

teaching children's choral music either at church, in Glendale elementary schools, or at the Los Angeles Children's Chorus. Her community involvement has included serving on the boards of Glendale Healthy Kids, Verdugo Workforce Investment, Los Angeles County School Trustees Association, and the League of Women Voters, as well as on the Glendale Arts and Culture Commission.

Before her election to the Glendale Unified School District Board of Education in 2005, Joylene worked locally as a substitute teacher and completed graduate work in education. She has since served as the Board's President, working to find ways to enrich and increase student learning through arts instruction and career-technical education opportunities. In the face of drastic state funding cuts and in an effort to ensure budgetary support for educational priorities, Joylene has facilitated creative, courageous, and cooperative community conversations about what is most essential for student success.

Joylene's steadfast dedication and selfless service are an invaluable addition to the legacy of Women's History Month. With gratitude and admiration, I ask all Members of Congress to join me in honoring an extraordinary woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Mrs. Joylene Wagner.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 19, 2009

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Madam Speaker, I regret that I missed rollcall vote No. 107 through 115. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes 107 and 109 through 115. I would have voted "no" on rollcall vote 108.

INTRODUCTION OF THE UNIVERSAL RIGHT TO VOTE BY MAIL ACT

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 19, 2009

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act of 2009—a bill to allow any eligible voter to vote by mail in a federal election if he or she chooses to do so.

In my home state of California, voters already have this right. California is one of the twenty-eight states that already provide this convenient alternative to voters.

While I love the ritual of going to the polls to vote, I know that getting to the polls on Election Day is often difficult. For some, it's impossible.

That is why I have introduced a bill that builds upon the growing trend of states to bring the polls to the voters. I believe we should try to meet our constituents halfway by increasing access to the electoral process.

What I am proposing is not new or even untested. States ranging from my home state of California, to Wisconsin, to North Carolina, to Maine have already adopted this voter-friendly policy.

With mail voting, citizens can vote from the convenience of their own homes. They will have more time to mull over their choices and make informed decisions, and they will be able to do so on their own terms.

Not surprisingly, studies have shown that some of the biggest supporters of voting by mail are parents, who must schedule time to go to the polls around so many other obligations.

Studies have also indicated that adding the option to vote by mail does not create a partisan advantage for one political party over the other.

Republicans and Democrats both benefit from similar increases in voter turnout when voters are given the choice to mail in their ballots.

In fact, overwhelming support for voting by mail is consistent across nearly every demographic—including age, income level, race, education, employment status and ideology. It is a win-win for all Americans.

After adopting a universal right to vote by mail system in 1978, California saw a thirty percent increase in the use of mail-in ballots.

Other states that have implemented this policy have seen the same degree of support from voters, which is why it is hardly surprising that States offering the option of mail-in ballots often experience greater voter participation.

There is also an extremely low incidence of fraud with voting by mail when compared to other methods of voting.

As the former President of the League of Women Voters of San Diego, I care deeply about the integrity of our electoral system.

Twenty-eight states have already proven this option works, and it is safe. It is time to give voters in the remaining states this convenient, secure and affordable alternative.

While I am proud to be from a state where citizens already have this right, I believe democracy works best when all citizens have an equal opportunity to have their voices heard.

Right now, an uneven playing field exists between states that already offer the option of mail-in ballots and states that do not.

When the same election is more accessible to voters in California than it is to voters in other states, the system is unfair.

States that fail to offer this choice stand to compromise their leverage in federal elections by curbing the greatest level of voter participation.

We should follow the lead of over half of our nation's states and ensure a uniformity of rights for all voters.

I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting this effort to strengthen the democratic process and give American voters the choices they deserve.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 19, 2009

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, on Monday, March 16, 2009, and Tuesday, March 17, 2009, I was not present for 6 recorded votes. Had I been present, I would have voted the following way: Roll No. 125, yea; Roll No. 126, yea; Roll No. 127, yea; Roll No. 128, yea; Roll No. 129, yea; Roll No. 130, yea.

HONORING DAVID S. GALLATIN,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF
EXCELA HEALTH

HON. JOHN P. MURTHA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 19, 2009

Mr. MURTHA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to David S. Gallatin, Chief Executive Officer of Excelsa Health. I would like at this time to draw attention to some of his accomplishments and contributions to our health system and the community of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

David S. Gallatin has long been associated with Excelsa Health and its predecessors, Westmoreland Health System and Westmoreland Hospital. He served, in a voluntary capacity, on the Board of Trustees from 1982 through 2004. During his time on the Board, he was a member of the Executive Committee (1985 to 2004); served as a member of the Finance Committee (1990 to 2004); filled the role of Vice Chairman (1994 to 1999), was named Chairman from 1999 to 2004.

In January 2003, the Westmoreland Health System Board of Trustees voted unanimously to name David S. Gallatin as its Chief Executive Officer, after having served as Interim Chief Executive Officer, while continuing his role as Board of Trustees Chairman until his term expired June 30, 2004.

David S. Gallatin, cited for his leadership skills and vision, helped devise and implement a turnaround plan for the health system, one that resulted in meaningful growth, capital strength, physician recruitment, and retention of a professional work force. He championed the acquisition of the latest clinical technologies, thereby advancing the quality of care for the residents of Westmoreland County and beyond. Further, he, among others, spearheaded the successful merger of Westmoreland Health System with Latrobe Area Hospital, and later, Mercy Jeannette Hospital, creating and expanding the county's largest and only health care provider, Excelsa Health. His vision of a distributed delivery model assures local access to advanced health care, which is evident in Excelsa Health's Centers for Excellence, state of the art Emergency Departments and nationally recognized Stroke Prevention programs.

Therefore, I join in commending David S. Gallatin for his history of hard work and service to our health system and the communities it serves.

RECOGNIZING NAACP MID-MANHATTAN BRANCH'S SALUTE TO NAACP WOMEN OF EXCELLENCE

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 19, 2009

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, today I rise to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing NAACP Mid-Manhattan Branch of the Metropolitan Council of NAACP Branches as they pay tribute to the everlasting accomplishments and contributions of the NAACP Women of Excellence in celebration of Women's History Month and the Centennial Anniversary of the