mistreatment of the Montagnard peoples represent a grave threat to the process of normalization of relations between the governments of the United States and Vietnam.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Montagnard peoples of Vietnam by cosponsoring this resolution.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SMALL BUSINESS WELFARE BENEFITS PROTECTION ACT

HON. JERRY WELLER
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, today, Representative NEAL (D–MA) and I introduced the Small Business Welfare Benefits Protection Act which deals with Welfare Benefit Plans governed by Section 419A of the Tax Code. The Code currently allows a deduction for contributions to multiple employer welfare benefit plans.

The purpose of this legislation is to provide some clarity to this section of the code in a fashion that protects pension tax law while allowing small businesses to provide important benefits, such as life and health insurance, long term care insurance and severance benefits to their employees. While any employer can utilize Section 419A plans, they allow small business to compete with large employers in attracting and retaining talented staff by enabling them to offer meaningful benefits like the ones I just mentioned.

Section 419A plans are independently trusteed and administered ensuring employees that the funds set aside for their benefit are there when they need them most, when a company's financial situation may be challenging. These plans provide important benefits including death, disability, long term care insurance and severance benefits for employees. They also allow for contributions to be made on a tax-deductible basis, which can help small businesses in their efforts to provide comprehensive benefits packages.

ACKNOWLEDGING ALL THOSE SUFFERING WITH THE DEADLY DISEASE OF HIV/AIDS IN THE CARIBBEAN

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, while we take into account the millions who die each year in Africa from this deadly disease we know as HIV/AIDS, we must also focus our attention on the Caribbean, as the second largest population to become infected with this devastating disease.

A TRIBUTE TO LT. AUGUSTUS HAMILTON, JR. AND THE MEMBERS OF THE FORCED LANDING ASSOCIATION

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, today is June 28th. We are only a few days away from the July 4th Independence Day celebrations. As fireworks light up the sky, houses are adorned with crisp flags, and children gaze in wonder at the passing parades, we must not forget the many brave men and women who courageously sacrificed their lives to preserve the freedoms and ideals we all enjoy as Americans.

Throughout our short history, America’s security as a nation has been tested and tried. It is truly a privilege that our youth have been spared the horrors of war. However, for all those who have known war and have died for the sake of this great country, let it be said that they did not die in vain. The gratitude felt by all Americans and our many allies throughout the world is immeasurable.

Let us extend particular thanks to the veterans of World War II. During World War II, Adolf Hitler and his Nazi regime came alarmingly close to achieving world domination. It is difficult to envision what our world might have looked like had Hitler succeeded but, thanks to the heroism of World War II veterans, we will never have to find out.

I’d now like to share a story about one very special World War II veteran, a man by the name of Augustus Hamilton, Jr., and a remarkable group of people in France who have dedicated themselves to ensuring that the memories of World War II veterans endure.

This story was told to me by Mr. Hamilton’s niece, Beth White from Chicago, Illinois, and I want to thank Ms. White for taking the time to contact me.

Augustus Hamilton was born on January 4, 1919. At the age of twenty, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps the day after Pearl Harbor and quickly advanced to First Lieutenant of the 358th Fighter Group, 35th Squadron. By all accounts, he had always been a family hero—an athlete (amateur golf champion for the state of North Carolina) and football star who attended the University of North Carolina on a football scholarship), good student, carpenter, brother, and loving son. He was also a new husband and when he went overseas, his wife was pregnant with their child.

Lt. Hamilton served as a fighter pilot in World War II and was awarded an air medal with two oak leaf clusters. According to an excerpt from Thunderbolts over High Halden by Graham J. Hukins, “Lt. Hamilton was last seen diving on a flight of four enemy planes with another four on.

At the time of his death, Lt. Hamilton had never met or seen a photo of his only son, for the baby was born when he was overseas. He had named his fighter plane after his wife and son, “Mrs. Ham/Lil Ham 3rd.” Following the crash, several of his family members persisted in denying his death. He had told his family that if he were ever seriously injured in combat, he would not come home due to his injuries, or perhaps had developed amnesia and could not contact them.

In 1993, almost half a century later, the gift of emotional closure was finally given to Lt. Hamilton’s surviving family members by a group named Jean Luc Grusson and his volunteer organization, Forced Landing Association. In an amazing demonstration of appreciation for the U.S. soldiers who fought in World War II, the members of Forced Landing Association devote themselves to finding each of the more than 150 crash sites reported in the state of North Carolina and football star, having discovered 30 crash sites, including that of Lt. Hamilton.

Grusson uncovered Lt. Hamilton’s plane in 1993. He then spent a full year tracking down Lt. Hamilton’s surviving family members...