

City Commission for the United Nations and Consular Corps. He often worked behind the scenes to help Israel and Jewish individuals who are suffering.

Rabbi Guttman is active in a vast array of non-profit organizations. Among these activities, he serves on the Board of the American Friends of the Sanz Laniado Medical Center (Netanya, Israel), which awarded him and his wife its Community Service Award in May 2000, and also on the board of the Metropolitan Council of the American Jewish Congress. Since 1997, Rabbi Guttman has quietly taught a Torah class at the United Nations for its Judaica Club. He has published articles in *Midstream*, *New York Affairs*, *Congress Monthly* and *The Jewish Press* on issues as varied as the Holocaust, Islam and Jewish and Communal affairs and has also lectured extensively. Carolynne, originally from Toronto, Canada, comes from a distinguished family active in Jewish and Communal affairs both in Toronto and Houston, Texas where she spent her formative years. A known expert on medical reimbursements, she serves as billing manager at New Rochelle Radiology.

Mr. Speaker, I have been fortunate to witness the revitalization of the National Council of Young Israel (NCYI). Nationally, the Departments of Synagogue and Rabbinic Services and the Women's Division and the Youth Department provide Young Israel congregations with much appreciated support. When an Orthodox synagogue needs assistance, NCYI is known as the organization to contact. On the international scene, NCYI is at the forefront of speaking out in support of the State of Israel, and to ensure the return of Israel's soldiers who are missing in action. NCYI has spearheaded a campaign to provide the Israel Defense Forces with Torah Scrolls for its troops who are in mobile and isolated posts. NCYI has delivered over 100 Torah scrolls and has not only facilitated but also encouraged many other individuals and organizations to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is incumbent upon this body to recognize the accomplishments of Rabbi & Mrs. Guttman for their outstanding efforts in the betterment of the Jewish community and the City of New York.

**BUSINESS CHECKING FREEDOM
ACT OF 2005**

SPEECH OF

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 23, 2005

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Business Checking Freedom Act of 2005, H.R. 1224. Among other things, H.R. 1224 would repeal the prohibition against banks paying interest on checking accounts and authorize the Federal Reserve to pay interest on reserve balances maintained by depository institutions at Federal Reserve Banks. The bill is almost identical to previous legislation on the subject passed by the House, including H.R. 758, which passed in 2003.

H.R. 1224 contains some long overdue changes. I am particularly pleased that this legislation will permit small businesses to earn interest on their checking account balances. Individuals have been able to receive interest

on checking accounts for some time, and small businesses, many of which are individually owned and operated, should have the same ability to receive an equitable return on their checking deposits.

Small businesses face an array of barriers to accessing the capital they need for start-up, operation and expansion. One of these barriers is the Depression-era law that prohibits interest-bearing checking accounts. The law, enacted as part of the Banking Act of 1933, was meant to keep banks solvent during the Great Depression. Almost 70 years later, the law is still in effect, despite evidence that it is no longer valid—or necessary.

In fact, a 1996 joint report issued by the Federal Reserve Board, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, and the Office of Thrift Supervision stated that the law barring payment on business checking accounts “no longer serves a public purpose.” H.R. 1224 effectively repeals this ban and permits small businesses to earn interest on their checking accounts.

Similar to past House bills, H.R. 1224 also includes a section entitled Rules of Construction, which ensure that the existing regulatory treatment of certain services and benefits provided by banks in lieu of interest on escrow accounts maintained to complete the settlement of real estate closing transactions remains as it is today.

Currently, the Federal Reserve's Regulation Q permits banks to offer services and benefits in lieu of interest to depositors. It also specifically provides that the provision or the receipt of such services and benefits does not constitute interest. Using this option, title companies and agents receive bank services, such as free safe deposit and night depository facilities and low-interest loans, in lieu of interest.

This arrangement lowers the cost of maintaining real estate escrows, which in turn lowers the cost of these services to customers of title companies and title agents. H.R. 1224 does not change Regulation Q or any regulatory standard regarding the definition of interest. Rather, it ensures the continued delivery of cost-effective real estate closing services.

H.R. 1224 provides for a long overdue change to federal banking laws that will enable small businesses to gain parity with larger firms that are already able to essentially receive interest on their checking accounts. By doing so, small businesses will be better able to grow and create the new jobs that our country so desperately needs.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

**HONORING JACK HORKHEIMER
FOR HIS OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION
TO THE SOUTH FLORIDA COMMUNITY**

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to pay tribute to Jack Horkheimer, the Executive Director of the Miami Space Transit Planetarium. For over 25 years, Jack has been a pioneer in the advancement of science exploration and discovery.

