

The North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation (NCEMC) recently announced its participation in the efforts of this newly formed national cooperative to help electric cooperatives develop renewable energy resources through projects and infrastructure improvements.

NCEMC is a generation and transmission cooperative that supplies all or part of the energy needs to the state's electric cooperatives. North Carolina's electric cooperatives provide energy to 2.5 million people in 93 of 100 counties, primarily in rural parts of the State. The electric cooperatives own and maintain 95,000 miles of power lines, by far the most of any electric utility in North Carolina.

Generation and transmission cooperatives across the nation are already working to further develop renewable resources and many are purchasing renewable energy credits. NRCO provides expertise and information for participating co-ops and provides the opportunity to match the needs of some cooperatives with the practical potential of others.

It is anticipated that NRCO will work with the North Carolina's electric cooperatives' newly formed renewable company, GreenCo Solutions, Inc., to identify cost-effective projects and opportunities to purchase renewable energy credits that will benefit consumers in the future.

By working closely together and sharing information, these electric cooperatives will be able to minimize investment risks and maximize the benefits. This is an important effort with enormous potential to help move America toward energy independence.

Madam Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in applauding the important outstanding collective and collaborative efforts of the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation and the National Renewable Cooperatives Organization.

IN HONOR OF RON BROWN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Ron Brown, and in recognition of his work for social justice and dedication to the Parma Democratic Party. I, along with the Parma Democratic Party, recognize Ron as the Parma Democrat Volunteer of the Year.

Ron has an immeasurable track record of community and public service in the local Democratic Party and for the city of Parma. He graduated from Valley Forge High School in Parma Heights in 1996 and continued his education at Cuyahoga Community College, where he earned a degree in business administration. His dedication to serving the residents of Parma is demonstrated by his 14 years of public service for the city of Parma. He currently works as a case manager for the Parma Public Housing Department and is always at the forefront of activism on behalf of the citizens of Parma.

Ron earns the award of Parma Democrat Volunteer of the Year for his enthusiasm and

commitment to the Parma Democratic Party. For years, Ron has worked diligently with the community on voter registration and has volunteered as a precinct chairman. A familiar face to many in the community, he has gone door-to-door, volunteered at polls and canvassed for all the democratic elected officials in Parma. Ron has been a tremendous volunteer and leader for the local Democratic Party.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor of Ron Brown, and in recognition of his commitment to social justice and public service, as he is named this year's Parma Democrat Volunteer of the Year.

TRIBUTE TO PASTOR JUDITH
HANLON

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Pastor Judith Hanlon of the Hadwen Park Church, a United Church of Christ Open and Affirming parish, located in Worcester, Massachusetts. She will be formally ordained on Sunday, September 14, 2008.

Pastor Judith Hanlon has distinguished herself as a passionate champion for equal rights by fighting for social justice in the Worcester community and abroad. Raised in Indiana along with six siblings, she was greatly influenced by her upbringing in the Pentecostal church in which her father was a minister. She has two daughters and raised them as a single mother, a noteworthy inspiration to her parishioners. Her deep faith is complemented by her amazing talent and love of music. For 25 years, Pastor Hanlon directed and accompanied singing groups at the Salem Covenant Church in Worcester, Massachusetts. Playing the piano at age 5 and writing music by the age of 9, her musical talent helps to promote her faith and desire for justice. She has produced two CDs of social justice Christian music. After retiring at the age of 45 from her marketing representative career at Verizon—formerly ATT, Pastor Hanlon then pursued her second calling as a pastor.

Serving as the pastor of the Hadwen Park Church since 2000, she quickly and easily gained the love of her community by welcoming all persons with her witty and devoted personality, her positive attitude, and celebratory style. Pastor Judy is courageous in her work for social justice, articulate, inspiring, and often very funny with her messages of love, faith, and overcoming challenges to find the positive side of life. And she is respectful of all people—even in times of disagreement. She is extremely well known for her commitment to and celebration of diversity. Gracelift is her signature e-mail name; it appropriately depicts Pastor Judy and her work.

Under her leadership, Hadwen Park Church proudly moved to become an Open and Affirming parish to show and tell the world that “all are welcome” at HPC—people of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds, sexual orientation, ages, family make up and physical mobility challenges. She led the way to cast—wide

open—the welcoming doors. As a result, the church membership has more than doubled, to the point where the former little white church at the corner of Knox and Clover Streets in Worcester could not accommodate the growing stream of Sunday attendees or committee meetings and events. As such she inspired and believed that the mighty little congregation could achieve a million-dollar capital campaign and expansion project. She was right; the project was successfully completed within a short, and miraculous, 2-year time frame. With the ongoing work of the church, it looks like another expansion is needed for meeting rooms and child care needs, the growing food pantry and more. Staying current with outreach and news, through technology, is important to Pastor Judy; a Web site was created at her suggestion and “A Place of Grace” e-mails are disseminated to hundreds of parishioners and colleagues weekly to promote the important work of the church.

Further, the church family has been active in the fight against HIV/AIDS; provided assistance to Hurricane Katrina and Rita victims through the Hope Shall Bloom Project; organized and inspired youth to do service work in South America and in their community; doubled its food pantry to be able to serve the hungry; and provided assistance to countless people in need from the congregation and in the Greater Worcester area. Pastor Hanlon has also been a tireless advocate for the rights of the GLBT community in her parish, the community and the State. Pastor Judy has been a leader in the effort to promote equal marriage and helped spearhead the “Equal Marriage: The Freedom to Marry Coalition in Massachusetts” initiative. Recently, several immigrants, fleeing from abuse in their country of Jamaica because of their sexual orientation, turned to a safe and welcoming haven with Pastor Judy and Hadwen Park church. As a result, she now helps to lead local efforts to promote human rights for GLBT people in Jamaica. For her work on these issues she was awarded the Safe Homes “People of Courage Award” in 2006.

Madam Speaker, I commend this amazing, grace-filled, and inspiring leader of faith for her dedication to making the Worcester area and our world a better place, and I ask all my colleagues to join me in offering her congratulations on her ordination.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SONGS
OF LIFE INTERNATIONAL CHO-
RAL FESTIVAL

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2008

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, Bulgaria is an ally of the United States, and this Congress has recognized the Bulgarian people for preserving and continuing their tradition of ethnic and religious tolerance. Most recently, the House of Representatives passed House Resolution 1383, which recognized the 100th anniversary of the independence of Bulgaria.

Through a grassroots movement organized by Kalin and Sharon Tchonev of Lexington,