

for clues giving them reasonable assurance that the organ donors will return to the Philippines.

"We don't determine between a medical visit or a trip to Disneyland," said Kelly Shannon, spokeswoman for the Bureau of Consular Affairs at the U.S. State Department. "Congress wrote the law, and it is virtually unchanged since 1952. It requires the assumption of an intention to emigrate. You have to show a reason to compel your return home."

Francisco Guerrero, 59, does not understand why Glenn's intent to save his father's life isn't enough to support the younger man's visa application.

"Sometimes they should try to be more understanding of the situation," the elder Guerrero said. "I think these people don't care. They should think of the purpose of the person who is coming here."

KEY ISSUES FOR FILIPINOS

There are 389 other patients in Hawai'i who are waiting for a kidney—a wait that can last up to seven years. More than 100 of those patients were born in the Philippines.

U.S. Consulate officials say Filipinos are treated in the same way as any other foreign nationals who wish to come to the United States on a temporary visa. But with few systems in place to track visitors once they have arrived and note when they have departed, overworked officers at the consulate are often the only line of defense against unwanted visitors.

"They have gotten tougher," said Jessica Vaughan, a former chief consular official at the U.S. Consulate in Port of Spain, Trinidad. Vaughan is now a senior policy analyst for the Center for Immigration Studies in Washington.

The law requires consular officials to assume that every applicant hopes to move to the United States permanently, according to Vaughan. It places the burden on the applicants to prove they would return to their home country.

The issue is complicated for Filipino organ donors because:

Many applicants are poor, with little property and money or a good job to return to in the Philippines.

Filipinos already are one of the largest groups seeking permanent visas to the United States. Any person seeking a temporary visa, who also has requested a permanent visa, faces likely rejection for a short stay. In some cases, officials are so backlogged in reviewing visas that only now are they considering applications dating back to 1990.

There are already an estimated 85,000 Filipinos who live illegally in the United States. Officials say it is likely that most of them simply overstayed their temporary visas.

Hawai'i lawmakers have asked the State Department to look into the organ donor cases at St. Francis.

Rep. Ed Case, D-Hawai'i, said he plans to reintroduce a bill to remove any presumption that an applicant intends to stay in the United States if they are coming here for family emergencies. Rep. Neil Abercrombie, D-Hawai'i, co-sponsored the bill when it was first introduced in late 2003.

Hawai'i's two senators have written letters to the State Department asking officials there to take a close look at the problem.

"I'm willing to take the chance of loosening the standard because he or she has demonstrated his or her mother is going to die on the island of Maui," Case said. "It is the right thing to do."

Case said he supports keeping the borders safe. But the current law "puts a disproportionate

burden on the Filipino community and that's not fair," he said. The U.S. Consulate, Case said, is "not entitled to deny an American his or her life."

EXPENSES, LONG WAITS

Since 9/11, the total number of all types of visas granted in the United States has declined because there have been fewer applicants. Vaughan, the former consular official, stresses that each application is evaluated one at a time.

"It's not discrimination," she said. "It may be that more people qualify from Japan than in the Philippines. The conditions in that country—economic, social or political conditions—are factored into the consular officer's decision."

Although the Philippine government has taken an interest in the transplant patients at St. Francis and their families, one official concedes there isn't much it can do.

"We cannot intervene," said Eva Ditita, Philippines deputy consul general. "We can help on the Philippine side and facilitate their papers, but the ball is on the (U.S.) State Department side. This is a humanitarian undertaking."

Complicating matters is the lengthy—and expensive—application process. Cathy Bailey, transplant evaluation coordinator at St. Francis, said it takes about a year to compile all the medical information required for a kidney donor in another country, compared with about three months for a donor in the United States.

The U.S. government also requires a long list of documents, from income-tax returns and bank statements, to prove the kidney recipient can support the organ donor for the six months they are required to stay in the United States.

Tissue and blood tests for each potential donor cost about \$3,500, and the results are good for only a few months before they must be performed again, Bailey said. The donor also must pay for travel to Manila for an interview with U.S. Consulate officials and pay for hotel expenses while there as well as for medical tests and doctors' fees.

She said most kidney patients rely on Medicare to pay for the surgery, which costs about \$200,000, and for about \$30,000 worth of drugs annually to ensure the body does not reject the donated organ. Patients don't travel to the Philippines for the surgery because Medicare would not cover drug costs upon their return.

