

the Attorney General to assign a National Amber Alert Coordinator. The Coordinator will establish minimum standards for the issuance of AMBER Alerts, including the extent of dissemination of alerts. The minimum standards will require vital information relating to the special needs of the child, including the child's health care needs, to be provided to the appropriate law enforcement and public health officials. Also, the dissemination of the AMBER Alert will be limited to the geographic area most likely to facilitate the recovery of the abducted child.

H.R. 1104 also requires the Secretary of Transportation to provide grants to states for the development or improvement of AMBER Alert communication or notification systems along America's highways. It requires the Attorney General to provide grants to States for the development or enhancement of programs and activities for support of the AMBER Alert communications plans.

I wholeheartedly support all of the AMBER Alert provisions of H.R. 1104. These provisions improve the AMBER Alert system and help to reduce the likelihood that children who are kidnapped will also be physically abused, sexually abused, or murdered. These provisions also improve the chances that abducted children will be returned to their families.

I have reservations about supporting H.R. 1104 because it is not a clean AMBER Alert bill. I believe that the Amendments to the bill dealing with prison sentence guidelines, pre-trial release, and law enforcement investigation powers should be dealt with in separate legislation.

More importantly, the extraneous provisions will delay the ultimate passage of the AMBER Alert Bill. Every day that goes by without a national AMBER Alert system in place puts the lives of children at risk. According to an October 2002 U.S. Department of Justice Report titled the National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMA Report), 12,222 children were the victims of traditional kidnappings in the year 1999 alone. That amounts to approximately 33 children kidnapped nationwide per day.

While the members of the House debate extraneous amendments, hundreds of children are being kidnapped and murdered. As the Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I strongly believe that the best way to save children's lives is to vote in support of H.R. 1104, even if I do so reluctantly.

That is why, Mr. Chairman, I reluctantly vote in favor of H.R. 1104.

HONORING PAUL BETANCOURT

HON. CALVIN M. DOOLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2003

Mr. DOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Paul Betancourt, who is being honored as the outgoing president of the Fresno County Farm Bureau, FCFB. Paul Betancourt has spent more than a decade serving my district through his activities with the Fresno County Farm Bureau, which represents over 6,000 members, produces more than 300 crops and grosses more than \$3.2 billion annually. Paul Betancourt has set an example

through his dedicated commitment to our community.

Since completing his 2-year role as president of the FCFB, Mr. Betancourt continues to serve on the FCFB Executive Committee and he was recently appointed to serve as the Industry Representative on the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District's Citizens Advisory Committee. Before serving as FCFB President, Betancourt also served as the FCFB secretary-treasurer and second and first vice presidents.

In addition to all of his work with the FCFB, Mr. Betancourt has served in a number of various community activities. Through his Farm Bureau activities, Mr. Betancourt served on the board of directors of the Fresno Chamber of Commerce, and represented FCFB at many industry and community forums and events. Mr. Betancourt currently serves on the Kerman Unified School Board of Trustees, and is involved in the Fresno Area Collaborative Regional Initiative. Additionally, Mr. Betancourt is a noted columnist for a local business publication and he teaches Sunday school at the Kerman Covenant Church.

Mr. Betancourt currently farms more than 750 acres of cotton and almonds in Fresno County, where he has also grown crops such as tomatoes, sugar beets, cantaloupes, barley, and cattle. Paul Betancourt's intimate knowledge of farming issues and his dedicated commitment to farmers and Fresno County residents as a whole should serve as an example of leadership and dedication in the Central Valley of California.

Mr. Betancourt has contributed to the improvement of the community through his work in and out of the Fresno County Farm Bureau. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in congratulating Paul Betancourt on his retirement as president of the Fresno County Farm Bureau.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. HARRY B. NISSLEY

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2003

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Harry B. Nissley, a local hero in my community who has dedicated over 50 years of his life to educating and inspiring our students.

Mr. Nissley worked as a tennis coach for the El Monte Union High School District from 1946 until his retirement in 2001. Over the course of his career, he has received numerous honors, including the San Gabriel Valley Administration Association's Service Award and the California Interscholastic Federation Award. But most enduring is the imprint he has left on the lives of hundreds of students, athletes and peers. Mr. Nissley's enthusiasm, caring and dedication is exemplary of a great educator.

Mr. Nissley went above and beyond the call of duty to make sure that students were given every opportunity to excel. Every spring, he hosted the Keeley Tennis tournament to help pay for student competition entry fees and often used his own money to help those students with financial hardships. Mr. Nissley's enthusiasm was only surpassed by his desire

to enhance each student's life. He strived to instill in his students a strong and positive sense of self worth.

