

ready to lead the Pantherettes back to Austin next year.

Congratulations to coach Cathy Self-Morgan and the other Duncanville staff who guided a super group of girls through a historic season. The 2003 Duncanville Pantherettes have earned the chance to savor this victory and reflect on all their achievements together. I look forward to following the Pantherettes as they try to return to Austin next year.

SUPPORTING AFFIRMATIVE
ACTION

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep and continued commitment to affirmative action.

Like many of my colleagues, I am baffled by the fact that almost thirty years since the enactment of the Civil Rights Act and the full implementation of affirmative action, many still question its importance and significance.

It astounds me that a country that brags on its riches in diversity of people can not equally boast on their diversity in university class rooms and company board rooms. Affirmative action is not a hand out! It is an all access pass for people who have long been denied the chance to achieve their potential because of an American society steeped in institutionalized racism and sexism.

Mr. Speaker, as you may know, there has been a recent uproar over the issue of affirmative action. In the past such states as Texas, California, and more recently my home state of Florida has prematurely abolished affirmative action, deeming it no longer necessary. Now, we are faced with this issue again. However this time, it's Michigan.

In 1999, the state of Florida brought an end to affirmative action under a plan named the One Florida Initiative. This initiative not only sparked hundreds of protest, but also ignited a march in Tallahassee, Florida's capital. Former state senator and current U.S. Congressman KENDRICK MEEK led this demonstration.

Mr. Speaker, as much as I wish affirmative action was an expired concept from an archaic time, the fact is, it is not. It is still needed. We as a Nation will no longer need affirmative action when we address the inequalities found at the heart of the educational system and corporate America. Then and only then should we discuss its abolishment.

RECOGNITION OF ELIZABETH
CLARK

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Elizabeth Clark, a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, Troop 985, and in earning the most prestigious honor of the Gold Award.

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest achievement attainable in girl scouting. To earn the Gold Award, a scout must complete five requirements, all of which promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values, and leadership skills. The requirements include, (1) Earning four interest project patches, each of which requires seven activities that center on skill building, technology, service projects, and career exploration, (2) earning the career exploration pin, which involves researching careers, writing resumes, and planning a career fair or trip, (3) earning the Senior Girl Scout Leadership Award, which requires a minimum of 30 hours of work using leadership skills, (4) designing a self-development plan that requires assessment of ability to interact with others and prioritize values, participation for a minimum of 15 hours in a community service project, and development of a plan to promote girl scouting, and (5) spending a minimum of 50 hours planning and implementing a Girl Scout Gold Award project that has a positive lasting impact on the community.

For her Gold Award project, Elizabeth created handicapped parking for more than ten city buildings.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Elizabeth Clark for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of the Gold Award.

IN HONOR OF DR. SAMUEL GWINN

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to congratulate Dr. Samuel W. Gwinn of Newark, Delaware on his induction into the National 4-H Hall of Fame. His long-time service to the Cooperative Extension and 4-H programs has touched the lives of numerous children in Delaware.

Dr. Gwinn, 83, served as Director of the Delaware Cooperative Extension for 22 years before retiring in 1984. His legacy with 4-H began when he joined the club as a 10-year-old. After participating in the club's activities as a child, he decided to help the club serve the future generations of children. In 1949, Dr. Gwinn established an overnight 4-H camp at Camp Barnes in Frankford, Delaware. To this day, the camp continues to attract hundreds of 4-H campers in the summer. In the 1970's, Dr. Gwinn helped create the Delaware 4-H Foundation that raises money to support 4-H activities for children. Throughout his career of service, Dr. Gwinn has served as a mentor to many colleagues who refer to him as the "Dean of Extension" and "Mr. 4-H."

Dr. Gwinn performed a great service by dedicating his career to enriching and giving back to Delawareans the experience that was given to him. It is people like Dr. Gwinn who ensure that the State of Delaware and the nation will continue to keep the American Dream alive and growing. I am proud to honor Dr. Gwinn's achievements and congratulate him on being the first Delawarean to be inducted into the 4-H Hall of Fame. His recognition, Mr. Speaker, is duly deserved.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, on February 27, 2003, I was unavoidably absent for several rollcall votes, due to influenza and a physician's advice to rest.

Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall votes 37 (Greenwood Substitute Amendment) and 38 (Motion to Recommit) and "yea" on rollcall vote 39 (Final Passage of H.R. 534—Human Cloning Prohibition Act).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 29, 30, 31, and 32, on February 13, 2003, I was unable to cast my vote because I was on Speaker-authorized travel with CODEL Collins to Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kuwait.

Had I been present, I would have voted the following:

Rollcall 29, the Motion to Recommit on the Personal Responsibility, Work, and Family Promotion Act, I would have voted "nay."

Rollcall 30, on Passage of the Personal Responsibility, Work, and Family Promotion Act, I would have voted "yea."

Rollcall 31, the Motion to Recommit on the Making Further Continuing Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2003, and for other purposes, I would have voted "nay."

Rollcall 32, on Passage of the Making Further Continuing Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2003, and for other purposes, I would have voted "yea."

TRIBUTE TO MS. FIFINE GLAWS

HON. MARY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Mrs. BONO. Mr. Speaker, along with my colleagues, Representatives JAN SCHAKOWSKY and SILVESTRE REYES, I would like to take this opportunity to honor Cannon elevator operator Ms. Fifine Glaws, who passed away over the President's Day weekend.

Fifine, a native of Boston, followed her family, including three siblings, to the Washington area in 1970. She began work at the Capitol in March 1983.

Each day, for close to 20 years, Fifine would make the trip from her group home in Rockville, MD to the Hill. However, unlike that of many other commuters, Fifine's trek was not an easy one. As her brother, Peter Glaws, told the Washington Post (Feb 20, 2003, page B1), Fifine "faced adversity every day and conquered it every day . . . She had much less to deal with in terms of capacity and had a very simplistic approach to life—that if you were expected to do something, you did it."

Not only did Fifine do her job, she brought a sense of kindness and consideration to an establishment more used to divisiveness and self-importance. Fifine would never let an opportunity to compliment riders of fifth floor elevator number five pass by. Her customary "You look nice today" would raise spirits and brighten moods even in the darkest of hours.

So often, those of us in the Capitol Hill community rush about our business and don't take a moment to reflect upon how great this institution is. Fifine kept this in mind every day. Her appreciation for her job and the U.S. Congress was second to none.

In an April 21, 1997 interview with the Washington Post, Fifine stated: "I love the congressmen," she said. "They have a lot of work to do and don't always have time to talk. I give them time to work, but I always talk to them. I love my job."

Fifine, we greatly appreciate you for taking the time to talk with us and thank you for a job well done. Our prayers and thoughts are with you and your family. We will miss you greatly.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL DURHEN
CHRISTIAN

HON. ROBERT E. (BUD) CRAMER, JR.

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lieutenant Commander Michael Durhen Christian. Michael was a prisoner of war in Vietnam from April 24, 1967, to March 4, 1973. Today marks the 30th anniversary of his release.

Mike was a highly decorated soldier, touting two Silver Stars, three Bronze Stars, four Air Medals, the Legion of Merit, and the Navy Commendation Medal. But perhaps what Michael is most well known for is the flag he made while in the Hao Lo POW Camp.

In the last year of his imprisonment, Mike began collecting bits of fabric. He fashioned a needle out of bamboo, used the thread from his blanket, and made an American flag that he sewed to the inside of his jacket. Mike's flag was a source of pride and comfort for many of the soldiers. Mike would hold up his flag, and they would salute.

When the guards at the POW Camp eventually found the flag, Mike was beaten and tortured for hours. When he was returned to the cell, Mike immediately gathered his remaining cloth and began to sew again. Leo Thorness, Congressional Medal of Honor recipient and survivor of the Hao Lo POW Camp stated "Now, whenever I see the flag, I think of Mike and the morning he first waved that tattered emblem of a nation. It was then, thousands of miles from home in a lonely prison cell, that he showed us what it is to be truly free."

Mike attended Butler High School in Alabama and still has family in our community. In September 1983, Mike lost his life in a house fire. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize LCDR Christian today. His patriotism and service to this country serve as an example to all Americans.

INTRODUCTION OF BIKE
COMMUTER ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, today, Congressman MARK FOLEY and I are introducing legislation to extend commuter benefits to bicyclists. This important legislation includes bicycles in the definition of transportation covered by the qualified transportation fringe benefit.