"They almost always come to me crying," Bailey said. "It's not like I can do anything. It is very costly for these people."

LAHAINA WOMAN'S PLIGHT

Hilaria Taborada, a 51-year-old Lahaina cashier, has spent a lot of money on medical tests and visa fees and untold hours worrying about her future ever since she was diagnosed with kidney failure in 1999.

One nephew was determined to be a good match as a donor but was too ill to undergo the surgery; a visa application by another nephew was rejected in December because it was deemed that he had no compelling reason to return home.

Taborada undergoes dialysis at home, but still must travel to the hospital for frequent tests.

"How many times I'm going back and forth to the hospital," she sighed. "I always have infections."

Taborada's brother is transferring his own property to the nephew in the hope that the U.S. government will recognize the property as a reason for the nephew to return to the Philippines.

Vaughan said that when she worked for the U.S. Consulate in Trinidad, the refusal rate for nonimmigrant visas for people from that West Indies nation (Trinidad and Tobago) was 50 percent.

She said most of the people she dealt with had similar backgrounds as those Filipinos seeking temporary visas.

"Officers do the best they can, based on the information and time they have available," she said. But "it's a very imperfect science."

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. CELESTINE PARISH

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the 75th Anniversary of St. Celestine Parish in Elmwood Park, Illinois. I am proud of the continuous support and inspiration this parish has provided to the people of Elmwood Park for the past 75 years, and I would like to thank the parishioners of St. Celestine's for their dedicated service.

St. Celestine's has served as an essential part of the surrounding community since 1929, when construction on the Parish church first began. Despite the daunting conditions of the time, construction was completed in 1930, and out of the despair and poverty of the Great Depression, a new beacon of hope emerged for the people of Elmwood Park.

Today, St. Celestine's continues to be an inspiration to the Elmwood Park community. This parish provides a prime example of what can be accomplished when we work together for the common good. The parishioners of St. Celestine's have an impressive history of giving their time, talent, and resources to their community.

What truly makes this parish special are the people of Elmwood Park and its surrounding communities. Week after week, the 3,000 registered families come to St. Celestine's with smiles on their faces and a warm welcome for any and all new parishioners.

Now as St. Celestine's celebrates their 75th anniversary, I ask you all to take a moment and recognize the importance of places like St. Celestine's in communities all across America.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing St. Celestine church and all of its parishioners for their 75 years of dedication and service to their community.

WOODSTOCK, ILLINOIS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY 60TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MELISSA L. BEAN

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 17, 2005

Ms. BEAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Woodstock, Illinois Chamber of Commerce and Industry on the 60th anniversary of their founding.

In March 1945, the Woodstock Journal called for business, industrial and professional leaders to form "a real live-wire chamber of commerce." Since that time, northern Illinois has experienced phenomenal growth, in no small part due to the activity of its business community.

At the Woodstock Chamber's organizational meeting, a representative from the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce told members that "The Chamber of Commerce is a voice of business, industry and agriculture." That description holds true today, with the Chamber working to ensure a favorable business climate and promoting the area's economic and social progress. Throughout the years, members of the Woodstock Chamber of Commerce and Industry have participated in various community activities, from honoring 4-H Club members and welcoming home World War II veterans in the 1940s to food drives and telethons today.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me today in recognizing the Woodstock Chamber of Commerce and Industry for their substantial and increasing influence on the economic growth and development of the Eighth Congressional District of Illinois. The Chamber's first 60 years have seen great advancement. Let us congratulate them on their part of that achievement and look forward to the next 60 years.

COMMEMORATING PEACE CORPS
44TH ANNIVERSARY AND THE
CONTRIBUTIONS OF SAN MATEO
VOLUNTEERS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the Peace Corps' 44th anniversary. Since 1961, over 178,000 Peace Corps volunteers in 138 countries have counseled teenagers and adults in HIV/AIDS education and prevention, guided entrepreneurs in the basic skills of small business development, worked with women to expand their access to credit, conducted curriculum development training for teachers, helped to bridge the divide between those who can afford access to technology and those who cannot, and effectively completed many other notable development projects.

