

of the Montgomery Central Marching Contest, the Trousdale County Marching Band Yellow Jacket Invitational, and the Highland Rim Marching Contest. The band received a superior rating at the Middle Tennessee School Band and Orchestra Association Marching Festival and third place at the Mid-South Marching Invitational.

I am sure it must be very gratifying to the students, staff, parents, and supporters to see the rewards of countless hours of practice. I congratulate the Rocket Band of Blue on their accomplishments and wish them continued success in the future.

I commend the 2007 Rocket Band of Blue: Madeline Bell, Kimber Luna, Taylor Blanchett, Crystal Cannon, Rachael Harris, Kim Meachem, Brooke Russell, Caleb Boone, Lauren Fotherly, Tyler Hargrove, Tyler Mierecki, Tyler Williams, Jared Blanchett, Paul Caraglio, Matt Kline, Jana Bunkall, Jed Hall, Brittani Stewart, Bryan Hartley, Travis Ryder, Stacey Ryder, Stacey Byrd, Devin Barnes, Shawna Crafton, Brianna LaFleur, Sam Hartley, Sarah Stemple, Lindsay Gaskill, Jon Fleet, Josh Hall, Gunner Warlick, James Luna, Audra Moble, Matt Cryer, Zach Brown, Megan Baker, Amber Scott, Katie Freeman, Chelsea Moore, Amber Barnes, Lauren French, Keisha Sherrill, Sara Lubieski, Reilly Rowland, Learyn Miller, Bethany Gamble, Taylor Herron and Jessie Baker.

#### HONORING ELEANOR WRIGHT

### HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 22, 2008*

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the memory of Eleanor Wright, a distinguished member of the Santa Barbara community. Eleanor's life was marked by service to our society and love for her family.

Eleanor Wright, a native of Ohio and a long-time Santa Barbara resident, attended the Ethel Walker School and Bennington College where she earned a bachelor of arts degree in psychology. Over 50 years ago, she married Clifford Ramsey Wright Jr., who served honorably in our Nation's armed services.

The Wrights moved to the Santa Barbara area in 1959. Immediately upon arrival, Eleanor proved herself to be a key leader in the community by advocating for social justice in a variety of fields. The Santa Barbara Mental Health Association, the Citizens Planning Association, the Family Service Agency, the Community Counseling Association, and the Santa Barbara Civil Service Commission benefited from Eleanor's tireless work on many of her committees. She also co-founded the Phoenix House of Santa Barbara, a facility designed to help mental health patients transition back into the community. In addition to her devotion through service, Eleanor supported a large number of community based action groups which work to make Santa Barbara a healthy and vital community.

Eleanor's legacy will be remembered by her husband, 4 sons, daughter, 12 grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren, and all of her extended family. As a woman who committed her life to

serving others, Eleanor's passing has been deeply felt by the many that were touched by her life. The Santa Barbara community will miss an invaluable community leader and a friend. Please join me in honoring this exemplary American.

#### HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF RAY ALEXANDER

### HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 22, 2008*

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Ray Alexander on his retirement from KRGV television station in Weslaco, TX. His dedication to providing and bringing the news to the Rio Grande Valley has been an invaluable service.

Mr. Alexander has served as general manager for KRGV for 26 years. During his time at the television station, KRGV has become a leader in both national and local news, covering the most important stories and issues of the Valley community. The station has been honored with several regional Edward R. Murrow awards, one National Edward R. Murrow award and an Emmy award. The station has also received the Texas Association of Broadcasters Bonner McClain Award.

The tremendous responsibility of managing a TV station has not stopped Mr. Alexander from serving in civic affairs. He has served in leadership positions for both the National Association of Broadcasters and Texas Association of Broadcasters. He won two of the Texas Association of Broadcasters' most prestigious awards—"Broadcaster of the Year" in 1988 and the "Pioneer of the Year" in 2002.

Mr. Alexander has also gained prominence for his community and charitable work. He has dedicated much of his time to the South Texas Chapter of the United Way; the McAllen, TX chapter of the Boys and Girls Club; and won the Easter Seals Society Rio Grande Valley Chapter "Humanitarian of the Year" in 2001.

As the area continues to grow and face new challenges, it is important to always have dedicated journalists to better inform our citizens. I have had a great working relationship with Mr. Alexander and KRGV throughout my congressional career. As Mr. Alexander moves on, I look forward to working with KRGV in the future in keeping our community abreast of the important issues.

There is no doubt that Mr. Alexander will continue to be an inspirational leader in south Texas. I wish him and his family the best as he moves on to another fulfilling chapter in his life.

#### INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION EXPANDING SECTION 179 SMALL BUSINESS EXPENSING

### HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 22, 2008*

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, in Congress's rush to enact some manner of

short-term economic stimulus, we should not lose sight of the bigger picture, that is, that the long-run prosperity of the American worker and his or her family depends on sustained and not one-time economic growth. In general, while economic growth is dependent on many factors, one of its chief determinants is certainty and predictability. It is for this reason that I believe we must act now to extend the critical tax relief of the last 6 years. Industry is already making operational decisions today based on the business environment of tomorrow, and it is troubling to think that, absent any signals from Washington to the contrary, they are expecting tax increases. It is also time to focus our attention on other elements of our long-term economic prosperity, and that includes America's competitive position relative to our largest global competitors. I am concerned that we have some of the highest business taxes among the top economies in the world. This is something that we must work to change if we hope to compete in the 21st century.

One of our country's most valuable assets is our workforce, and fostering the continued competitiveness of this asset is a growing challenge. This is one of the reasons I support small business expensing, both as a short-term and long-term tax policy. Workers grow and learn on the job, underscoring the critical importance of businesses keeping their doors open and expanding. Nearly two-thirds of all new job creation in the U.S. comes from small businesses. In the context of an economic stimulus, increasing small business expensing limits would help keep workers employed and even create new jobs as our country weathers an uncertain economic time.

How does small business expensing help? Second, when facing slower economic growth, and the potential for job loss, expensing frees up potentially affected businesses from spending so much of their cash flow on overhead, therefore enabling them to retain existing workers, hire new workers, and focus on expansion rather than just staying afloat. Expensing makes this possible by allowing companies to write-off 100 percent of new, otherwise depreciable assets immediately.

While my legislation would grant a short-term increase in the current law expensing limits, expensing makes for good long-term investment-focused tax policy as well. I look forward to working with others in the House and Senate to approve this measure, and continue the debate over long-term tax policies that really get at the bedrock of America's economic growth.

#### COMMEMORATING "MR. MENDOCINO" JOHN A. PARDUCCI FOR HIS OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE MENDOCINO COUNTY WINE INDUSTRY

### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 22, 2008*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a legendary grape grower, winemaker and friend on the