

TRIBUTE TO JOHN WILMER
PORTER

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 16, 1998

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of one of Virginia's first Civil Right's success stories, Mr. John Wilmer Porter. John Porter, a native of Dumfries, Virginia, because a beacon of progressive and enlightened through for Virginia during a time we now acknowledge as one of our darkest hours. In 1963, when most of the state was bearing the brunt of a storm of national outrage over its refusal to desegregate public schools, John Porter became the first African-American in Virginia to become an elected official since the era of post-Civil War Reconstruction. The people of Dumfries recognized an innate leadership quality in Mr. Porter that transcended any racial stereo type and in the fall of 1963, elected him to the position of Town Councilman.

John Porter began his life in Dumfries, Virginia in 1905 as one of fourteen children born to the late John and Laura Reid Porter. The family's history is irrevocably linked to Virginia and more specifically to Dumfries: The Porter family John was born into are all direct descendants of Betsy Bates. Betsy Bates, a slave born in Virginia sometime between 1795 and 1805, had gained her freedom by 1830 and her lineage and become so celebrated in Prince William County that the town settled by her heirs was named Batestown in her honor. I believe it is from this foundation of strength and honor that John Wilmer Porter was made.

Beyond his meritorious service to the people of Dumfries, Mr. Porter was and is a dedicated husband, father and now grandfather. In 1942 John married the late Mary Porter. Mary Porter became John's companion and confidante, but also distinguished herself through public service and her ability to transcend racial barriers as an educator. A native of Farmville, Virginia, Mary Glaze Porter began her career as a teacher in an all-black school just before World War II. A few months after her husband John's election, Mary Porter was selected to participate in a pilot desegregation program in the Prince William County public school system.

John and Mary Porter are both true pioneers from the Civil Rights movement and dedicated public servants who have willingly given enormously of themselves (in one instance John personally co-signed for the loan to build the Dumfries Town Hall). John Wilmer Porter retired from public service in 1980, leaving behind a legacy that the people of Dumfries can reflect upon with pride. He was always regarded by supporters and detractors alike as a man of "common sense" and "superior wisdom", two traits he has instilled in his two daughters, Hazel Porter Sykes and Gwendolyn Porter Washington, and his granddaughter, Shannon Washington and three grandsons, Chad Sykes, Kevin Lewis and Troy Washington.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of the Eleventh Congressional District, I would like to thank John Porter for his years of dedicated service and willingness to become the role-model of equality for Virginia. Indeed, he is an

American of whom our entire nation can be proud.

SENSE OF THE HOUSE REGARDING
MURDER OF MATTHEW SHEPARD

SPEECH OF

HON. WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 15, 1998

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I join with my colleagues and the good people of the state of Wyoming in mourning a young man whose life was senselessly and brutally cut short by hatred and ignorance.

Matthew Shepard had many fine qualities. He was thoughtful and idealistic. He had ambitions for public service. And had hoped one day to serve his country overseas.

He was also gay. And that is why he was beaten to death and left to die.

Matthew Shepard will never fulfill his youthful ambition. We will never know what he might have accomplished with his life. He is gone, and we can do nothing to change that.

But we can do something to help make sure that there are no more murders on the road to Laramie.

We can do something to help put a stop to racial killings in Jasper, Texas, where James Byrd was chained to a pickup truck and dragged to his death last summer.

We can send a message to the cities and towns across America where hate-motivated violence and harassment occurs every day. We can and must pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

Over the last few days, we have heard some people deplore these incidents—while cautioning us not to pass new laws to deal with them. "New laws won't stop hate," they tell us.

They're right. No law ever stopped murder, rape, arson or other heinous crimes. Yet our society keeps these laws on the books. To punish those practices and express its disapproval of them.

Why do we need the Hate Crimes Prevention Act? Consider two vignettes from today's New York Times:

Last Saturday morning, while Matthew Shepard lay comatose from a beating, a college homecoming parade passed a few blocks from his hospital bed in Ford Collins. Propped on a fraternity float was a straw-haired scarecrow, labeled in black spray paint, "I'm Gay."

On Monday, hours after Shepard's death, two gay organizations [in Fort Collins] . . . received identical messages applauding Shepard's murder. The messages closed with the words: "I hope it happens more often."

