

a ministry that incorporates community development and neighborhood beautification along with a tutorial program and English as a second language; SBC Praise Ministry, a ministry that lifts the name of Jesus in song; Hosanna Praise Dance Ministry, a ministry that lifts the name of Jesus in dance; the Christian Education Ministry, a ministry that focuses on Christian walk through education and mentorship; the Prison Ministry, a ministry that focuses on the needs of men and women in the penal system.

Pastor Williams' commitment to his church and the surrounding area are evident in his other activities. Along with his wife, the former Patricia Gabriel, the Crossroads of Life Christian Bookstore was established in June, 1976. He has received numerous awards for his outstanding love and passion to the work of the church, business and community.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in letting Pastor Williams' family, friends and congregation know that his 25 years of service are greatly appreciated. I also wish him well in continuing his leadership to both Second Baptist and the community.

ARTHUR STACEY MASTRAPA POST
OFFICE BUILDING

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2005

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as someone born and raised in the town of Altamonte Springs, Florida, it is a special honor to support the designation of the United States Postal Service located at 321 Montgomery Road in Altamonte Springs, Florida, as the Arthur Stacey Mastrapa Post Office Building.

SGT Arthur Stacey Mastrapa, a former Postal Service employee, was killed in Iraq last June while serving his country as an Army Reservist. Naming the Altamonte Springs Post Office after Sergeant Mastrapa is an honor befitting of a man who dedicated his life to serving his fellow citizens and eventually made the ultimate sacrifice for his Nation.

Sergeant Mastrapa was killed in June 2004 after serving nearly 400 days in Iraq as part of a Military Police unit of the Army Reserve. Sergeant Mastrapa joined the Army in 1992 and later joined the Army Reserve in 1998 after leaving active duty. When he was not serving with his reserve unit, he served as a postal worker at the Altamonte Springs Post Office. Sergeant Mastrapa leaves behind his wife Jennifer and two children. Sergeant Mastrapa was a model American.

Mr. Speaker, each of the 24 other Members of the Florida Congressional delegation supports this legislation because it not only honors Sergeant Mastrapa's life, but it also thanks his family for their sacrifice and creates a permanent memorial that his coworkers at the post office can remember him by.

HIGHLIGHTING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ARMENIAN-AZERBAIJAN CONFLICT

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2005

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, as a result of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, Armenian forces occupy the mountainous region of Nagorno Karabagh, as well as seven additional regions, resulting in a million refugees and internally displaced Azerbaijanis.

Located between Russia and Iran, Azerbaijan is an important partner and ally in the international war against terrorism. While bilateral cooperation on terrorism-related issues between the U.S. and Azerbaijan started well before September 11, they intensified with Azerbaijan offering unconditional support to the coalition and becoming the first Muslim country to send troops to Iraq.

While there have been several attempts to find a resolution to the conflict under the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Process, little progress has been made. However, the U.S. continues to work towards the end. According to a recent State Department statement: "The United States does not recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent country, and its leadership is not recognized internationally or by the United States. The United States supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and holds that the future status of Nagorno-Karabakh is a matter of negotiation between the parties. The United States remains committed to finding a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict through the Minsk Group process. We are encouraged by the continuing talks between the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan."

On January 25, 2005, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a resolution on the Nagorno Karabagh conflict, which concluded that "considerable parts of Azerbaijan's territory are still occupied by the Armenian forces and separatist forces are still in control of the Nagorno-Karabakh region." Additionally it asked the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to expedite an agreement on the issue and urged the parties concerned to comply with U.N. Security Council resolutions by refraining from any armed hostilities and "by withdrawing military forces from any occupied territories."

Mr. Speaker, this shows the international community is ready for a resolution of the conflict. I welcome the initiatives by the Council of Europe and the statement by the U.S. Administration, and I urge my colleagues to support a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

BLACK HISTORY TRIBUTE TO
JULIA THOMAS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2005

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, throughout the month of February, I would

like to recognize outstanding African Americans of the 2nd Congressional District of Mississippi, and their contribution to Black History. The 23 counties of the 2nd District are well represented from both a local and national perspective.

Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as "Negro History Week" and later as "Black History Month." In fact, black history had barely begun to be studied—or even documented—when the tradition originated. Although blacks have been in America as far back as colonial times, it was not until the 20th century that they gained a presence in our history books.

Though scarcely documented in history books, if at all, the crucial role African Americans have played in the development of our nation must not be overlooked.

I would like to recognize Mrs. Julia Thomas of Washington County. Mrs. Thomas has been an advocate for young African Americans throughout her life. She has been instrumental in getting young African-Americans elected to public office. She is a member of the Progressive Art and Civic Club that provides scholarships to African-American students to help further their education.

Mrs. Thomas' dedication to the citizens of Washington County is also recognized through the sponsorship of 20 to 30 girls to participate in Literacy Bowls, and workshops on etiquette, attitude, mannerism, drugs, health, politics, etc.

Mrs. Thomas also volunteers 85 percent of her time going to schools to talk to students about the contributions that African-Americans have made and are still making in the State of Mississippi and throughout the Nation. Some examples of Mrs. Thomas hard work and dedication to having African Americans represented in the political arena include Mr. Davis Weathersby (African-American) serving as Election Commissioner for 2 terms and Mr. Mark Seard being elected to the Office of Supervisors.

Even though she has not been the "1st" she has made numerous contributions to her race. Throughout her lifetime she has kept the motto to "lift as she climbs."

I take great pride in recognizing and paying tribute to this outstanding African American of the 2nd Congressional District of Mississippi who deserves mention, not only in the month of February but year round.

IN HONOR OF ROTARY INTERNATIONAL'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2005

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Rotary International on 100 years of outstanding service worldwide.

Founded on February 23, 1905, in Chicago, Illinois, Rotary International is an organization of business and professional leaders that provides humanitarian service, encourages high ethical standards in all vocations, and helps build goodwill and peace in the world. Today, there are nearly 1.2 million Rotarians belonging to more than 31,000 Rotary clubs located

in 166 countries. We are very fortunate to have 11 Rotary Clubs in the 29th Congressional District. The Burbank, Burbank Sunrise, Alhambra, Altadena, San Gabriel, Pasadena, Pasadena Sunrise, South Pasadena, Glendale, Glendale Sunrise, and Monterey Park Rotary clubs have individually contributed to Rotary International's mission and have united in the ideal of service.

More than 1 million Rotary members have volunteered their time and personal resources to protect over 2 billion children in 122 countries from polio. Rotary has contributed over \$500 million to the global polio eradication campaign and spearheaded the polio rededication efforts of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Health Organization (WHO). It is also a proud supporter of educational opportunities for students, teachers, and other professionals. These clubs are community gems that have wholeheartedly donated their time, effort, and passion to causes of worldwide importance.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring Rotary International on their 100th Anniversary and recognizing their important services to local communities and the world.

INTRODUCING THE PHARMA-
CEUTICAL RESEARCH AND MAN-
UFACTURERS ACCOUNTABILITY
(PHRMA) ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2005

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, people are dying because the drug industry is making billions marketing drugs they know to be unsafe. Today I propose a bill that will end this dangerous practice by increasing accountability for pharmaceutical manufacturers and their executives who withhold evidence of drug risks.

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers Accountability (PhRMA) Act would impose criminal penalties and fines on those who fail to disclose evidence of serious adverse drug experiences. It is unfortunate we need this legislation, but the only way to make manufacturers accountable for drug safety is to hit them where it hurts—putting executives in jail and imposing large individual and corporate fines for wrongdoing.

In the past 6 months alone, Vioxx has been taken off the market for causing heart attacks and strokes, and a new "black box" warning has been added to antidepressants due to increased risk of suicide in children. What's worse, evidence suggests the manufacturers knew about these deadly safety issues, but masked or withheld the information from consumers and the FDA because they were making so much money on these drugs.

