

county level, and state-wide through his work with the DEP. His commitment and dedication to our state and its people will be sorely missed.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 29, 2002*

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I was absent from the House floor during Thursday's rollcall vote on S. 1762, amending the Higher Education Act with respect to student loan interest rates. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of this measure.

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HONORING DR. DOUG LIGON, FINALIST FOR "COUNTRY DOCTOR OF THE YEAR."

**HON. JOHN S. TANNER**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 29, 2002*

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dr. Doug Ligon, one of only four national finalists for "Country Doctor of the Year 2001." Dr. Ligon is a family doctor at Trinity Hospital in Erin, Tennessee, where his coworkers describe him as a big-city boy with a country heart.

Born and schooled in Nashville, Ligon attended Vanderbilt University and the University of Tennessee Medical School, then planned to stay in an urban area to work as a dermatologist. His plans would change, however, after he accepted what was originally to be a temporary job in the small town of Erin in Houston County.

Almost thirty years later, Dr. Ligon is still working in Erin. He says he could not leave, once he realized how much he was needed at Trinity Hospital, where he worked eighty hours each week as one of only a handful of doctors treating a five-county area. Dr. Ligon also acted as Houston County's medical examiner and county coroner, for which he would not accept pay, saying that the county needed that money more than he did.

Dr. Ligon says he appreciates getting to know his patients and their families over time, following the progress of babies he delivered, some of whom are grown now and have families of their own. He says working in a small town allows him to experience what being a family doctor is all about—getting to know his patients, treating them and being able to watch after their general welfare.

Dr. Ligon says his family has been supportive of his decision to remain in Erin. His wife Betsy is, in fact, the person responsible for nominating Dr. Ligon for the prestigious "Country Doctor of the Year" award, as a way to recognize him for the service he provides to the people of Houston County, Tennessee.

We know many medical professionals care deeply about what they do and the patients they see, but Dr. Ligon's years of free-hearted work have been invaluable to the people of Erin and the surrounding communities. He has proven time and time again that he is a leader among his peers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues join me in thanking Dr. Doug Ligon for his years of selfless service and congratulating Dr. Ligon for his distinguished recognition as a national finalist for the title "Country Doctor of the Year."

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GIRL SCOUTS GOLD MEDAL  
RECIPIENT: STEPHANIE ROBEDEE

**HON. STEVE ISRAEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 29, 2002*

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize one of New York's outstanding young students: Stephanie Robedee. In February, the young women of her troop will honor her by bestowing upon her the Girl Scouts Gold Medal.

Since the beginning of this century, the Girl Scouts of America have provided thousands of youngsters each year the opportunity to make friends, explore new ideas, and develop leadership skills while learning self-reliance and teamwork.

These awards are presented only to those who possess the qualities that make our nation great: commitment to excellence, hard work, and genuine love of community service. The Gold Awards represent the highest awards attainable by junior and high school Girl Scouts.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the recipient of this award, as her activities are indeed worthy of praise. Their leadership benefits our community and they serve as role models for their peers.

Also, we must not forget the unsung heroes, who continue to devote a large part of their lives to make all this possible. Therefore, I salute the families, scout leaders, and countless others who have given generously of their time and energy in support of scouting.

It is with great pride that I recognize the achievements of Stephanie, and bring the attention of Congress to this successful young woman on her day of recognition.

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A TRIBUTE TO MATT GREENE OF  
BIRMINGHAM

**HON. EARL F. HILLIARD**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 29, 2002*

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer a tribute to a fallen youth from my hometown of Birmingham, Matt Greene. Born Matthew James Greene, Matt was the youngest son of Ken and Barbara Greene and the brother of Michael and Laura. Matt was only 17 years old when he tragically died in the early hours of January 12, 2002, at his home in the presence of his family. He was only 30 days shy of reaching his 18th birthday of February 15, which he shared with his twin brother Michael.

Matt was an exceptional young man. He was handsome, tall and a little on the skinny side with a keen interest in having fun. He had a quick sly smile that melted the hearts of girls and guys alike. He always had a twinkle in his eye when he smiled, and had a zest for life that defied rhyme or reason. He was the Mas-

ter of his own destiny who loved to hunt and fish and reveled in telling a joke. He had great tolerance for all people and all beliefs and his one goal in life was to be loved and liked. He truly had no enemies or malice toward any people. He loved R.&B. music much to the amusement of his friends and frequently to the annoyance of his family, and especially his brother whose bedroom reverberated with the bass of Matt's music into the early hours of most mornings.

The death of Matt is very tragic because for just a few moments, Matt lost sight of his dreams, his future, his family and his friends. Matt forgot the past, denied the future and only focused on the NOW and the pain, which NOW contained. Matt died in an accident that no one had the power to prevent and for which no one should feel guilt. There is no one and nothing to blame, but the blinding light of pain, despair and misplaced loneliness. I say misplaced loneliness, for Matt had many friends, old and young, male and female, rich and poor, black and white. At Matt's funeral mass, over 1,200 people who loved him gathered together and prayed to God for Matt's eternal soul.

It has been said, "wishing on last night's star will not change tomorrow's dawn." However, instead of succumbing to the demons of anger and self-doubt, Matt's family and friends are turning instead to the balm of God's healing and understanding. All of Matt's friends will miss his crooked smile and his frequent requests of "Can you do me a favor, man?" His teachers and fellow students at his high school will miss his antics, and the Rite-Aid Pharmacy where he worked has lost a valuable team player and morale builder. Matt's family and loved ones miss his embrace, his kisses, his loyalty, and his unyielding love. Those people who love Matt have told me they will wait a lifetime to join him again. May the Congress, by these remarks, offer comfort and solace for Matt's family and friends.

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TRIBUTE TO THE DISASTER MORTUARY OPERATIONAL RESPONSE TEAM, REGION VI, OF LOUISIANA

**HON. RICHARD H. BAKER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 29, 2002*

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the nine Louisiana residents who put fear aside and risked their lives to recover those lost on September 11, 2001, during the tragic attack on the World Trade Center.

The Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team (DMORT), administered through USPHS and funded through FEMA, provides assistance upon request of local authorities in the event of a mass fatality incident. Regional VI consists of participants hailing from Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico. This team was deployed to New York City several days after the terrorist attacks to assist the New York Medical Examiner. Subsequent to this assignment, Region VI was then transferred to the American Aircraft crash in Queens, New York.

Mr. Speaker, Deputy Commander Charles D. Smith, Jr., led Louisiana residents Anthony Buras, Jordan Charlet, Arbie Goings, Shelly