

on behalf of the residents of the Fourth Congressional District of Florida, I extend our sincere appreciation and gratitude.

FREEDOM FOR EDEL JOSÉ GARCÍA
DÍAZ

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 19, 2004

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Edel José García Díaz, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. García Díaz is the founder and editor of Centro Norte del País, an independent news agency amidst the dictatorship's mandated propaganda. He has devoted his efforts to printing the truth about the horrors in Cuba under the totalitarian dictatorship. By founding an independent news agency, Mr. García Díaz knowingly risked the wrath of the tyranny; however, he believed that illuminating the nightmare that is Castro regime was more important than his personal safety.

From 1997 to present, Mr. García Díaz has been harassed by the dictator's thugs. According to Reporters Without Borders, his life was threatened by a functionary of the municipality of Caibarien. He was also subjected to detentions, interrogations, and other official warnings. Yet, despite these threats, Mr. García Díaz always returned to his news agency to publish the truth about the regime's monstrous abuse of the basic human rights of the Cuban people.

On March 18, 2003, as part of the tyrant's deplorable crackdown on peaceful pro democracy advocates, Mr. García Díaz was arrested. According to Amnesty International, Mr. García Díaz was accused of writing about the poor physical condition of a school building in Havana and accompanying the article with a photo of the installation. After the conclusion of a sham trial, he was sentenced to 15 years in the totalitarian gulag.

Mr. García Díaz is languishing in Castro's infamous, inhuman gulag because he believes in freedom and democracy. His bravery in the face of oppression is another example of the courage of the pro-democracy activists in totalitarian Cuba. Recently, over one hundred Cuban opposition activists took part in a symbolic vote on November 2nd in Havana. They participated in a mock election for U.S. President at the residence of James Cason, head of the U.S. Interests Section in Cuba. Once again, the courage of the Cuban activists demonstrated to the world that, despite the consequences of dissent, the Cuban people are unafraid to demonstrate their desire for democracy.

Mr. Speaker, it is unconscionable the Mr. García Díaz is confined in an infernal gulag because he believes in writing the truth, freedom of the press, and basic human rights for the Cuban people. As we celebrate the successes of the American democratic process, we must never forget those who continue to fight the evil tyranny 90 miles from our shore. My Colleagues, we must demand the immediate release of Edel José García Díaz and every prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

HONORING TEDDY "PILLAR OF
TRUTH" BENNETT

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 19, 2004

Ms. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, in East Prairie, Missouri, there is no more well-known or better-loved gentleman than Teddy "Pillar of Truth" Bennett. Across our Nation, many fine Americans have met Mr. Bennett and he has had a great effect on their lives. I am certainly one of them.

Mr. Bennett was born in the spring of 1930. He grew up on the banks of the wild and mighty Mississippi River. The usual entree in his Depression-era lunch was a gravy sandwich. Mr. Bennett served our Nation in the Korean war in the U.S. Army. When he returned, he came back to East Prairie. Eventually, Mr. Bennett formed his own business and began to gain fame for his fabulous fish fries. His cooking skills are renowned throughout the Nation—as are his character and his pure heart. The "Pillar of Truth" is a man who knows the age-old axiom that you nourish people with fish as well as with ideas.

Teddy Bennett is more than an entrepreneur or a "people person" or a great storyteller. His whole life teaches us what it is about to grow up in Southern Missouri and make something of yourself. Teddy began his life's journey during the Great Depression. He learned the lessons of hard work and overcoming challenges as he grew up. He didn't set out to inspire us. It just happened that way.

You hear a lot of stories about the Pillar of Truth—but I know lots of things that are true about him: Though he has made many friends, he has never lost one. He makes his living, and his life, out of bringing people together. And he knows that you feed people with more than food. Teddy is a sage—an intelligent, dedicated man who is just as proud of his community as we are of him.

In recent years, Teddy Bennett has fought a war of his own with cancer, but he has not been alone. Every one of his many friends has stood shoulder to shoulder with him. They deserve the thanks of our Nation. Most of all, however, I would like to thank Mr. Bennett for being a trusted friend to the Emerson family and an inspiration in our world. You are our Pillar of Truth.

HONORING JOHN RITTER FOR HIS
CONTRIBUTIONS TO ENDING VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 19, 2004

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank and honor John Ritter for his contribution to Clark County Legal Services through the Ritter Charitable Trust. This important contribution of \$175,000 will ensure that victims of violence against women will continue to have access to the legal support they need to protect themselves and their families.

John Ritter has long been a leader in the economic development of Clark County, Nevada. This gift, and other charitable donations

he has made, shows that he is also a leader in meeting the humanitarian needs of our community. John Ritter has shown that, as Southern Nevada continues to experience the fastest growth in the Nation, our community will meet its challenges with the same spirit that has made Las Vegas a world capital of culture, entertainment and quality of life. I look forward to continuing to work with John Ritter and Barbara Buckley, Director of Clark County Legal Services, to fight violence against women. I urge the House to join me in honoring John Ritter for his philanthropy and leadership.

CELEBRATING 35-YEAR CONGRES-
SIONAL CAREER OF THE HONOR-
ABLE PHILIP M. CRANE OF ILLI-
NOIS

SPEECH OF

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 17, 2004

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a distinguished member of this chamber, Congressman PHIL CRANE. Since 1969, Rep. CRANE has served his constituents in the 8th District of Illinois with distinction and dedication. I join my colleagues in celebrating his career in the House.

Born in the midst of the Great Depression, Phil served his Nation in the Army, and went on to earn his doctorate degree from Indiana University. He then began a career in academia, before being elected to Congress. He continued his intellectual interests, going on to write three books, and contributing to various publications.

Congressman CRANE's interest and extensive knowledge of economic issues is well known. He is a champion of free trade, and played a pivotal role in the House passage of NAFTA and the 1994 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. As vice chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Rep. CRANE has taken a leadership role on issues of great importance to all Americans, such as Social Security, taxes, and Medicare.

As a leader in the conservative movement and as the senior Republican member in the House, PHIL CRANE has created a record of accomplishment for his constituents and his Nation during his tenure in the House. His legislative accomplishments have made a lasting and positive impact on our Nation, and his leadership in the House has inspired his colleagues.

Although Congressman CRANE will soon leave this chamber, his accomplishments and his legacy will continue to live on. All of us who have had the opportunity to serve with PHIL CRANE are better for the experience, and I congratulate him on his distinguished career.

CONGRATULATING TEMPLE SAMU-
EL OR OLOM IN MIAMI, FLORIDA

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 19, 2004

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate