

to duty to preserve freedom and the security of our neighbors, they answered without hesitation.

Mr. Speaker, it is my sincere privilege to recognize the life of a proud soldier and heroic representative of the State of New Jersey. LCpl Brian P. Parrello was an honorable defender of liberty and he deserves our gratitude and respect.

We remember those who have fallen not only as soldiers, but also as patriots who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. May we keep their loved ones in our thoughts and prayers as they struggle to endure this difficult period and mourn the heroes America has lost.

ARTICLE HONORING CORPORAL  
KEVIN JOHN "JACK" DEMPSEY

**HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 6, 2005

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I wish to insert in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the following statement by Jennifer Dempsey. Jennifer's brother Jack died bravely serving our nation in Iraq on November 13, 2004.

CORPORAL KEVIN JOHN "JACK" DEMPSEY DECEMBER 9, 1980—NOVEMBER 13, 2004—A SON, A BROTHER, A FRIEND

I would just like to say a few words about my brother, Jack. As a young child, Jack was always on the move. From a very young age he was involved in team sports. His nickname was Tiger because of his fearless personality. He excelled in every sport he played because of his natural ability and drive to be the best. As a son and brother he was loving and protective. He has a great love for animals. Our mom took us to every zoo and animal park she could find. Even as a Marine, he showed that love. There was a stray dog at Camp LeJeune that Jack used to feed and take care of.

Jack is loved by many people. He had a great smile and an even greater laugh. He was a sweet kid who always wanted to do something great with his life. My brother was a wonderful man who accomplished many great things. He excelled in the Marines and felt he was truly part of a brotherhood. My mother and I are incredibly proud that he was able to do this for himself and his country. We love him dearly and this loss is tremendous to us. But we are extremely proud of the man he became. He was a sweet soul with the courage of a tiger. My brother Jack made the ultimate sacrifice to protect all of us. Honor him well.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF PADRON  
CIGARS

**HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 6, 2005

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, 2004 marked the 40th anniversary of

the founding of Padron Cigars and I rise to honor and congratulate them on this wonderful achievement.

Padron Cigars was founded on September 8, 1964 by the Padron brothers—Jose Orlando and Rodolfo. Throughout the last 40 years, the Padron family has worked to grow their business and continue providing new products to their loyal customers throughout the world.

Of course, the success of Padron Cigars did not come without significant challenges over the years. In fact, their factory in Nicaragua was destroyed as a result of civil war.

Through endless commitment and leadership, Padron Cigars was able to survive and grow, despite the serious challenges they faced.

Today, Padron Cigars continues their commitment to quality through their consistent approach to the lengthy process of manufacturing cigars. In fact, they claim: "Our primary mission is the exceptional quality of our product, not the quantity produced."

Headquartered in Miami, Florida, Padron Cigars is clearly an industry leader that has epitomized the success of small family businesses throughout America. The success story of Padron Cigars is nothing short of the American Dream and I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Padron family on this anniversary.

LEGISLATION ON EXCHANGE OF  
LAND FOR A SCHOOL ON ST. JOHN

**HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN**

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 6, 2005

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to address a long held concern of my constituents on the island of St. John, Virgin Islands; the need for the National Park Service and the government of the Virgin Islands to agree on an exchange of land so that residents of St. John can build a school to accommodate students from K-12.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents in the Virgin Islands have been wrestling with this issue for several years now. Since the 1970's, enrollment in public schools on St. John has grown considerably and the local government has no more land on which to expand either of the two current St. John public schools.

Just last month a 7-year-old boy by the name of Javon Alfred was struck and killed by a delivery truck, as he was on his way home from the only public school on St. John. The Julius Sprauve School, where Javon was a second grade student, is located in an urban area with significant vehicular traffic. With the significant increases in population that St. John has witnessed in recent years, the location of the Sprauve School is not the most suitable at the present time.

Mr. Speaker, St. John is an island only 28 square miles in size, two thirds which comprises the Virgin Islands National Park. Without an exchange of land between the National

Park Service and the government of the Virgin Islands, there is no place to build a school on St. John. While the residents of St. John have benefited from a boom in tourism on that island, they have had to give up many long held traditions, including the right to fish in local waters. The exchange of land for a school on St. John is a matter that is long overdue. It is high time that this issue be resolved. The residents and students of St. John deserve nothing less.

I urge my colleagues to support passage of this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JOE BACA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 6, 2005

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully request that the attached letter, requesting excuse from the floor on January 6, 2005, be published in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. I have also submitted the letter to Leader PELOSI's Office.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
January 6, 2005.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,  
Democratic Leader,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR LEADER PELOSI: I respectfully request to be excused from the floor, today, on legislative business.

Were I able to be present on the floor today, I would vote to ensure that the electoral will of the people is respected in every state. If there is any perceived electoral irregularity, those who have been aggrieved must be afforded the opportunity to have their concerns redressed, in the appropriate manner and forum, as expeditiously as possible.

The hallmark of our Democracy—lasting and cherished for over two centuries—is that we respect and abide by Constitutional principles. The right of franchise, purchased with the blood and toil of our civil rights leaders, must not be idly relinquished. We must fight to make all voices heard in that noble and great enterprise that is America.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

JOE BACA,  
Congressman.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JOHN BARROW**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 6, 2005

Mr. BARROW. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 3, I was unable to cast my vote on January 3, 2005. The pager provided to me by House Administration, to notify me of votes, was defective. Consequently, I did not receive the announcement that the vote was taking place in time to cast my vote on the House Floor. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."