Earlier this year, a former student and professional tennis player, honored Mr. Nissley by organizing an event commemorating his contributions. During the event, numerous former students and athletes praised him with kind words and fond memories.

Mr. Nissley is now 90 years old. At the request of his students, colleagues, friends and family who wanted to recognize his numerous contributions, the community of El Monte recently nominated him for induction into the California Interscholastic Federation Hall of Fame. Not only is the number of years he taught at the El Monte Union School District already a state record, but his commitment and selflessness is immeasurable.

I would also like to join the community of El Monte in showing my appreciation for Mr. Nissley by asking Congress to recognize his vast contributions to our youth, and outstanding dedication to service.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ST. CROIX NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA STUDY ACT

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2003

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to direct the Secretary of Interior to conduct a study of the suitability and feasibility of establishing the St. Croix National Heritage Area.

According to the National Park Service, National Heritage Areas are places that are federally designated to preserve an important aspect of America's past and share it with visitors. They are generally started at the grassroots by community members who envision places where the best of the past becomes part of a sustainable future.

National Heritage Areas are not living theme parks seeking to freeze places in time. They seek instead to conserve their special natural spaces and historic places as part of their communities' social and economic futures. The successful melding of past and future is the National Heritage Area challenge.

The unique natural, historic and cultural resources of the island of St. Croix represent distinctive aspects of American heritage that are in my view, worthy of recognition and provide outstanding opportunities for recreational and educational opportunities.

In introducing this bill I hope to utilize our spectacular natural and historic resources to spur economic development on my home island which badly needs it. As Interior Secretary Gail Norton noted during her visit to St. Croix: "We certainly want to protect the wonderful environment here and to match that great environment with a thriving economy. Heritage tourism might be one option for St. Croix".

Mr. Speaker, there are currently 23 existing national heritage areas across 17 states. As the Ranking Democrat on the House National Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee, I can confirm that heritage areas are just one of a growing number of collaborative, community-based conservation strategies that have developed in recent years to identify, preserve, and interpret resources.

I urge my colleagues to support enactment of this legislation to provide for a study to determine the sustainability and feasibility of the island St. Croix becoming the 24th National Heritage Area.

GREEK AND TURKISH CYPRIOTS
ISSUES

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2003

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, as the ranking Democrat on the Europe Subcommittee, I believe my colleagues in Congress will be interested in the following letter sent by the Turkish Cypriot Leader Rauf Denktas to the Greek Cypriot Leader Tassas Papadopoulos on April 2, 2003. I am hopeful that Mr. Denktas's letter and its content will be a catalyst for renewed dialogue between Greek and Turkish Cypriots and a positive step toward a comprehensive resolution to their long-standing issues.

In this letter, Mr. Denktas provides a detailed proposal to lift all overseas trade, transport, travel and cultural activities from both parts of Cyprus. He calls for freedom of movement to be facilitated between the two sides and restrictions on the movement of tourists to be lifted as well. His measures also include allowing Greek Cypriot refugees to return to the Greek Cypriot sector of Famagusta. Finally, Mr. Denktas expressed his willingness to meet with Mr. Papadopoulos to discuss the core issues of a comprehensive settlement with the objective of reaching an agreement between Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

While I understand that the long-standing Cyprus issue cannot be solved without great sacrifice by both sides, it is incredibly important that the United States and the international community work together to resolve this issue. Please know, I remain firmly committed to helping both Greek and Turkish Cypriots overcome obstacles and bring about a lasting peace for future generations.

APRIL 2, 2003.

DEAR MR. PAPADOPOULOS: Since our return from the Netherlands on 11 March 2003, I have been trying to reassess in depth the negotiating process resulting in the stalemate at The Hague.

Based on our re-evaluation and the responses given to the UN Secretary-General's proposals by both sides, I am now convinced more than ever that we have for too long overlooked the significance of the socio-psychological dimension of the problem, and especially the deep crisis of confidence between the two sides.

The Turkish Cypriot side sincerely wishes a lasting settlement to the forty year-old question of Cyprus. In achieving a sustainable and viable settlement that would be acceptable to both sides, the first meaningful step should, without doubt, be the improvement of the political environment within which we could allow for the evolution of a working relationship between the two sides through the building up of trust and confidence. This would enable us to resolve pending issues, thus preparing the ground for a comprehensive settlement. The island is, no doubt, the common home of the two co-owner peoples in Cyprus. In this context, I wish to share with you the following ideas and suggestions which I believe could initiate a process of dialogue and consultation leading to a working relationship between

us. This would greatly enhance the prospects for and paved the way to a mutually acceptable comprehensive settlement based on the political equality of the two sides and bring tangible benefits to both parties.

