

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

### BLACK HISTORY TRIBUTE TO KATHARINE CARR-ESTERS

#### HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 17, 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 Ms. Katharine Carr-Esters of Attala County, Mississippi. Ms. Carr-Esters was born on April 9, 1928, to Mr. James William McKinley and Ms. Ida Presley Carr.

Ms. Carr-Esters has always played instrumental part in the movement toward equality in Attala County. She has dedicated her time and efforts to Focus.com (Founder), the Attala County Democratic Committee, the Heritage House Activity Center—organizations which benefit the community. Her community service has been recognized through the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Image Award for Community Harmony, NAACP, Inc., the Attala Historical Society and the Black Service Unlimited. Because of her constant service and dedication to her community, the Katharine Carr Esters Group Home in Kosciusko, MS, and the Katharine Carr Ray Esters Group Home in Meridian, MS, was named in her honor. She was also named the Grand Marshall of the Kosciusko Christmas Parade in 2003.

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.

### RECOGNIZING THE FAIRFAX COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2005 VALOR AWARD RECIPIENTS

#### HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 17, 2005*

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. WOLF, and I rise today to recognize an outstanding group of men and women in Northern Virginia. As many may know, the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce annually recognizes individuals who have demonstrated superior dedication to public safety with the prestigious Valor Award. Several members of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department have earned this highest honor that Fairfax County bestows upon its public safety officials.

There are several types of Valor Awards that are awarded to a public safety officer: The Lifesaving Award, the Certificate of Valor, or the Gold, Silver, or Bronze medal of Valor. During the 27th Annual Awards Ceremony, 61 men and women from the Office of the Sheriff, Fire and Rescue Department, and the Police Department received one of the aforementioned honors for their bravery and heroism.

It is with great pride that we enter into the record the names of the recipients of the 2005 Valor Awards in the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. Receiving the Bronze Medal: Hazardous Materials Technician Ronald G. Bauserman II; Captain I Steven D. Clark; Hazardous Materials Technician William L. Franklin; Firefighter Rudy Iturrino; the Lifesaving Award: Captain I John E. Hart; Technician Richard N. Mitchell; Captain I Gary D. Pemberton; Public Safety Communicator III Scott N. Pierpoint; Master Technician Virgil J. Weber Jr.; the Certificate of Valor: Volunteer Captain II Thomas K. Warnock.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all the men and women who serve in the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. Their efforts, made on behalf of the citizens of the Fairfax County, are selfless acts of heroism and truly merit our highest praise. We ask our colleagues to join me in applauding this group of remarkable citizens.

### DEMOCRACY IN BURMA

#### HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 17, 2005*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the suffering of the people of Burma. They continue their valiant struggle for human rights and democracy despite brutal

human rights violations committed by the illegal ruling military regime.

In a few days, Burma's military regime will reconvene a sham "National Convention" under the guise of facilitating a transition to democracy in the country. In reality, the Convention is filled with handpicked delegates of the ruling regime. It is simply an attempt to legalize the regime's grip on power and guarantee the military's permanent role in the future of the country.

Why do I call the Convention a sham? Because the country's democracy movement, led by the world's only imprisoned Nobel Peace Prize recipient Aung San Suu Kyi, is not invited. Her political party, the National League for Democracy, is similar to the African National Congress in South Africa under apartheid rule in the 1980s and enjoys universal support from the people of Burma. In Burma's last election, the NLD won 82 percent of the seats in parliament, only to have the results annulled by the regime. They are completely excluded from the Convention.

As if that's not bad enough, the Convention is being held at a military camp which is surrounded by several military battalions. Among the regime's hand-picked participants are members of the United Wa State Army, whose leaders were indicted in absentia by a U.S. Federal Court in New York on January 24, 2004. The Department of Justice rightfully stated that the UWSA is one of the largest heroin producing and trafficking organizations in the world and is responsible for the production of more than 180 tons of opium in 2004. It is estimated that the UWSA has exported more than \$1 billion worth of heroin to the United States alone since 1985, as well as vast amounts throughout the world.

The proceeds from this drug money have kept Burma's military regime in power. Burma's regime is a narco-dictatorship, addicted to the proceeds of the international drug trade. The UWSA and the regime have worked together to launder billions of dollars in drug profits into the Burmese economy.

We should not tolerate this orchestrated play by members of the military junta and drug traffickers, at the cost of thousands of lives of Burmese non-violence activists. As a Member of Congress who has been engaged on human rights and promoting democracy for 25 years, I am proud that our country has taken a firm stance against thugs who now control Burma. This pressure has been from both Republican and Democrats in Congress and the last two administrations. We should publicly denounce this sham convention and the drug traffickers that plan to attend.

In late 2004 Congress unanimously passed a resolution calling for the U.N. Security Council to address the Burmese military regime's threat to regional peace and security. I am also encouraged by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's labeling of Burma as an "outpost of tyranny" and I fully support her assessment. Now, I respectfully encourage

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