Among this legion of volunteers are twenty residents of my congressional district in San Mateo County, California. They are Corrine Basanez, James Choy, Emily Doan, Michael Henley, Brian Jungwiwattanapo, Andrew Kerfoot, Adam Ko, Joshua Kroot, Cynthia Lai, Anna Lee, Matthew Lewis, Andrew Lind, Theresa Nagan, Joshua Nagler, Aida Navarro, Michael O'Donnell, Michelle Pena, Doreen Peterson, Dino Saldajeno, and Victoria Wilson. I commend all of them for their dedication, commitment, and service to our country.

Mr. Speaker, this body in the 108th Congress passed with overwhelming bipartisan support the Peace Corps Expansion Act of 2003 and the Health, Safety, and Security of Peace Corps Volunteers Act of 2004. Unfortun-

nately, our colleagues in the other body were not as successful in considering companion legislation. Notwithstanding this fact, the needs of Peace Corps Volunteers and the Peace Corps as an agency remain pressing. Consequently, I look forward to working with my friend and colleague Chairman HYDE as well as other Members to reintroduce authorizing legislation that will strengthen Peace Corps' ability to fulfill its congressionally mandated mission of conducting diplomacy through development. I am also committed to ensuring that Peace Corps Volunteers, as our best ambassadors in remote villages throughout the globe and particularly in countries with significant Muslim populations, reflect the diversity of our great nation.

Mr. Speaker, I again salute the many thousands of Peace Corps Volunteers who have dedicated on average two years of their lives to proudly continuing the arduous yet vastly rewarding work of the nearly 180,000 volunteers that have come before them. I am proud to represent twenty of these extraordinary individuals who are currently separated from their families, friends, and neighbors in the pursuit of service to country and others.

BLACK HISTORY TRIBUTE TO
JAMES GALES

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 Mr. James Gales of Jefferson County, Mississippi, born May 18, 1922. Mr. Gales attended the Jefferson County Training School until sixth grade.

In 1940, Mr. Gales began public work as a construction worker for Shepp Time Construction Company and helped build the Natchez Trace. Following his work at Shepp Time Construction he went on to work for the WPA and construct many of the streets in Jefferson County. In addition, he assisted in erecting the Jefferson County Jail in 1942. He later went on to work for the Illinois Central Railroad.

In February 1944 he volunteered for the United States Army and started his service at Camp Shelby and later to Fort Bennitt, Georgia. After basic training he worked in the bat-

alion headquarters breaking down rations, supplies, for four companies in the Services. In 1946, Mr. Gales attended Alcorn A & M College and later worked for the International Paper Company, working there until 1984.

Mr. Gales was very active in the civil rights movement and joined the NAACP in 1954. Through his commitment and activism in the civil rights movement, he played significant role in electing Jefferson County's first black mayor since Reconstruction, Charles Evers, as well as five city aldermen.

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.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF BEND
ROTARY AND THE CENTENNIAL
ANNIVERSARY OF ROTARY
INTERNATIONAL

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary commitment to service, community, and humanitarianism displayed by the members of Rotary International as the organization celebrates its 100th anniversary this month.

One hundred years ago, a lawyer in Chicago, Illinois, embarked on an effort to create a professional club that captured the same friendly spirit he felt in the small towns of his youth; a club that would make service a priority, generosity a regular occurrence, and hard work a way of life. This idea was welcomed throughout the United States with clubs sprouting coast to coast within the first decade, and throughout the rest of the world with clubs forming on six continents by 1921.

Today, Rotary International is a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders—individuals committed to humanitarianism, high ethical standards, and civic involvement.

I have been a proud member of Rotary since October 1987, and while my work here in Washington, D.C. keeps me from attending all the meetings of my Hood River, Oregon club, I make every attempt to go when I am home. And as I commute home to Oregon each week from our nation's capital, I am able to attend many meetings at clubs in the twenty counties throughout my sprawling district.

There are approximately 1.2 million Rotarians in over 31,000 clubs located in 166 countries. And in the United States, there are nearly 400,000 Rotarians in more than 7,500 clubs.

The Bend Rotary, found in the heart of Oregon, is one such club. Founded in 1947, Bend Rotary is the longest running club in Bend and its members have helped establish the three other Rotary clubs that currently exist in the city—High Desert, Bend-Mt. Bachelor, and Greater Bend.

Rotary International has the motto "Service Above Self" and they adhere to "The Four Way Test" of business ethics, a philosophy