

district will benefit from this agreement. In fact, a significant portion of them either currently export or want to export to those countries. But currently, there are heavy tariffs placed on their products when they arrive in Central America, making those products more expensive to the purchasers there. This agreement will remove those tariffs and make American products more available to those who wish to purchase them in Central America.

Now, my question is, how can that be bad for American business? It is not. It is good for American business, and anybody who is thinking about growth in our economy should support the CAFTA agreement.

#### ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

(Mr. FARR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, there can be no worse public act than a government that refuses to acknowledge the humanity of its citizens.

Throughout history, the United States has struggled to rise above the divisions among its people and, instead, fuse its people into a single, unified citizenry.

Whether it was the struggle over civil rights for persons of color, the fight for women's rights or, most recently, the battle for access by persons with disabilities, the United States has risen above our differences and embraced them as worthy of a society that sees itself as open, free, and inclusive.

The fight by persons with disabilities for nondiscrimination in matters of employment, transportation and building access, and accommodation, was landmark.

Through the enactment of the ADA, our country removed the cloak of secrecy wrapped around our disabled citizens and announced to the world that persons with disabilities were valued members of our society.

So, today, as we celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act, I rise to honor every person, disabled or not, who worked so hard to see this law enacted. These persons and their effort are a testament to the spirit of fairness, the spirit of perseverance, and the spirit of hope that inspires us all.

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Through the enactment of the ADA our country proclaimed that 43 million Americans were real people, deserving of amenities everyone else took for granted.

Through the enactment of the ADA our country removed the cloak of secrecy wrapped around our disabled citizens and announced to the world that persons with disabilities were valued members of our society.

The successes of ADA continue to astonish us, even 15 years later: the disabled child who now can play Little League ball; disabled veterans who can now use special equipment to play golf at military golf courses; disabled patrons who can now go to movie theaters, restaurants, and museums who before found the trip daunting, or were blocked entirely. Now we have buses that kneel for our disabled riders, earphones for opera lovers who just don't hear well enough, and talking elevators that tell blind passengers their floor stop.

All of this may have been mandated by the ADA but just as consequential is that it was American ingenuity that developed it. We figured it out. We set a goal to integrate persons with disabilities into mainstream America, and by gosh, we did.

Unfortunately, even with the ADA in place, the road to full accommodation has been pitted with potholes and rough spots. As it was with civil rights, or women's rights, the full recognition of disability rights falls short in many regards. As a Nation we need to recommit ourselves to these lofty laws; it is the right thing to do. There are still too many instances of persons with disabilities being excluded from public venue because they are different. That is just wrong and it is un-American. In the land of freedom, established so every man and woman could pursue their dreams, these incidents are blots against our national value of equality.

So today while we celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, I rise to honor every person—disabled and not—who worked so hard to see this law enacted. These persons and their effort are testament to the spirit of fairness, the spirit of perseverance and the spirit of hope that inspires us all.

#### EXPRESSING SYMPATHY TO THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA FAMILY

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a day or two ago, I rose on the floor of the House to welcome the Boy Scouts of America to their jamboree that they hold every 4 years.

As a member of the Board of Directors of the Sam Houston Area Boy Scouts in my hometown of Houston, Texas, Houston-Galveston Council, I rise today to offer my deepest sympathy to the Boy Scouts of America family due to the loss of four scout leaders who died in an electrical accident in Virginia during the course of putting up some of the equipment for the young men who were about to par-

ticipate in the jamboree right after their noontime service.

I know that the Boy Scouts are, in fact, a family. This is an enormous tragedy. Just as their scout oath reminds them of their commitment to their country and their God and the honor that they have, I know that they will draw together as a family and be united in their empathy and sympathy with the family members of their lost scout leaders.

I wish for them the very best as they continue their jamboree, and my greatest sympathy to those who lost their lives. As well, I know that the Boy Scouts will continue to serve in their communities around the Nation and continue to serve America, for they are young outstanding leaders that have come here to the United States Capital to begin to learn and recommit themselves to their values and to service.

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#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

#### ON THE RETIREMENT OF GEORGE CRAWFORD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to pay tribute to really a great person, a great leader, a truly decent man, and a dear friend on his retirement after nearly a quarter century of service to the House of Representatives, Mr. George Crawford.

George is a master of policy, politics and procedures of this institution, and he must be one of the kindest people working on Capitol Hill. George has been invaluable to my office as the chief of staff of the leader's office and of this Congress.

George began his distinguished career on the staff of the then Senator Howell Heflin of Alabama. He soon moved to the staff of the great Claude Pepper of Florida, who was chair of the Rules Committee, but, Mr. Speaker, in those days we still called him Senator Pepper.

And George worked with him and quickly revealed his remarkable talents. Again he went with Senator Pepper to the Rules Committee while Senator Pepper was chairman and worked his way up to staff director under the magnificent chairman, Joe Moakley of Massachusetts, who was a colleague to many of us who serve here today.

Today, having traveled a long and impressive arc, he retires as the chief of staff of the Democratic leader's office. I was privileged that George came to work for me nearly 4 years ago,