That's why we need the Hate Crimes Prevention Act. For all the Matthew Shepards and the James Byrds who can still be saved.

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 16, 1998

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, the most important and valuable resource we have in this

country is our children. Providing a safe environment for them to grow and learn has always been this country's number one priority. The people who dedicate their time and energy to making this possible are most deserving of our praise and thanks. Pamela LeVasseur is one of those people. She is being honored on October 21, 1998 with the Women's Recognition Award for Volunteerism for her outstanding work with the Bay County Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN Council).

The CAN Council is a non-profit organization dedicated to the prevention of child abuse and neglect. This valuable organization is comprised entirely of volunteers. Over the past eight years, Pamela LeVasseur has devoted her time and talent to the success of the CAN Council. Always one of the CAN Council's most energetic volunteers, Pam has served as the Council's Treasurer for the last five years.

Along with her duties as treasurer, Pam has also given countless hours overseeing the CAN Council's many service projects and fundraisers. Annually leading the CAN Council Bowl-A-Thon, she has turned this event into one the Council's most successful fundraisers. She has also played a vital role in the Council's Harry Parks Adopt-A-Smile Program, which provides dental care to children who would otherwise go without it, and the Babylonian Encounter, which teaches young children about the subject of "good touch and bad touch." The children of Bay County are better off because of programs such as these and these programs are successful because of the dedication of volunteers, like Pamela LeVasseur.

The work Pam does is largely behind the scenes and rarely allows her the opportunity to receive the accolades that she rightly deserves. Yet, that is what makes Pam the great volunteer that she is. She is not motivated by praise and recognition. Instead, she is motivated by protecting and improving the lives of the children in her community. From tracking donations and paying the bills to making the Bowl-A-Thon a striking success, Pam's behind the scenes work is a critical ingredient in the success of the CAN Council.

Mr. Speaker, I invite you and all of our colleagues to join me in congratulating Pamela LeVasseur for receiving the Women's Recognition Award honoring her tireless dedication to the Bay County Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect and in turn the children of Bay County.

TRIBUTE TO LAURA ROBINSON
KUZNIAR

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 16, 1998

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the deepest sadness to memorialize the untimely passing of a member of my staff, Laura Robinson Kuzniar, whose life was cut short at the young age of thirty years.

My first contact with Laura was when she was a small girl and we had occasion to visit her home in Royal Oak. Our families had similar interest—my wife, Vicki, and Laura's mother, Rosemary, participated in the AAUW, and her father, Hal, was active in political life.

In December 1995, as a young woman and graduate of Oakland University, Laura was hired as a caseworker and office manager in my Sterling Heights district office. Here she was a quick learner, a team player and an inspiration to the entire staff. She was wise beyond her years; she was concerned and caring for those constituents she served; and she was fastidious and devoted to her work.

In the prime of her life, in a wonderfully happy marriage to Larry, misfortune struck in September 1996. Laura was diagnosed with leukemia.

With an exceptional fighting spirit, she endured an uphill battle for a little more than two years. Despite stays in the hospital, and its accompanying pain and suffering, Laura kept battling against all odds. Gaining back some strength, and with spirits high, she would come back to work, always hoping for a positive prognosis. But the leukemia returned, and on October 13, it ended her life.

How unfortunate it is that this remarkable woman who had so much to give not only to her family and friends and colleagues, but to society as well, was taken from us—taken away before she had the opportunity to fully realize her bountiful gifts.

I, and her colleagues in both my district and Washington offices, have indeed lost a marvelous friend. I know we will miss her humor, her charm, her insight, her feistiness and her goodness.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in sending our condolences to Laura's devoted husband, Larry, to her caring parents, Rosemary and Harold Robinson, and to her loving sister, Elisabeth, and brother, Thomas.

IN SUPPORT OF THE JOHN
BONHAM MEMORIAL FUND

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 16, 1998

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, this country is blessed by the number of individuals and groups who give of their time to help the less fortunate. I would like to use this opportunity to honor one of these philanthropies, the John Bonham Memorial Fund.

