

HONORING EUGENE PARKS

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the memory of a remarkable citizen, Mr. Eugene Parks of Madison, Wisconsin.

Eugene Parks was a complicated man who confronted complicated issues head on, no holds barred. He was the outspoken conscience of our community and he wasn't afraid to remind us of our shortcomings. He is remembered as a man who worked passionately against the racism and injustice he saw and felt in our community and in the world. "As a black man," he told his nephew, "you aren't going to be heard unless you say it like you mean it." Gene Parks was never afraid to say it and he always, always, meant it.

Most important, no matter how contentious his relationship with his community and its government, Gene never abandoned either. As Madison's first African-American alderman, Gene was a role model and catalyst for change by the age of 21. Decades later, as the city's first African-American candidate for mayor, he showed the same commitment to civic responsibility.

Most in our city knew Gene as a firebrand, but he was also a devoted father, a music lover, and even an actor. I still have the Playbill from a UW-Madison Theatre Department production of the musical "Finnian's Rainbow" in which I was a five year old member of the chorus and Gene Parks played a lead role.

I think Gene would have been humbled by the many heartfelt tributes and the overflow crowd at his memorial service in Madison's Memorial High School auditorium. Our city was shaken by the depth of the void left by his passing.

Of all the descriptors by which we remember Gene Parks, there is none more accurate nor more honorable than that of "citizen."

Thank you, Gene.

LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE DEBT COLLECTION

HON. TODD RUSSELL PLATTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce important legislation that will improve the way the Federal government collects delinquent non-tax debts.

This legislation would amend the Debt Collection Act to eliminate the 10-year limitation on the collection of delinquent federal debts through the Treasury Offset Program, which is maintained by the Financial Management Service at the U.S. Department of the Treasury. A request for this legislation was transmitted as part of President Bush's Fiscal Year 2006 Budget request. It is estimated that this provision would return \$6 million to the Treasury in the first year of implementation, and at least \$11 million each year thereafter.

Non-tax debt would include defaulted loans or overpayments to vendors. Under current law, the only type of non-tax debt not subject to the 10-year limitation is defaulted student loans owed to the U.S. Department of Education. This legislation would bring all other types of debt in line with the requirements for repaying student loans.

The U.S. government should have the ability to collect each and every debt. This money belongs to the taxpayers. No one should be able to avoid responsibility simply by waiting for an arbitrary time limit to expire. In times of tightening budgets, we cannot afford to allow delinquent debtors to shift their burdens onto taxpayers.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF RETIRED SGT. MAJOR BENITO V. GUERRERO

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize retired Sergeant Major Benito V. Guerrero and his many years of service in our United States Army.

Mr. Guerrero was born north of New Braunfels, Texas on April 3, 1935. He began his military career very early as the Advisory President of his Junior ROTC Program at Jefferson High School in San Antonio, Texas.

Upon graduating high school, Guerrero joined the army in 1956. By 1959 Mr. Guerrero's airborne unit was deployed to Germany and became part of the 8th Infantry Division. Because Mr. Guerrero graduated in the top ten percent of his class at the 7th U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer Academy, he was selected to attend the Federal Republic of Germany Airborne School in 1962.

Throughout his many years of service Mr. Guerrero has served all over the world and has received such awards as the Purple Heart with 1st Oak Leaf Clusters, the Meritorious Service Award, the National Defense Medal, and the Outstanding Noncommissioned Officer Award, just to name a few.

Retired Sergeant Major Benito V. Guerrero retired from the United States Army after over 30 years of honorable service to our Country. He is the epitome of dedication and professionalism.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had this opportunity to recognize the many achievements and service of Retired Sergeant Major Benito V. Guerrero.

A TRIBUTE TO LOUISE WILSON LEWIS, 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, Louise Wilson Lewis. For many years, Louise has brought an abounding spirit and energy to her service in the community. Those fortunate enough to meet and work with Louise instantly recognize her dedication toward helping others.

Born and raised in the Glendale area, Louise worked at Walt Disney Studios for 14 years until she cofounded Iwerks Entertainment. She was able to retire at an early age, which gave her more time to devote to her real career—helping other people.

Louise's description of herself as a "professional volunteer" is an apt one. She began her volunteer career while in elementary school as a math and reading tutor, and an assistant in the Vice Principal's office. At age 12, she started teaching Sunday School and continues to do so today. At age 16, Louise began volunteering as a candy striper at Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center. This year she is celebrating 42 years of continuous service, having served several terms as President of the hospital's Guild, on the hospital's Community Board of Directors, and is the first woman to chair the hospital's Foundation Board. In addition, she served 2 terms as President of the San Gabriel Area Council of Hospital Volunteers and 2 years on the Volunteer Board of the California Association of Hospitals and Health Systems. Louise also volunteers for Las Candelas, an organization which assists emotionally disturbed children.

Devoted to her church, St. Francis Episcopal Church, Louise has volunteered in every volunteer capacity—the Altar Guild, the Thrift Shop, Girl's Youth Group, Vacation Bible School, Rose Garden, Junior Warden and Senior Warden and is currently Bishop's Warden. She is also a Lay Eucharist Minister, a Stephen Minister, and in her spare time visits shut-ins and the elderly in retirement homes and convalescent hospitals.

Louise has received several awards over the years including the First Volunteer at Glendale Memorial Hospital to serve 500 hours at age 17, Uni-Health Hospital System Volunteer of the Year in 1997, recognition from the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, and the Glendale Young Women's Christian Association Woman of Heart and Excellence in 2004.

During the last few years, Louise has managed to maintain her active volunteer work while battling cancer. Her courage and determination is an inspiration to us all. Louise and her husband Tim have been married for 32 years and reside in Glendale.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an outstanding woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Louise Wilson Lewis. The entire community joins me in thanking Louise for her success and continued efforts toward making the 29th Congressional District a more enjoyable place in which to live and work.