

like bulletproof vests and armored vehicles to our troops in the field. Our brave men and women in uniform depend on these resources to carry out their mission and minimize loss of life.

I have heard from many deeply concerned families in my district about equipment deficiencies. One of my constituents, Dr. Donald W. Walsh, is the father of a soldier in the 933rd MP Company. Like so many parents, Dr. Walsh is very proud of his son but he is also worried about his son's safety due to the shortage of body armor and armored Humvees.

Given all the strains on the troops and their families as a result of overextended tours and uncertainty, the last thing they need is to worry about their loved ones engaging in hostilities with outdated vehicles and insufficient body armor. I am glad that Dr. Walsh came to me with his concerns. I promised him that I would do all I can to help his son. Supporting this legislation is a step in that direction.

Also, I am pleased to support H. Con. Res. 260, which recognizes and honors the service of non-active duty personnel who participate in funeral honor guards for deceased veterans. In times of war, there are not always enough active duty honor guards available to perform funeral services for our distinguished military personnel. These services are very important to the families of the deceased, and we should honor those who volunteer their time to provide these patriotic services.

In recognition of their contributions, the House recently passed this bill with unanimous support. Our Nation owes a debt of gratitude to these dedicated men and women who bring comfort and honor to our deceased veterans and their families.

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT SITING IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2004

SPEECH OF

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 15, 2004*

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to legislation that would significantly weaken the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA.

The bill on the floor today exempts any federal agency from considering alternatives when assessing the environmental impact of renewable energy projects. It eliminates input from local communities, states and the public.

I strongly support wind, solar and other clean, renewable energy projects. They are critical to our clean energy future.

I have cosponsored legislation that permanently extends the wind energy tax credit. This tax credit will spur additional windmill development in Minnesota.

I have cosponsored legislation that increases the use of biodiesel and ethanol. Minnesota is a national leader in producing these renewable fuels.

The Republican leadership, however, isn't allowing these bills to be considered today.

Renewable energy projects can adversely impact our environment and public health if not designed and operated properly. We have rules that ensure that all energy projects on public lands are subject to a full environmental and public health review required by NEPA.

Congress must recognize the renewable energy development is key to our energy future. We must not pass legislation that fails to ensure that environmentally important renewable energy development occurs in a timely manner, in the right locations, is subject to the terms that fully protect the public interest and that there is ample public input.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill today.

#### HONORING ARC-DIVERSIFIED AS THE USDA'S JWOD CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR

**HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 17, 2004*

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Arc-Diversified for being named the Department of Agriculture's Javits Wagner O'Day Contractor of the Year. Arc Diversified is located in Cookeville, Tennessee, which I have the pleasure of representing in Tennessee's Sixth Congressional District.

Arc-Diversified is a truly remarkable organization that specializes in the employment and training of people with disabilities. Currently, Arc-Diversified employs 183 such people. These workers provide a valuable service to the community as they manufacture foods for military feeding programs, the USDA and commercial and prime vendors.

Not only does Arc-Diversified manufacture quality products, but it also provides quality training to its employees. The workers learn valuable industrial skills and have access to a wealth of vocational services such as on the job training, job coaching and supported employment.

The USDA award is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the employees and the administration of Arc-Diversified. They are the sort of people who make Middle Tennessee such a fine place to call home.

#### SIKHS REMEMBER 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF ATTACK ON GOLDEN TEMPLE—FREEDOM FOR KHALISTAN WILL END THE BRUTALITY

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 17, 2004*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, Sikhs observe the twentieth anniversary of India's brutal attack on the Golden Temple, the seat of their religion, this month. From June 3 to 6, 1984, the Indian military brutally attacked the Golden Temple and 125 other Sikh Gurdwaras all over Punjab. This brutal and devastating attack, carried out by the Indira Gandhi government, which was always proudly proclaiming its commitment to secularism, killed over 20,000 Sikhs.

This attack made it clear that even when the secular parties are in power, the minorities in India are not safe and they have no real rights, despite what is written in India's constitution. Whether the Hindu nationalist BJP is in power or the secularist Congress Party is in

power, the policy of killing the Sikhs and other minorities in the futile effort to preserve what India considers its territorial integrity marches brutally on.

Among those killed in the Golden Temple attack were major Sikh leaders like Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, Bhai Arrikk Singh, General Shabeg Singh, and many others. The Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy scriptures, were shot full of bullets from the guns of the Indian military. Sikh boys were taken outside and asked if they supported Khalistan. Then they were shot to death. Khalistan, of course, is the name of the independent Sikh homeland.

There is no place for Sikhs or other minorities such as Christians and Muslims in India despite its claims of secularism. On October 7, 1987, Khalistan formally declared its independence. If India is the democratic country it claims to be, why not simply decide the issue in a free and fair plebiscite in Punjab, Khalistan on the subject of independence? Isn't that the democratic way? I was under the impression that in democracies, things were decided by votes. The United States allows the people of Puerto Rico to vote on independence every few years. Canada has held democratic plebiscites on the status of Quebec. In 1947, India promised to settle the Kashmir issue by plebiscite, but it has never allowed that vote to be held. Why not simply put the question to a democratic vote? That is self-determination and self-determination is the essence of democracy.

The Sikh Nation was independent from 1765 to 1849. The Sikhs were supposed to receive sovereignty when India became independent. Although the Indian constitution was adopted in 1950, more than half a century ago, to this day no Sikh representative has ever signed it. How can India claim that it holds sovereignty over the Sikh Nation?

Unfortunately, the Sikhs are not the only victims of India's repressive tyranny. More than 300,000 Christians in Nagaland have been killed by the Indian government since 1947. They have seen priests murdered, nuns raped, schools, prayer halls, and festivals attacked—the government even shut down one festival with gunfire—missionaries murdered, beaten, and thrown out of the country, and so many other atrocities carried out against them. Almost 88,000 Kashmiri Muslims have fallen victim to India's brutal tyranny since 1988. Another 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims were massacred in Gujarat with the connivance of the government. And these are just a few of the atrocities committed against minorities by the Indian forces.

Mr. Speaker, we must do something to stop these atrocities. If real democracy and real freedom is going to come to all the people of South Asia, the United States must take a stand. It is good that a Sikh is now Prime Minister. He must know the feeling of India's brutality against his people. Therefore, I call on him to use his office to release all of India's political prisoners and bring the persons who carried out these atrocities to justice. We must stop our aid to India until it shows that it is willing to act like a democracy and protect human rights. We are setting up a democratic government in Iraq with a new President and a new Prime Minister. Isn't it time that real democracy finally came to India?

In addition, it is vital for the Congress to declare its support for a free and fair plebiscite