Currently, employers may offer a Transportation Fringe Benefit to their employees for commuting to work. Employees who take advantage of this program may receive a tax exemption benefit totaling \$180 for participating in qualified parking plans or \$100 for transit or van-pool expenses. Employees may also opt to take cash compensation instead, which is subject to employment taxes. The Bike Commuter Act would extend these same Transportation Fringe Benefits to employees who choose to commute by bicycle.

It's time to level the playing field for bicycle commuters. Bicycling is one of the cleanest, healthiest and environmentally friendly modes of transportation that exists today. At a time when communities across the country are seeking to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and increase the safety of their neighborhoods, bicycles offer a wonderful alternative to driving for the more than 50 percent of the working population who commute five miles or less to work. The Federal Government should do its part to support these goals by providing transportation benefits to people who choose to commute in a healthy, environmental, and neighborhood-friendly fashion.

According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, bicycles are second only to cars as a preferred mode of transportation, demonstrating their potential for commuter use. Many Americans own one or more bicycles, but limit their use to recreational purposes. This legislation is an important step in making the Federal Government a better partner for more livable communities.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION BY
JOHN BRADY KIESLING

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2003

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker I commend to the attention of my colleagues the following letter of resignation written by American diplomat John Brady Kiesling. Mr. Kiesling served in the U.S. State Department as Political Counselor at the American Embassy in Greece before resigning his post on Thursday, February 27—ending twenty years of public service. Mr. Kiesling's letter is an eloquent expression of principal in opposition to war with Iraq and America's heavy-handed approach to foreign policy under the leadership of President Bush.

US DIPLOMAT JOHN BRADY KIESLING,

February 27, 2003.

Secretary of State COLIN L. POWELL,
Letter of Resignation.

ATHENS

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I am writing you to submit my resignation from the Foreign Service of the United States and from my position as Political Counselor in U.S. Embassy Athens, effective March 7. I do so with a heavy heart. The baggage of my upbringing included a felt obligation to give something back to my country. Service as a U.S. diplomat was a dream job. I was paid to understand foreign languages and cultures, to seek out diplomats, politicians, scholars and journalists, and to persuade them that U.S. interests and theirs fundamentally coincided. My faith in my country and its values was the most powerful weapon in my diplomatic arsenal.

It is inevitable that during twenty years with the State Department I would become more sophisticated and cynical about the narrow and selfish bureaucratic motives that sometimes shaped our policies. Human nature is what it is, and I was rewarded and promoted for understanding human nature. But until this Administration it had been possible to believe that by upholding the policies of my president I was also upholding the interests of the American people and the world. I believe it no longer.

The policies we are now asked to advance are incompatible not only with American values but also with American interests. Our fervent pursuit of war with Iraq is driving us to squander the international legitimacy that has been America's most potent weapon of both offense and defense since the days of Woodrow Wilson. We have begun to dismantle the largest and most effective web of international relationships the world has ever known. Our current course will bring instability and danger, not security.

The sacrifice of global interests to domestic politics and to bureaucratic self-interest is nothing new, and it is certainly not a uniquely American problem. Still, we have not seen such systematic distortion of intelligence, such systematic manipulation of American opinion, since the war in Vietnam.

The September 11 tragedy left us stronger than before, rallying around us a vast international coalition to cooperate for the first time in a systematic way against the threat of terrorism. But rather than take credit for those successes and build on them, this Administration has chosen to make terrorism a domestic political tool, enlisting a scattered and largely defeated Al Qaeda as its bureaucratic ally. We spread disproportionate terror and confusion in the public mind, arbitrarily linking the unrelated problems of terrorism and Iraq. The result, and perhaps the motive, is to justify a vast misallocation of shrinking public wealth to the military and to weaken the safeguards that protect American citizens from the heavy hand of government. September 11 did not do as much damage to the fabric of American society as we seem determined to do to ourselves. Is the Russia of the late Romanovs really our model, a selfish, superstitious empire thrashing toward self-destruction in the name of a doomed status quo?

We should ask ourselves why we have failed to persuade more of the world that a war with Iraq is necessary. We have over the past two years done too much to assert to our world partners that narrow and mercenary U.S. interests override the cherished values of our partners. Even where our aims were not in question, our consistency is at issue. The model of Afghanistan is little comfort to allies wondering on what basis we plan to rebuild the Middle East, and in whose