Profit before public safety is the modern mantra of pharmaceutical manufacturers. These companies continued to market drugs that caused individuals to be severely physically disabled or die. While the companies have been civilly sued for their actions, their typical response has been to pay enormous

monetary settlements that don't even put a dent in their outrageously high drug profits. Even worse, the manufacturers never admit guilt and require injured parties to sign non-disclosure agreements as part of the settlement, effectively hiding from the public the horrific tales of death and disability.

The PhRMA Act will put an end to this irresponsible corporate citizenship by placing responsibility for the knowing concealment of serious adverse drug experiences on the pharmaceutical executives who ultimately decide to place profits over people's lives. In the wake of Enron and other corporate accounting scandals, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act created 10-year prison terms for withholding financial information from shareholders and regulators. The PhRMA Act would impose a minimum jail term of 20 years and fines of up to \$2 million on executives who withhold information, proving once and for all that life is more valuable than the almighty dollar.

The bill would also require CEOs to annually attest that they have disclosed all evidence of serious adverse drug experiences to the FDA. Failure to meet this requirement would result in fines up to \$100,000 per month for the CEO and \$1 million per month for the corporation.

Under today's fast track process at FDA, drugs are often approved with the caveat that manufacturers complete specified post-marketing studies of safety and effectiveness. Unfortunately, drug companies currently ignore these requirements because they know FDA will not revoke approval of a drug unless it is clearly unsafe. This perverse system actually provides an incentive for manufacturers to ignore required post-marketing studies so there is no new safety evidence available for FDA to justify a market withdrawal.

The PhRMA Act ameliorates this problem by requiring post-marketing studies to be completed in a time-period specified by the FDA. Failure to complete these studies can lead to fines of \$5 million for each month the study goes unfinished. As always, FDA retains the authority to pull a drug from the market, but the PhRMA Act would give them an important intermediate sanction to make drug companies accountable for meeting their obligations.

The influence of the drug industry has infiltrated every aspect of society. The Bush administration gave drug manufacturers a huge windfall in the Medicare prescription drug bill, the FDA bows to the industry while ignoring the science, and millions are taking unnecessary prescriptions because of TV commercials or doctors bribed by manufacturers.

The PhRMA Act can begin to turn the tide on an industry that continually puts profit and shareholder earnings above patients' lives and health. By holding pharmaceutical manufacturers and their executives responsible for the safety of their products we can ensure prescription drugs save lives, not destroy them.

RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL
BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to join with many of my colleagues in recognizing the fifth anniversary of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

African Americans have been disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS since the epidemic's very beginning, and there's no evidence to show that trend is changing. National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day not only calls attention to how HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects the Black community, but the extreme disparities in healthcare access for African Americans.

Although African Americans represent only 13 percent of the U.S. population, they account for 40 percent of the 929,985 AIDS cases diagnosed since the start of the epidemic and approximately half of the 43,171 cases diagnosed in 2003 alone. The epidemic has also had a disproportionate impact on subgroups of African Americans including women and youth.

African American women accounted for a greater proportion of new AIDS cases among African Americans overall than their white counterparts. And although African American teens (ages 13–19) represent only 15 percent of U.S. teenagers, they accounted for 65 percent of new AIDS cases reported.

Although treatment advances, along with prevention efforts, have led to the decline in new AIDS diagnoses and deaths, these declines were not as sharp for African Americans and appear to have ended.

We must continue to push for a comprehensive prevention policy that highlights the ABCs—Abstain, Be Faithful, and use Condoms. We must strongly encourage destigmatization of the disease among African Americans, and increase funding that will allow for extensive outreach not only in our communities, but to our international neighbors as well.

We must support the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and "Get Educated, Get Involved, and Get Tested."

BLACK HISTORY TRIBUTE TO
MILDRED JUANITA SCOTT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2005

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