

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING CLAIRE NICHOLS

### HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 20, 2002*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the late Claire Nichols, for receiving the 2002 Educator of The Year Award from the Sanger District Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Nichols was a dedicated educator, and is being recognized for her tremendous efforts.

Claire began teaching Kindergarten in 1955 at Lincoln Elementary. Shortly thereafter, she left the teaching field to become a mother. While absent from teaching, Mrs. Nichols was still very active within the school system, serving on the Jackson PTA, and as a Room Mother. In 1987 she returned to the classroom, this time as a second grade teacher for Jackson Elementary School. Claire brought a lot of attention and affection to her students. When her students were sick, she brought them baked goods at home.

Claire's dedication to and genuine interest in students extended beyond the classroom. She had a deal with her students that if any of them hit a home run she would buy them a pizza. This deal followed the students from Little League all the way through high school. The football and basketball players also benefited from Mrs. Nichols' generosity in the form of team meals.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Claire Nichols, for her dedication as an educator and for touching the lives of all her children. I invite my colleagues to Join me in remembering Claire Nichols for her community service and exemplary life.

RECOGNIZING THE 46TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA'S NATIONAL DAY OF INDEPENDENCE

### HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 20, 2002*

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Republic of Tunisia and its people on the 46th anniversary of their National Day of Independence. Over the last 46 years, Tunisia has been an outstanding model for developing countries. It has risen from a fledgling democracy to a nation that is at the forefront of instituting an aggressive North African free market economy.

The United States and Tunisia have maintained a strong relationship throughout Tunisia's history. During the Cold War, Tunisia was a crucial partner in the Mediterranean Sea. In our struggle against terrorism, dating back to the early 1990s, Tunisia has been a steadfast ally. As early as 1993, Tunisia condemned forms of Islamic extremism and ter-

rorism. In 1994, Tunisia warned the West of terrorism's evils and spoke of the need to fight terrorism on a global level.

Tunisia's unwavering opposition to terrorism has been no more evident than in its response to the tragic terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Immediately following the attacks, Tunisia's President, Zine El Abidine Bel Ali, offered his country's heartfelt condolences to the American people and strongly condemned the attacks and those behind them. President Ben Ali also offered his country's steadfast support for our efforts to bring those responsible to justice.

As a friend of Tunisia, I again congratulate the Tunisian people on 46 years of independence and would like to share with my colleagues the insightful words of President Ben Ali, describing the reasons for Tunisia's success in building a democratic society:

"Tolerance is at the heart of our social traditions as well as a characteristic of Tunisia's history. Pluralism, whether religious, cultural, or political, is ingrained in our society. Tunisian Moslem and Jews have lived together under the same sky and same state for many centuries. Each contributed to the building of [Tunisia], whose greatness is based on the tolerance of its people—a tolerance which has been among the highest values governing relations between the two parties, as there was no room for hatred."

TO HONOR MR. AND MRS. VEGA FOR ALL THEIR HARD WORK IMPROVING THE LIVES AND EDUCATION OF YOUTH IN THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY

### HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 20, 2002*

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to pay tribute to two outstanding citizens who have improved the lives and education of youth in the Hispanic community. For their commitment and dedication, a new elementary school will be named in their honor in McKinney, Texas. I speak of Jose de Jesus and Maria Luisa Vega, whom I have the distinct honor of knowing and representing in Congress.

Upon arriving in McKinney in 1950, the Vegas realized that most immigrant children had little opportunity to succeed in the public school systems. Work in the fields seemed a better alternative to the difficulties of integrating for these children. However, after visiting with parents from the community, the Vegas decided to build a school specially to assist the newly migrated children. Through various fund-raisers, local contributions and assistance from the parents, a school was built to help students learn and improve their English skills and provided tutoring on various other subjects.

Mrs. Vega, who graduated from the National University of Mexico with a degree in medi-

cine, also opened a clinic in the community and Mr. Vega served as a pastor in the local Episcopalian church.

Years later, the Vegas moved for health reasons to Arizona, where Mrs. Vega taught high school for 22 years before retiring. Nonetheless, their contributions to the McKinney community have been far from forgotten as they continue to be honored and recognized for their work.

For decades, Mr. and Mrs. Vega have educated and helped to provide our underprivileged children with the opportunity to obtain a basic education. They truly serve as a model and inspiration to educators throughout our nation.

A TRIBUTE TO DORITA CLARKE

### HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 20, 2002*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Dorita Clarke in recognition of her commitment and dedication to higher education opportunities in New York City.

Donita is a very active member of the community. Along with a full time job with the Department of Transportation, Dorita has served as the New York State Committee Woman for the 22th Assembly District since 1965. In 1997, she co-founded the "You Can Go to College Committee" where she continues to serve as the Executive Director. This organization prepares ninth through twelfth grade students to take the SAT's, assists seniors through the application and financial aid process, and provides workshops on college life. In addition, she arranges college visits to New York area colleges and tours of some Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Many of the students who have worked with the "You Can Go to College Committee" have enjoyed an easier adjustment to college life and maintained at least a 3.0 GPA. Once in the program and attending a college, the Committee continues to track students' progress and periodically sends care packages. Since the inception of this tremendous program, over 1,000 students have participated.

In addition, Ms. Clarke is affiliated with several other organizations such as the New York State Fraternal Order of Police, Chapter #93; United Democratic Club—Executive Board; Democratic National Committee; Key Women of America. Inc.; and York College Advisory Board.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Clarke has dedicated her life to giving youth in Brooklyn and throughout New York City the opportunity to excel in higher education. As such, she is more than worthy of receiving our recognition and I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this truly remarkable woman.

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