Jack Horkheimer has worked diligently throughout his tenure at the Miami of Science to enhance and transform planetarium presentations. He is best known as the creator, producer and host of the television show, “Star Hustler/Star Gazer,” that has been shown weekly for over 25 years. His sign-off motto, “Keep Looking Up,” has become familiar to many. Mr. Horkheimer has appeared on major television and radio networks, and has led several solar eclipse expeditions, as well as the first Halley's Comet Chase. Presently, Mr. Horkheimer is assisting associates position a telescope on the International Space Station.

In January 2001, the International Astronomical Union renamed “Asteroid 1999 FD,” the asteroid that orbits between Mars and Jupiter, to “Asteroid Horkheimer” in honor of his contributions to astronomy. Mr. Horkheimer has also received the Outstanding Achievement Award from the Astronomical League, as well as the 12 Good Men Award presented to him by the Ronald McDonald House. In May 2000, he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree by the International Fine Arts College, and was also the recipient of the Klumpke-Roberts Award from the Astronomical Society of the Pacific. He is the Founding Member of the International Planetarium Society, co-editor of “The Planetarium,” and past editor of “Southern Skies.”

In addition, Mr. Horkheimer has established several annual scholarship funds for young students, providing them the opportunity to study astronomy.

Mr. Speaker, many in my home state of Florida have benefited immeasurably from Mr. Horkheimer's leadership and involvement in our community. My daughters are among many South Floridians that have had the unique opportunity to visit this exceptional facility. It is truly an asset to our community, and I encourage my colleagues in the House to pay tribute to Mr. Jack Horkheimer.

**HONORING SAUL STERN, RECIPIENT
OF THE PROJECT INTERCHANGE AM
YISRAEL CHAI AWARD**

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Saul Stern who will receive the Project Interchange Am Yisrael Chai Award on May 25, 2005 at the Park Hyatt Hotel in Washington, DC.

This award is presented by Project Interchange to Mr. Stern to honor his contribution to the organization. Project Interchange is the only national organization solely dedicated to providing educational seminars in Israel for America's policy and opinion makers. With exceptional leadership, Mr. Stern has guided more than 3,500 prominent Americans, including Members of Congress, congressional aides, state officials and other community leaders to experience Israel through intensive seminars. These seminars allow political and civil leaders to witness democracy at work in Israel and to provide an understanding to the complex challenges that face that country.

The Project Interchange Am Yisrael Chai Award recognizes Mr. Stern's contribution to

the Jewish community including his work in advocating Jewish interests, strengthening public support for Israel, building ties with other faith, minority, and ethnic groups and establishing a framework for social action for over six decades.

Mr. Stern has served as a life-long civic leader and truly believes in the mission of Project Interchange. In his own words, he believes the eyewitness experience in Israel is one of the most effective ways to understand the value of the U.S.-Israel relationship. While Mr. Stern has impacted the Jewish Community at the international and national level, he is also extremely influential in local Jewish and secular community associations. He has served as an advisor and a dependable colleague to local elected officials, business leaders, academicians and community activists.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to congratulate Mr. Stern on receiving this award. His significant contributions are much appreciated and greatly admired. I call upon my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Stern and wishing him the best of luck in all future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF COLORADO
HISTORY DAY WINNERS

HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR
OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Caitlyn Darnell and all the other students who will represent Colorado in the National History Day competition from June 12–16, 2005.

Caitlyn placed second in the Colorado History Day competition with her dramatic performance “Anne Sullivan: Reaching Behind Closed Doors,” which chronicles the life of the great teacher who taught Helen Keller to communicate.

National History Day is a year-long education program for middle and high school students across the nation. Students produce documentaries, dramatic performances, exhibits, or research papers related to the annual theme. They then compete in a series of local and state competitions, with the very best traveling to the national competition.

I would like to recognize Caitlyn and all the students representing the state of Colorado for their excellence and hard work. These extraordinary students represent educational excellence in America. I would also like to recognize the students’ teachers, whose support and dedication have encouraged students like Caitlyn to strive for excellence.

