

years, working on the Public Education, State Affairs, and Constitutional Amendments committees. In 1983, he made the transition to county service. He was elected Commissioner for Precinct 2, and has been serving San Antonio as a Bexar County Commissioner for over 20 years.

He has been involved in a wide variety of community organizations, including the Center for Health Care Services, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Private Industry Council, and the National Council of Community Mental Health centers. An energetic public servant, a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, and a beloved teacher he is an inspiration to the community.

Mr. Speaker, Bexar County Commissioner Paul Elizondo is a credit to his community and a tremendous resource to his county.

H. RES. 16, NATIONAL
MANUFACTURING WEEK

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2005

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak favorably on House Resolution 16, supporting the goals of National Manufacturing Week, congratulating manufacturers and their employees for their contributions to growth and innovation, and recognizing the challenges facing the manufacturing sector.

The American manufacturing industry has been a key to our economic success in the past, and will continue to be a key to our economic success in the future. As a member of the Congressional Manufacturing Task Force, I have focused on how the federal government can most effectively help small and medium sized manufacturers compete and grow in western Wisconsin and throughout the country. Through good investments and smart practices, the federal government can better assist American companies and help our nation keep its economic edge.

We need to invest in proven programs that help small and medium sized businesses, such as the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP). The MEP provides our manufacturers with the tools to compete in a competitive marketplace. It increases our country's manufacturing productivity and competitiveness, resulting in expanded economic activity and an enhanced tax base. It aids in the creation and retention of well-paying manufacturing jobs for American workers, and it is vital to our nation's small manufacturers. That is why I have supported level funding of \$109 million for the MEP in FY 2006.

Mr. Speaker, I fully support House Resolution 16, supporting the goals of National Manufacturing Week, and I congratulate American manufacturers for their contributions to our economic success.

HOW WE CAN HELP AFRICA

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 10, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, the plight of Sub-Saharan Africa is one that has concerned our country for some time now. Africa faces many challenges that potentially threaten long-term stability, including the world's most serious HIV/AIDS pandemic, widespread rural and urban poverty, and civil and ethnic conflict. In constant dollar terms, incomes in Africa are only about \$100 higher than in 1960.

With so many problems facing the continent, many Americans may wonder what they themselves can do to help. This question was addressed in a recent news release from Julius E. Coles, President of Africare. Africare is the oldest and largest African-American organization dedicated to African development. While his organization oversees the distribution of millions of dollars to projects across Africa, Mr. Coles has offered in this release some simple steps that average Americans can take in the effort to help Africa. In short, he advocates that Americans get to know Africa—its history, people, food, languages, music, and current events.

In so doing they will be gaining the knowledge and understanding necessary to advocate effectively for Africa to their elected officials. With large African communities in most cities, Americans have ample opportunity to get to know Africa without even leaving home. Americans should also begin to invest in companies and ventures that engage in sustainable and mutually beneficial investment in Africa, or take the extra step to buy products made in Africa.

In addition, Americans should remember to donate to reputable charity and nonprofit organizations that operate in Africa. As governmental capacity in most African nations is lacking, the non-profit sector serves an important role in providing assistance to those in need. Again I thank Mr. Coles for his release, it clearly reminds us that we all can help Africa, we need only take the first simple step.

[From Africare, Feb. 25, 2005]

10 WAYS YOU CAN HELP AFRICA

(By Julius E. Coles)

WASHINGTON, DC.—I have worked with Africa for nearly 40 years; and as a result, I am often approached by people here in the United States who want to help the people of Africa but who also feel overwhelmed. It may be the continent's vastsize that intimidates, or the depth of some of its challenges, or the media reports that highlight Africa's problems but minimize the progress that has been made. "Can I really make a difference?" people ask. "Yes," I always tell them, "you can."

As I write these words, Black History Month is nearing its end. We have celebrated the achievements of our African-American community and honored our hereditary roots in Africa. Now, I propose that we Americans continue the celebration by committing ourselves to help Africa year-round. What follows are 10 ways in which you—an individual, a family, a member of a social or civic group, a small business, a church, a school—can do just that.

Read. The more you know about Africa, the better you can motivate others to help. Read a survey of African history since the dawn of humankind more than 200,000 years ago. Read a book about black African leaders, from the Kushite pharaohs of ancient Egypt to the giants of 20th century independence (Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Leopold Senghor of Senegal, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Haile Selassie of Ethiopia and more). Follow African current events on Web sites like AllAfrica (allafrica.com), BBC News (newsbbc.co.uk/2/hi/afica) and CNN (www.cnn.com/WORLD/afica/archive).

Teach, learn. If you're a teacher, plan a lesson or special project about Africa. If you're a parent, look for a fun "African experience" your family can share. If you're a student, do a research paper on Africa or start an Africa Club with your friends. If your school has African students, have a special assembly and ask them to speak.

Write. Voice your views and perspectives on Africa-related issues. Write a letter to your senator, member of congress, or state or local government official. Share your concerns with companies engaged in Africa. Author a guest editorial for your community or school newspaper, or a posting to your favorite Internet message board.

Speak. If you've traveled or worked in Africa, give a talk to a group you belong to. If you've never been to Africa, arrange for an African immigrant who lives in your community to speak.

Travel. If you have the means, visit Africa. Consider a group trip: traveling in groups can add to the fun as well as reduce the costs (group discounts are often substantial); As much as possible, do business with African vendors for transport, lodging and tours. While in Africa, absorb the beautiful scenery and cultural sites—but also take the time to meet local people, learn about their lives and understand the development challenges that they face. Finally, stay connected, and committed, once you return home. For example, if you visited a drought-prone country, involve your friends in raising funds for water wells.

See, hear, eat . . . enjoy! African culture is accessible in most American cities. You can see an African film (Afrique-sur-Seine, The Gods Must Be Crazy) or a film about Africa (Hotel Rwanda, The Lost Boys of the Sudan, Cry Freedom). Attend a performance of African music or dance. Visit an African art museum. Eat at an African restaurant. Enjoy and appreciate the incredible variety of cultures that are "African" and share those enthusiasms with others.

Meet. Almost every city and many smaller communities in the United States are home to first-generation Africans. Find opportunities to meet your African neighbors, to learn from them and to invite their participation in local organizations. Reach out especially to new arrivals, who might welcome your help finding housing and jobs and generally adjusting to American life.

Invest. You may be in a position to invest in an African business or to join a group of investors with African interests (there are growing numbers of African investment funds you might want to explore). On the other hand, even the simple act of buying African art in an American store helps to support the artists and their families in Africa. Depending on where you work, you might also engage your employer in African investment or trade.

Donate. Make a charitable donation to one of the many reputable organizations assisting Africa. Your gift may be large or small.