(i) As a first step, the fenced area of Varosha south of Dhimoktrathias street, including the area extending to the UN Buffer Zone, will be transferred to the Greek Cypriot control to be opened for resettlement.

(ii) Parallel to this, all restrictions on overseas trade, transport, travel and cultural and sportive activities from or to both parts of Cyprus will be lifted. I am convinced that Turkey and Greece will also positively respond to this by removing the restrictions which they apply to the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides respectively. We shall invite the UN and EU to acknowledge and give effect to these arrangements.

(iii) The freedom of movement will be facilitated between the two sides, subject only to minimal procedures. The restrictions on the movement of tourists will also be lifted.

(iv) Steps will be taken gradually for the normalization of the flow of goods between the two parties on the island. Cooperation shall be also encouraged between the institutions of both sides to identify and develop joint projects.

(v) The Turkish Cypriot side will lift the measures regarding the movement of UNFICYP of July 2000.

(vi) A bilateral Reconciliation Committee will be established with the objective of promoting understanding, tolerance and mutual respect between the two parties. This Committee will make specific recommendations for promoting bilateral contacts and projects. These ideas and suggestions constitute a package and should be regarded as an integrated whole. The acceptance and implementation of this package will neither prejudice our respective positions, nor will it be a substitute to a final settlement. I am prepared to discuss with you the above points and their modalities with the aim of initiating a cooperative relationship. In doing this, we could benefit from the assistance of the UN and the EU. These measures, I believe, would bring about a positive climate to the island and to our region. On the understanding of the above, I am also ready to talk with you the core issues of the comprehensive settlement and matters related to EU membership with the objective of reaching a mutually satisfactory conclusion. As we both supported the good-offices mission, I am taking the liberty of sending a copy of this letter to the UN Secretary-General.

Sincerely,

RAUF R. DENKTAS.

SUPPORT AMERICAN-GROWN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO IRAQ!

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2003

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I recently introduced a resolution supporting humanitarian assistance from the United States to Iraq. H. Con. Res. 127 reinforces the ideal that we should send American-grown and made products to Iraq—and on American ships!

The United States obviously has a deep and enduring interest in the welfare of the citizens of Iraq who have been living under the regime of Saddam Hussein for decades. Iraq is currently suffering a humanitarian crisis that could worsen during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

An estimated 4.5 million to 10 million people in Iraq, about 40 percent of the population, will require food assistance within a few weeks. Unfortunately, most of the warehouses in Iraq that store food under the "Oil-for-Food" program are empty. There are few food reserves in Iraq. If action is not taken to address this shortfall, people will die of starvation.

Now that Operation Iraqi Freedom has begun, it is our duty to recognize the need for, and prepare for, the delivery of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to the people of Iraq. It is our obligation to provide American-grown commodities, such as wheat, to Iraq!

Food security will be significant in improving the quality of life the people of Iraq. Providing United States agricultural commodities to Iraq will help alleviate the humanitarian crisis there, as well as help strengthen our Nation's economy. Our Nation's farmers would certainly be proud to supply humanitarian assistance to a country in great need. Further, our United States maritime industry would be honored to ship supplies to Iraq in order to help with this critical effort.

In addition, the Department of Defense recently created the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. This office is a coordinated effort between government agencies in order to plan and implement assistance programs in a post-war Iraq. The resolution I have introduced commends the Department of Defense for recognizing the need for, and taking an inter-agency approach to, the delivery of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance for Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, we can, and must, help to improve the living conditions of the civilian population of Iraq! The fact that we can do this with American products makes this humanitarian effort all the more beneficial, significant, and crucial!

HONORING McNEIL NUTRITIONALS,
SPLENDA PLANT, McINTOSH,
ALABAMA

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2003

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize McNeil Nutritionals, Splenda Plant, a revolutionary manufacturer located in McIntosh, Alabama.

Each year the Alabama Technology Network and the Business Council of Alabama honors outstanding manufacturers with their Alabama Manufacturer of the Year Awards. This year, McNeil Nutritionals, Splenda plant, has received recognition as a Medium Manufacturer for excellence in leadership, performance, profitability and work force relations. McNeil was chosen based on its demonstration of superior performance in the areas of customer focus, employee commitment, operational excellence, continuous improvement, profitable growth and investment in training and retraining.

McNeil Nutritionals manufactures Splenda, the only no-calorie sweetener made from raw sugar which is from 650 to 750 times sweeter than sugar. This product was introduced in