INTRODUCTION STATEMENT OF
THE HONORABLE ALCEE L.
HASTINGS FOR THE HAITI COM-
PASSION ACT

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS
OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Haiti Compassion

Act. Do our colleagues know that before Haiti had even achieved its own independence in 1804, 500 Haitian troops joined American colonists in an attempt to drive the British from Savannah, Georgia? In that one battle, Haitians made up the largest military unit to fight in the 1779 siege. Haiti demonstrated through noble action and sacrifice its loyal friendship to the United States more than 225 years ago. It is now time for Congress to do the responsible thing and protect the lives and well-being of those who have stood by us for centuries.

2004 was a debilitating and tragic year for Haiti and her people. Haiti remains severely devastated by the combined effects of ongoing political turmoil and the aftermath of the natural disasters of 2004, such as Tropical Storm Jeanne and Hurricane Ivan. Political oppression and human rights violations are rife in Haiti while poverty and homelessness have become the norm for too many innocent people. To return a Haitian national back to Haiti is not only morally unjustifiable, but poses a severe threat to their personal safety.

If you don’t take my word, then ask, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. On March 11, 2005 the U.S. Department of State issued a travel warning to U.S. Citizens, warning them of the “absence of an effective police force in much of Haiti, the potential for looting, the presence of intermittent roadblocks set by armed gangs or by the police, and the possibility of random violent crime, including kidnapping, car-jacking, and assault.” The Department of State’s Consular Information Sheet states, “There are no “safe areas” in Haiti.” As a result, “U.S. Citizens should avoid travel to Haiti at this time.”

At a time when current U.S. policy is to compel its own citizens not to travel to Haiti, it is unjust to return Haitian nationals to this type of dangerous situation. To return a Haitian national back to Haiti where there is ongoing violence and a devastating environmental situation would pose a severe threat to one’s personal safety. Both Democrats and Republicans have mentioned the history of blatant discrimination and mistreatment of Haitians in the immigration process. Therefore, the time has arrived for us to offer some much-deserved compassion and effective action on the behalf of our loyal friends.

My legislation would designate Haiti under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act in order to render nationals of Haiti eligible for temporary protected status. In light of the political, civil, and governmental crisis and tragic conditions caused by the recent environmental disasters in Haiti, my legislation would make nationals of Haiti eligible for temporary protected status.

I ask for my colleagues’ support and urge the House Leadership to bring it swiftly to the House floor for consideration.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 19, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House in the State of the Union had under

consideration the bill (H.R. 2361) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes:

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment to the Interior Appropriations bill submitted by Representatives SLAUGHTER, SHAYS, DICKS, LEACH, and PRICE to increase funds for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

As a member of the Congressional Arts and Humanities Caucuses, and former chair of the California Legislature’s Joint Committee on the Arts, I have had the opportunity to see first hand the tremendous role that the arts play in the education and development of our children. Several academic studies have demonstrated the connection between music, dance, visual arts, and the development of the human brain. It is a fact that arts education cultivates critical thinking skills that are so important in this information-age economy. Children who learn to read music or to play an instrument show improved proficiency in mathematics and sciences.

Today, I am proud to support an increase of \$10 million for the National Endowment for the Arts and a \$5 million increase in funds for the National Endowment for the Humanities.

One of the initiatives under the NEA, Challenge America, expands the National Endowment for the Arts reach to connect families and communities to local arts programs and educational components. Meanwhile, funds to support the National Endowment for the Humanities will continue to assist “We the People” to strengthen the teaching, study, and understanding of American History and culture.

The arts are not only about appreciation and enjoyment, they are also a strong component of our economy. A recent study from Americans for the Arts found that the nonprofit art industry alone generated \$134 billion in economic activity, including full time jobs, household income and tax revenues. More than \$80 billion of this is spent by audiences who enthusiastically attend events in their local communities.

In my own district, there are more than 2,700 arts-related businesses and more than 37,000 jobs including those in visual arts, design, and the performing arts. In addition, the film, television, and radio industry generates more than 26,000 jobs in the district I represent.

I am proud to host an annual Congressional Arts Competition in my district that allows high school students to showcase their artistic talents in painting, drawing, and photography to the community. I have constantly been impressed with the artistic vision and creativity of our young people. This vision and creativity should be fostered, not discouraged.

By supporting the arts and humanities, the federal government can partner with state and local efforts to bolster the quality of life as well as economic and educational opportunities in our communities.