The Bonham Fund assists California youth organizations in teaching community responsibility and self-respect to children, primarily young girls. The Fund provides support to the California Police Activities League, the Big Sisters of Los Angeles and a group that teaches arts education to young girls in low-income areas.

The Bonham Fund provides a wonderful opportunity for individuals to contribute to their community by providing enrichment and educational opportunities for low income, at-risk youth. Through the generosity of many, young people in communities throughout California and around the country are benefitting from the good works of this philanthropic organization.

By providing our youth with access to such educational activities, the Bonham Fund is ac-

tively working to enrich the lives of California's younger generations. I know my colleagues will join me in honoring the Bonham Fund's admirable efforts.

DANTE B. FASCELL NORTH-SOUTH
CENTER ACT OF 1991

SPEECH OF

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 12, 1998

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in support of legislation that renames the University of Miami's North/South Center in honor of my good friend Dante B. Fascell. Dante Fascell worked tirelessly to help create and fund the North/South Center during his tenure as the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Throughout his service in Congress, Dante Fascell was a constant advocate for the cause of democracy and open dialogue among the nations of the Western Hemisphere. Our Nation owes him a debt of gratitude for his years of service.

Dante Fascell's support for the creation of the North/South Center stemmed from his strong belief that the free exchange of ideas would strengthen our Nation's security, competitiveness and economic vitality. The North/South Center provides a forum for research and policy analysis that is unparalleled by any other institution in the country and promotes better understanding and relations between the United States, Canada, and the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean.

In 1990, with the passage of the North/South Center Act, Congress authorized the establishment of the Center as a place for "cultural and technical interchange between North and South." Dante Fascell's dream was to focus the country on the pursuit of policies which strengthen our national economic policy, trade practices, and relations with the countries of the Western Hemisphere.

The North/South Center plays many roles. It is a think-tank, a foundation, a public resource center, and a repository of information. The work of the Center informs our national debate regarding topics of major significance, such as trade, economic growth, immigration, drug control policies, and the spread of democracy.

There is no greater way that we can thank Dante Fascell for his vital contributions to the North/South Center than naming it in his honor. Dante Fascell served his constituents in Florida and the Nation as a whole for 36 years. He is, indeed, worthy of this tribute and I would like to thank my colleagues for passing H.R. 4757.

A HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY TO
HELEN LOPER OF PORT JEFFERSON,
LONG ISLAND

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 16, 1998

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the U.S. House of Representatives to ask my colleagues to join me in wishing a very happy, healthy, and joyous 100th birthday to Helen Loper of Port Jefferson, Long Island.

Though not many Long Islanders outside of her family and friends know Helen Loper, through her generous spirit and charity for acquaintances and strangers alike, Helen has done so much in her 100 years to make Long Island a better place for all of us to live.

A native Long Islander and a teacher by training, Helen Loper is a dedicated volunteer at Mather Hospital in Port Jefferson, an historic and picturesque seaside village on Long Island's North Shore. An original member of the John T. Mather Hospital Auxiliary, Helen Loper has volunteered there for nearly 50 years, giving selflessly of her time and energy to patients and hospital staff. After a half-century of volunteer service to her community, Helen's spirit and enthusiasm has not waned and today she still works a regular Monday afternoon shift in Mather Hospital's thrift shop.

An avid world traveler, Helen has been to locales as far away as Antarctica, but she always comes back home to Port Jefferson. One of seven graduating students in Port Jefferson High School's class of 1915, Helen Dayton attended college at the Savage School in New York City and then spent a year teaching school in Iowa.

After returning home to Long Island, she met her future husband Carroll Loper and they were married on January 26, 1924, in Miami, Florida, the winter homes for both of their parents. Together the couple had two sons and Helen now has five grandchildren.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues and all of our fellow Americans gathered here today in the People's House to offer our best wishes and heartiest congratulations to Helen Loper of Port Jefferson as she celebrates her 100th birthday on November 18, 1998.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN C. KILPATRICK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 16, 1998

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, due to a death in my family, I was unable to record my vote on several measures. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on Roll Call Number 521; "nay" on Roll Call Number 522; "nay" on Roll Call Number 523; "nay" on Roll Call Number 530; and "aye" on Roll Call Number 531. I appreciate the kindness of the Speaker in approving my earlier leaves of absence.