

Commissioner Weldon P. Cude is no stranger to the needs of his community. In 1996, he was elected Pleasanton's "Business Person of the Year," and has served as Director of "The County Bank," the "Atascosa County Economic Development Corporation," and the "Atascosa County Appraisal Board."

Since 1983 Mr. Cude has served as a pillar of the business community. As an independent business person, he has contributed as President of both Premium Well Drilling Incorporated and the Fat Cowboys Steakhouse. He has also served his community as Vice President for Goldwell Investments Incorporated. Employing over 150 employees, he understands the values of hard work and dedication.

Commissioner Weldon P. Cude lives in Atascosa with his wife Gayla Cude, and his five daughters: Aubry, Stephanie, Jennie, Lindsey, and Jessica.

It is a pleasure to recognize the accomplishments of Commissioner Cude, his dedication to the community has helped to make Atascosa a better place to live and work.

Mr. Speaker, County Commissioner Weldon P. Cude is an exemplary public servant. I am proud to have the chance to thank him here today for all he has done for his fellow Texans.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SACRIFICE OF SERGEANT MICHAEL ESPISITO

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and sacrifice of Sergeant Michael Espisito, U.S. Army. On March 18, 2004, SGT Espisito made the ultimate sacrifice for his Nation—he gave his life while fighting on the frontiers of freedom in the small town of Miam Do, Afghanistan.

Referring to heroes of World War II, Sir Winston Churchill once stated, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." I believe that Churchill's sentiments reign truer than ever when applied to today's historically small contingent of service men and women. The challenge facing us is similarly great: the defeat of terrorism. But the number bearing that burden has never been so small.

Michael Espisito not only recognized that challenge, he embraced it. He volunteered to serve, to bear that burden, and he loved it. In a letter to Michael's parents, Captain Jorge Cordeiro, Michael's Company Commander, reflected back on the first battle he fought in with Michael. Captain Cordeiro wrote, "I can recall him telling me it was the best day of his life and how proud he felt to have fought for his country."

Assigned as a Team Leader in A Company, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment of the 10th Mountain Division, Sergeant Espisito took each word in his title to heart.

Team: Sergeant Espisito never cared as much about himself as he did about the men surrounding him, his brothers in arms. He put their interests first; he put their safety first; he put their success ahead of his own. But Michael Espisito's team extended beyond those

he fought with. His team was the Army, his family, his Nation and, in many ways, the people of Afghanistan. Just before Sergeant Espisito was mortally wounded in Afghanistan he successfully evacuated two women from the same building in which he was fighting. Those women were on SGT Espisito's team and they were saved because of it.

Leader: In the U.S. Army infantry there is a short slogan that is often repeated: "Follow me!" Michael Espisito didn't just say "follow me," he lived it. He led his men from the front in every combat maneuver they took part in. In so doing, he earned the trust, the respect and the confidence of all around him. As his Battalion Commander wrote of him, "He was a shining example of a soldier and non-commissioned officer to the end." SGT Espisito was leading from the front when he breached a door in an enemy compound and was mortally wounded in an exchange of fire.

Michael Espisito was a special human being. He was different. He was a hero. You get the feeling he was put on this earth to serve. He knew his mission, he understood his roll and he embraced it. And he lived his life, did his work and executed his missions with dignity, vigor and excellence. Our world is better because of his sacrifice but it is poorer because of his loss.

Churchill reminds us how much we owe to those few men and women like Michael Espisito. We owe Michael our commitment to a better world. We owe Michael our commitment to living better, more principled, more service oriented lives. And we owe Michael the memorializing of his life and his sacrifice, best completed by living the lives he would have wished for each us. Michael is gone but he will never be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO JAY B. CUTLER

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Jay B. Cutler—a dedicated public servant, a champion for mental health parity, a gifted attorney, and a dear friend. Mr. Cutler passed away on March 4 at the age of 74.

A native New Yorker, Mr. Cutler's accomplished career includes service as administrative assistant to former U.S. Senator Jacob Javits and minority counsel and staff director to the Senate Health and Human Resources Committee. From 1977 to 2003, he directed government relations efforts for the 35,000-member American Psychiatric Association. He will be remembered as a passionate and trusted advocate who fought to improve the quality of, and access to, America's mental health system.

All who were fortunate enough to be lobbied by Jay Cutler recognized that he was so much more than a lobbyist. Over the years, his name became synonymous with the cause of mental health parity. Because of his untiring efforts, millions of Americans received better, more compassionate care. His unwavering commitment to protecting patient confidentiality, broadening coverage for psychiatric and substance abuse treatment, and improving patients' rights will continue to serve as an inspi-

ration to those of us who fight for these causes today.

I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing condolences to Mr. Cutler's wife, Randy, his two daughters, Hollie S. Cutler and Perri E. Cutler, and his granddaughter, Makayla Lipsetts. We are deeply saddened by his death, and we are warmed by the memory of his remarkable life.

A TRIBUTE TO DONNA ANDERSON
29TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
WOMAN OF THE YEAR—2005

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our nation's women during the month of March. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District.

I would like to recognize an outstanding woman in my Congressional District, Ms. Donna Anderson. For many years, Donna has brought an abounding spirit and energy to her service in the community. Those fortunate enough to meet and work with Donna instantly recognize her joy, enthusiasm and passion for helping others.

Donna was born in Glendale and grew up in the Glendale/Burbank area along with her 11 sisters and brothers.

As a young mother of Angela and Mark, Donna volunteered as a teacher's aids at Mountain View Grade School, as an office worker at Our Lady of Lourdes Grade School, and visited patients twice weekly at Queen of Angeles Hospital in Los Angeles. She was a co-leader of her daughter's Girl Scout troop and a co-leader of her son's Cub and Boy Scout troops for many years.

Donna began working for the City of Burbank in 1986, and in 2001 was elected as Burbank's City Treasurer, a position she holds today. She returned to college during this time and received her Bachelor of Arts in Business Finance. A long-time board member of the Burbank National Management Association, she is active in the Burbank Sunrise Kiwanis Club, where she is currently Vice President-Elect, and in the Zonta Club of Burbank, where she will become President in May of 2005. In 2001 Donna received the Hixon Fellowship Award from the Burbank Sunrise Kiwanis Club for her service to the community.

Ms. Anderson actively participates in the annual Burbank Police Officers' Relay for Breast Cancer Walk and walks for the ALS Foundation of Los Angeles. Other organizations that Donna supports are the Guide Dogs of America, the Burbank Family Service Agency, Friends of the Griffith Park Observatory, and the John Burroughs High School Vocal Music Association.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an outstanding woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Donna Anderson. The entire community joins me in thanking Donna for her success and continued efforts toward making the 29th Congressional District a more enjoyable place in which to live and work.