

publicly confront the Azerbaijani government over these destabilizing maneuvers would send extremely dangerous signals to Azerbaijan.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. must take action to condemn Azerbaijan's desperate acts of destructive venue shopping, and we here in this Chamber must do everything that we can to ensure that all parties involved in this conflict make a genuine commitment towards peace and stability. Action on the part of the U.S. must go further than the OSCE joint statement that was released in which the members of the Minsk Group expressed their concern and opposition towards the Azeri resolution. Beyond merely releasing a statement, the U.S. must demonstrate its views by taking a stance and voting against this measure.

I urge the U.S. to forcefully renounce this proposal, secure its retraction and impress upon the Azerbaijani government that it should drop such counterproductive tactics in favor of serious and lasting commitment to the OSCE Minsk Group process.

The OSCE Minsk Group process cannot survive Azerbaijan's destabilizing tactics. Continued tampering with this process will inevitably produce a chain reaction resulting in its demise. We cannot afford to allow Azerbaijan to continue to disrupt the work of the OSCE, which, as my colleagues know, has been recognized by the U.N. itself as the lead arbiter in this conflict.

Finally, it is time for the U.S. to be more forceful with Azerbaijan and to make clear that their tactics are not helpful to a peaceful and just resolution of the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict. Once again, it is imperative, Mr. Speaker, for the U.S. to vote against this U.N. resolution, thereby clearly demonstrating that there are serious consequences to actions that disturb the regional Caucasus peace, security and prosperity.

THANKING MARY HOWARD FOR A LIFETIME OF PUBLIC SERVICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank one of South Carolina's finest ladies, Mary Talbert Howard, for her lifetime of public service.

Mary will conclude her full-time service to the people of South Carolina when she retires at the end of this year. Active in the Lexington, South Carolina, community since 1973, Mary served with my predecessor and mentor, the late Congressman Floyd D. Spence. In 2001, she graciously agreed to stay on as the District Director for the Second Congressional District of South Carolina.

A native of Hartsville in Darlington County, South Carolina, Mary attended the Hartsville schools, Limestone College and graduated from the University

of South Carolina with a BA in education. She began her employment with the late Congressman Floyd Spence in 1981, after successfully serving as Spence for Congress campaign office manager, and she became District Director in 1992. Her responsibilities included representing the Congressman at all events throughout the Second Congressional District, handling of all constituent concerns, meeting with the local and State government officials and attending all local and State civic group meetings.

Mary has been active in the Lexington Women's Club since 1973 and served in many of the officer positions, including president. She also served as district and State legislative chairman for the State Federation of Women's Clubs.

Mary has also served as president of the Riverbanks Zoo Society, as an active member of the Lexington Medical Center Board, as Corresponding Secretary of Friends of the Lexington County Museum, and as a board member of the Lexington Arts Association.

She has been a delegate to the State and county Republican convention since 1980.

Mary is a member of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, where she served on the Worship and Music Committee and is a former Sunday schoolteacher.

Mary is married to Jerry Howard, and they have three children: G.G. Howard Culpepper, Melissa Howard Henshaw and Amy Talbert Howard. She also has two grandchildren, Cate and Jerrod.

In all the years that I have worked with Mary, she has always served with grace and dignity, and I have been extremely honored to have her represent me these last 3 years. She will always be a close, personal friend of the Wilson family, and Roxanne and I wish her and her husband Jerry all the best in their future.

I ask all of my colleagues to join me in thanking Mary Howard for her commitment to serving her community with excellence.

In conclusion, God bless our troops; and we will never forget September 11.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

HONORING CONGRESSMAN AMO HOUGHTON AND CONGRESSMAN JACK QUINN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, in the rush of events at the end of this session, the New York delegation has attempted to set aside some time to recognize the distinguished careers of two of our colleagues who are retiring at the end of this session. What I intend to do is make a brief statement and then reach out to my colleagues, both sides of the aisle, to give them the opportunity to provide remarks to acknowledge the great service of these two men.

