

The United States is better and stronger as a result of Jewish people from around the world choosing to become American citizens. Jewish Americans made invaluable contributions to our Nation's labor movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Thousands of Jewish immigrants and their children who arrived in the United States during this time period earned their livings in sweatshops and factories in New York City, often working under horrific conditions. Many Jewish Americans played a key role in improving the working conditions for laborers, which led to collective bargaining and other advancements in the labor movement. Samuel Gompers, one of the founders and first president of the American Federation of Labor, earned his living in the crowded slums of New York as a cigar maker upon his arrival in the United States in 1863. Becoming highly skilled at his trade and earning the respect of his peers, he eventually moved up the ranks of the existing labor organization, transforming the structurally weak and ineffective Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Councils to the American Federation of Labor in 1886, which grew to represent over one million workers 6 years later.

Many individuals within the American Jewish community also made important contributions to the Civil Rights movement. Jewish philanthropist Julius Rosenwald, who funded dozens of primary schools, secondary schools, and colleges for black youth, led the Jewish community in contributing to some 2,000 schools for black Americans, including Howard, Dillard and Fisk universities. At one time, 40 percent of southern blacks were attending these schools. In addition, Jewish Americans like Abraham Joshua Heschel, a writer, rabbi and professor of theology at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America was outspoken on the subject of civil rights and marched arm-in-arm with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Selma. Professor Ernst Borinski, a refugee from the Holocaust who came to America to teach at Taugaloo University, organized dinners at which blacks and whites sat next to each other, a simple act challenging segregation. Joel Elias Spingarn, a Jewish-American educator and literary critic, was a founder and one of the first Jewish leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). In 1913, as the organization's chairman of the board, he established the Spingarn medal, awarded annually for outstanding achievement by an African American. In addition, organizations such as the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, and Anti-Defamation League have actively promoted civil rights over the years.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that all Americans observe Jewish-American Heritage Month by initiating programs and activities that commemorate these and the many other significant contributions Jewish Americans have made throughout our Nation's history. Over the centuries, Jewish Americans have achieved great success in business, medicine, the arts, science and technology, and many other professions. These achievements have strengthened our country and helped shape our way of life. In their commitment to family, faith, and community, the Jewish people have made America a stronger and more democratic society.

AC TRANSIT VOTED THE "BEST OF THE BEST"

### HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 23, 2006*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Alameda County Transit Agency, AC Transit, headquartered in Oakland, California. For the sixth time in 9 years, AC Transit has been recognized as the Nation's most outstanding public bus agency at the American Public Transportation Association, APTA, meeting in Anaheim, California. At its annual "Bus Roadeo" in which bus operators and maintenance teams demonstrate their driving skills and knowledge, APTA has crowned AC Transit's drivers and mechanics as the "Best of the Best."

In addition AC Transit also won first place for its Customer Service in a special competition to evaluate bus operators' courtesy, patience and know-how.

The "Best of the Best" award came after grueling tests of competition involving more than 40 transit agencies with teams of drivers and mechanics from virtually every State in the country. Drivers were tested on their abilities to smoothly stop and maneuver their coaches in and out of tightly constricted spaces, avoiding mishaps and pedestrians. Mechanics were tested on their ability to quickly troubleshoot vehicle malfunctions by quickly diagnosing problems and instituting immediate repairs.

The competition is the "Super Bowl" for transit agencies, offering some of the world's top professionals an opportunity to display their driving skills, reflexes, judgment and superior workshop intelligence.

The "Best of the Best" designation represents the highest combined scores of the operator and maintenance team. AC Transit's team—operator Jesse Delacruz and mechanics, Carlos Leyva, Grant Pinkston and Donald Righter—was deemed number one in the Nation. AC Transit operator Patricia Lock won first place for Customer Service.

Congratulations to AC Transit on winning this prestigious "Best of the Best" award.

### RECOGNIZING THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS STUDENTS OF AMERICA

### HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 23, 2006*

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 30th anniversary of the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA).

HOSA is a national career and technical student organization endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education and the Health Occupations Education Division of the Association for Career and Technical Education. HOSA provides a unique program of leadership development, motivation, and recognition exclusively for middle school, secondary, postsecondary, adult and collegiate students.

HOSA is not a club to which a few students in school join. Rather, HOSA is a powerful instructional tool that works best when it is integrated into the health science curriculum and

classroom. Health Occupations instructors are committed to the development of the total person. Those who join the Health Science-HOSA Partnership recognize the importance of providing students with training far beyond the basic technical skills needed for entry into the health care field. The rapidly changing health care system needs dedicated workers who, in addition to their technical skills, are people-oriented and capable of playing a leadership role as a member of a health care team.

Nationally, HOSA has grown to over 78,000 members in almost every state, and soon, over 5,000 HOSA members will gather in Anaheim, California, for their annual leadership conference. This opportunity provides tours of health care facilities, exhibits presented by professional health care associates, as well as an Educational Symposium—workshops presented by professional partners that provide information about current health care issues.

The members of HOSA, through a student-led pipeline, are making a significant contribution to overcoming the shortage of health care workers in our country, guiding more than 1 million students into health professions. I am proud to say that the Florida HOSA has the fourth largest membership at more than 6,700 members.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Health Occupations Students of America on celebrating their 30th anniversary, and I wish them luck on their continued success.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE PLUMBERS LOCAL UNION 210 GRADUATING CLASS OF 2006

### HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 23, 2006*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sincerity and respect that I offer congratulations of several of Northwest Indiana's most talented, dedicated, and hardworking individuals. On Friday, June 9, 2006, the Plumbers Local Union 210 will honor the graduating class of 2006 at the Annual Apprentice Graduation Banquet, which will be held at the Patio Banquet Hall in Merrillville, Indiana.

At this year's banquet, the Plumbers Local Union 210 will recognize and honor the 2006 Apprentice Graduates. The individuals who have completed the apprentice training in 2006 are: Nino Arredondo, Joseph Butcher, Robert DePyssler, Lloyd James, Jr., Michael Klaich, Todd Knight, Paul Lacy, William Lawrence, Eric Longoria, Milutin Miljus, Greg Monnier, Eugene Pazdur, Derrick Poper, Jason Powers, Luis Quintana, Sean Severson, Daniel Smith, Bertram Wagner, Adam Westlund, Robert White, and Raymond Zack.

Northwest Indiana has a rich history of excellence in its craftsmanship and loyalty by its tradesmen. These graduates are all outstanding examples of each. They have mastered their trade and have demonstrated their loyalty to both the union and the community through their hard work and selfless dedication.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating these dedicated and hardworking individuals. Along with the other men and women