay in Guam. In time, he married a native girl and started a family. His name was James Underwood. He was my grandfather.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for extending me the honor of paying tribute to these veterans and retirees of the Corps and to salute them, in behalf of our grateful nation, on the Golden Anniversary of their commissioning as officers of Marines.

(Roster of members/wives of deceased members of the 11th SBC Marines celebrating the 50th Anniversary of their commissioning as Officers of Marines, May 3–5, 2001):

Robert Altick, Al Bailey, Robert Beezer, Gene Benbow, Charles Bentzen, John Bickley, Ben Blaz, Ted Brothers, Charles