First, our colleague from Corning, New York, AMO HOUGHTON. AMORY HOUGHTON came to the Congress in 1986, was appointed to the Committee on Ways and Means, has served as a subcommittee chairman and has done great work not only on tax policy and health care policy but, also, he has been a dedicated global citizen. He has been involved in Africa and in other troubled places around the world where his gentle, thoughtful approach to problem solving has been respected and has brought great credit to not only to him but to our country.

He has been a great adviser, counselor to me; and his service to our State has been no less than remarkable. We will miss him very, very much. He will leave a tremendous void in our delegation, and we wish him all good health, and a long and enjoyable retirement with his beloved wife Priscilla.

Our other colleague who is completing his career at the end of this session is my good friend JACK QUINN, who represented Buffalo, New York. His home is in Hamburg, New York, where he served as supervisor. He came to the Congress in, I believe, 1992, was appointed to the Committee on Transportation, served as the subcommittee chairman on railroads for an extended period of time and set very important policy regarding our rail lines around the country.

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JACK, as all of us know, has a very personable, delightful personality. He is a hard-working, dedicated family man who always brought joy and laughter wherever he traveled. He is a close personal friend, someone that we all respect, and someone we will all dearly miss as he proceeds into his next iteration, whatever that may be. We all know he will be successful at whatever he does, and we wish him all the best.

To both my colleagues, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. QUINN), we bid them adieu. We know you are not going far away. We hope to see you on a regular basis.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives is losing an extraordinary man in Congressman AMO HOUGHTON. He has been my colleague in the House, in the New York Delegation and the Committee on Ways & Means. I have been privileged in every way to be his colleague, as there is no one who more exemplifies public service.

AMO HOUGHTON is of a distinguished and affluent family, yet he is interested in neither

wealth nor leisure, forging a career dedicated to serving his fellow man. Throughout his significant career, Mr. HOUGHTON represented one of the more economically depressed districts in New York State, a fact that never deterred him from trying to improve the economy of the New York Southern Tier. He was a successful businessman before becoming a politician, and it has been said that he would surely have become a missionary, had he not been elected.

AMO HOUGHTON quickly became one of the most beloved Members from either side of the aisle, most likely because of his unifying nature; Mr. HOUGHTON was not one to participate in partisan sniping, always calling for understanding and compromise. Never neglecting any of New York's citizens, he pledged his complete attention and support to those in New York City, the suburbs and many smaller cities and rural communities, like those in his district.

The House will find itself at a loss without the talents and graces of this remarkable man. It will miss his civility and his wisdom, his spirit and determination, but it will be his optimism for our Republic and his respect for the beauty of human life that will be missed most of all.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the career of Representative JACK QUINN, one of the most optimistic Members I have met. I have had the pleasure of serving with JACK since 1993; he is a man who signified the old values of the Republican Party in New York. Mr. QUINN's respect for the working class, fiscal responsibility and civil rights are lasting testaments to his impressive legacy.

It could not have been an easy task in representing the City of Buffalo, which has suffered so many devastating economic downturns over the past few decades, yet Mr. QUINN was constantly re-elected in a district overwhelmingly comprised of registered Democrats. This fact is a tribute to his keen understanding of the needs of his constituents even where they may contradict with the leadership in the House of Representatives.

JACK QUINN is one of those Members for whom no one has a bad word and with whom no one has had a bad experience. He has the range to be comfortable with factory workers to business leaders to Democrats and Republicans alike. His independent nature and policies are deserving of the highest mark of honor; a man of JACK QUINN's poise and positive energy will be sorely missed in the halls of Congress.

HONORING DEPARTING TEXANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PENCE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, it is with a sad heart that I rise to say goodbye to six of my colleagues from Texas who will not be returning to this body next year. All of these men have been dedicated patriots who have served the State of Texas and this country with honor and distinction.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST) has faced the challenges of serving as the dean of the Texas Democrats for years and has fought to ensure that the rules of this House are fairly enforced.

This Nation's farmers and ranchers have had no better friend or advocate than the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM). He has been our conscience on fiscal responsibility, and I hope that we will take his remarks last night to heart as we begin the budget debate next year.

After the tragic events of 9/11, we created the Select Committee on Homeland Security. As the committee's first ranking member, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TURNER), has fought to increase funding for critical infrastructure protection and has brought national attention to the serious manpower and infrastructure shortages along our southern border.

The Texas border region is losing my colleague and good friend, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ), who has worked tirelessly to address the health care crisis that is facing the southern border communities. As the chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus this past year, CIRO RODRIGUEZ has continued to focus national attention on issues important to the Hispanic community.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. LAMPSON) has protected our children through his national leadership on the issue of missing and exploited children.

The gentleman from Texas (Mr. SANDLIN) has been a strong member of the Blue Dog Caucus and was instrumental in securing our airways through his work on the Aviation Security Act.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I was proud to serve on the Committee on Financial Services with one of my newer members of the Texas delegation, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BELL). He and I worked on legislation which focused on the financial literacy of all people. I appreciate his strong support of my efforts to improve math and science education in this country.

Mr. Speaker, all of these Members from Texas have given invaluable service to this Nation, and the 109th Congress will be poorer for their absence. I wish them all the best.

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE INSURANCE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, we just finished our elections, and we hear a lot of browbeating and weeping and gnashing of teeth from the other side of the aisle concerning what went wrong. Goodness gracious, what in the world went wrong? We thought we ran a good campaign. We were ready to elect a President, we were ready to take over the House, we were ready to get the majority in the House and the Senate, and none of those things happened.

Of course the pundits are on television every day, 24 hours a day it

seems, talking about exactly what went wrong. And there is a lot of talk, of course, about the issue of moral values, traditional family values, and Christianity. I am sure that that had something to do with it. But I will stand here today, Mr. Speaker, and say to my colleagues that I ran a race in which I won with 57.4 percent against an opponent on the other side of the aisle who I think was a very strong Christian man, a good man, and one who had great values. But he was running on a party platform that did not embrace those traditional values that mean so much to I think middle America and those of us where I come from in Georgia.

But I think it goes beyond that. I think it goes far beyond that. And I would suggest to my friends on the other side of the aisle, as they try to play Monday morning quarterback and figure out what went wrong, to think about issues like medical liability reform and the fact that the Nation, 75 percent or more, the American people in every poll that has ever been done, are very much in favor of medical liability reform. And yet an issue like that, which really should not be a partisan issue, because there is absolutely no reason why access to health care and fixing a broken system should come down along party lines, certainly did become partisan. It did in this body, and it did in the other body.

In March of 2003, the HEALTH Act was passed in this House Chamber, as my colleagues know, and there were Members of the Democratic minority who voted for the bill, but only a few, only a handful, and practically none in the other body. So today, as we stand here going into the 109th Congress and President Bush's second term, we once again have a chance, an even better chance, I think, to get medical liability reform passed because we have increased our margins in the other body.

So there are a lot of reasons you can look back and try to figure out why you lost, but that is one, I think, that my Democrat colleagues need to take a close look at. When this issue comes before us in the 109th, if you want to do something positive, if you want to respond to the will of the American people, this is certainly a great first step. I would encourage my friends on the other side of the aisle and my fellow Republicans in the House and the Members in the other body that it is time. The American people want this. They need it.

Access to health care is hugely important. We are seeing more and more physicians, and I will get to some specific numbers a little later regarding doctors in high-risk specialties, like neurosurgery, emergency room physicians, and OB-GYN, which is my specialty. I think all my colleagues know that in my prior life I practiced medicine for almost 30 years, and as a pro-life OB-GYN physician, delivering those 5,200 babies. Many of my colleagues in that specialty are dropping