

violates the Ecumenical Patriarch's religious rights and freedoms by refusing to recognize its international status. Training for the clergy has also been effectively banned because the Turkish government refuses to reopen the Greek Orthodox Halki seminary. Furthermore, the Turkish government requires all candidates for the Patriarchate be Turkish nationals, thus severely limiting the field. Additionally, the Turkish government has confiscated 75 percent of Ecumenical Patriarchal properties since 2002 and has levied a 42 percent retroactive tax on the Balukli Hospital, a philanthropic institution run by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Meanwhile, Turkey is scheduled to begin accession negotiations with the European Union in October 2005.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation I am introducing today is very simple. This resolution calls on Turkey to meet the criteria on eliminating all forms of discrimination set forth by the European Union, particularly those based on race or religion. This bill urges the Turkish government to grant the Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate international recognition and ecclesiastic succession, the right to train clergy of all nationalities, and demands that Turkey respect the property rights and human rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. These are simple demands, Mr. Speaker. The path of democracy must be laid with the bricks of freedom and tolerance—without them, democracy becomes a hollow word devoid of promise and hope. We must take a stand for religious rights and freedoms. We must call on Turkey to fulfill its obligations to the European Union and stop violating the human and religious rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

STATEMENT BY THE FRIENDS OF
IRELAND ST. PATRICK'S DAY 2005

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2005

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, the Friends of Ireland in the Congress join 38 million Irish Americans in celebrating the unique ties between America and the island of Ireland. We welcome the Taoiseach Bertie Ahern to the United States, and we send our warmest greetings to all the people of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Irish Americans care deeply about Northern Ireland, and we commend President Bush for his efforts to keep the American government involved in the pursuit of peace. We also praise Mitchell Reiss, the President's special envoy to Ireland, for his unwavering commitment and his bi-partisan American approach to the process.

We do regret that none of the political parties from Northern Ireland will be represented at the Shamrock Ceremony or the Speaker's Luncheon this year, but this should be taken as a clear signal reflecting the severity of the situation, and the immediate need for all parties to return to the negotiating table.

In 1998, the parties to the Good Friday Agreement committed to partnership, equality and mutual respect as the basis for moving forward. We continue to believe that inclusive

power sharing—based on those three defining qualities—is essential to the viability and advancement of the democratic process in Northern Ireland. A political system based on inclusive power sharing requires trust and confidence. The parties to the Good Friday Agreement also affirmed their total and absolute commitment to exclusively democratic and peaceful means.

The recent events in Northern Ireland involving alleged and admitted criminality by IRA members have put tremendous pressure on all the governments and have seriously undermined the trust and confidence that are essential to advance the process. We deplore this tragic setback. Circumstances on both the Nationalist and Unionist sides have created great chasms of mistrust. Neither side is blameless in this tragic breakdown, and the British, Irish and United States Governments must devote themselves to instill the trust and continue the forward movement.

Clearly, there is essential work to be done in ending all paramilitary activity, permanently restoring the democratic institutions, progressing with demilitarization, and advancing an equality agenda. It is also imperative, in all democratic societies, for all parties to be willing to work with the criminal justice system or in this case the Police Service.

We regret that the dramatic effort to reach an agreement over the Christmas Holiday fell short. The world watched as the framework was set, and all parties were steps away from a victorious moment in history. We must remind all the parties that this framework is still in place and there was a reason why an agreement was almost settled only a few months ago. It is from this point that negotiations must resume.

We commend the Irish and British Governments for their ongoing efforts to work with the political leaders in Northern Ireland to restore the trust and confidence that are essential to advance the peace. On this St. Patrick's Day, we look forward to the day when the Good Friday Agreement will be finally and fully implemented, and to the day when stable democratic institutions, peace, and justice will be achieved in Northern Ireland.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BRIAN BAIRD

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 16, 2005

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, due to circumstances stemming from the recent birth of my two sons, William and Walter, I was not able to be present for legislative business on the morning of March 16, 2005, during which time the House considered and passed H.R. 1268. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

On House Amendment #60 I would have voted "aye."

On the motion to recommit H.R. 1268 to the Committee on Appropriations with instruction to provide an additional \$100 million for veterans healthcare, and \$50 million for veterans job training and transitional assistance, I would have voted "aye."

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF SAN MARCOS CITY COUNCIL-
MAN JOHN THOMAIDES

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important contributions of San Marcos City Councilman John Thomaides, of my Congressional District.

In 2003 John Thomaides was elected to San Marcos City Council. Mr. Thomaides was chosen to represent the Council on the Convention and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors. He has been active in city affairs since he came to San Marcos ten years ago. John has served on the City's Drainage Advisory Board, the Citizen Review Commission, and as chair to the Transportation Advisory Board.

After arriving in San Marcos John opened Alpha Pure Water Company, and has quickly become a leader in business and community organizations. In January 2003 the Area Chamber of Commerce awarded him "Small Business Person of the Quarter" and in October 2003 he was honored again with "Small Business Person of the Year."

John Thomaides has consistently worked to improve the quality of life for his constituents, and is a 2003 graduate of the Leadership Academy of Public Service. He has served as president of the San Marcos Tennis Association, and as Ambassador for the Area Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, John Thomaides serves as an example of what discipline, courage, and dedication can accomplish, and I am proud to have had this opportunity to thank him.

A TRIBUTE TO ADELE ANDRADE-
STADLER, 29TH CONGRESSIONAL
DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE
YEAR—2005

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women during the month of March. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District.

I would like to recognize an outstanding woman in my Congressional District, the Honorable Adele Andrade-Stadler. For many years, Adele has brought an abounding spirit and energy to her service in the community. Those fortunate enough to meet and work with Adele instantly recognize her enthusiasm and commitment to education and children.

A native of Southern California, Adele was raised in Monterey Park. She attended Alhambra public schools, graduated from East Los Angeles College and attended California State University, Los Angeles. While attending college she worked part time for the Los Angeles Unified School District as a bi-lingual instructional aide. She also studied early childhood