Airport Authority Board and the Flint Urban Insurance List Steering Committee with the Governor's Office of Community and Faith-Based Initiatives. In addition to their service to Our Lord, Bishop Floyd and his wife Brenda are the devoted parents of Anthony and Nikki.

Mr. Speaker I ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Bishop Odis and Brenda Floyd as they celebrate their 37th Pastoral Anniversary. May Our Lord bless them and bless New Jerusalem Full Gospel Baptist Church.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT LATORRACA ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 9, 2006

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to join the many family, friends, and colleagues who have gathered in extending my sincere congratulations to Robert LaTorraca as he celebrates his retirement after more than thirty years of dedicated service to American Medical Response.

In each of our communities, we have emergency response services which we depend on. However, ambulatory services, like those provided by American Medical Response, are often overlooked with police, fire, and other services at the forefront of discussion and debate. American Medical Response serves more communities and customers than any other private ambulance service provider in the nation. But more importantly, the organization's employees, those like Bob LaTorraca, serve their local communities on a personal basis, as part of the community where they live and work.

A graduate of Hamden High School and alumni of Quinnipiac College and Southern Connecticut State University, Bob has spent a lifetime in the community and his dedication to its protection and safety is unquestionable. Bob began his career as a field emergency medical technician with the New Haven Ambulance service and quickly earned his way to the position of Vice President of Operations. During the beginning of his career, Bob distinguished himself as an innovator by developing the first proprietary accounts receivable system in the state and establishing the first neonatal transport contract with Yale-New Haven Hospital. When, in the early nineties, New Haven Ambulance Service became one of the four founding companies of American Medical Response, Bob was named Chief Operating Officer for Connecticut and for the Northeast Operations just a few years later.

Leading a team of more than eight thousand employees in 23 states prior to his retirement, Bob achieved great professional success, however, his innumerable contributions to communities in need are what set him apart. Most recently, and perhaps most notably, were the actions he took following two of the most devastating events in our Nation's history. On September 11, 2001, he personally led a contingent of American Medical Response personnel from both Connecticut and New York to support of Fire Department of New York, and, just this past year, Bob has made a number of trips to assist in the ongoing relief efforts in Mississippi in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Bob has also left an indelible mark on his own community with his outstanding efforts on behalf of a variety of local organizations and committees. The Hamden Fire Commission, the Shirley Frank Foundation, the Clelian Adult Daycare Center, and Mothers Against Drunk Driving are just a few of those who have benefited from Bob's support. The myriad of awards and citations that he has been honored with are testament to his enduring commitment to our community.

I have often said our communities would not be the same without the efforts of those who dedicate their time and energies to making a difference. Bob is a reflection of all that we want our community members to be. His compassion, generosity, and faithful service has touched countless lives. It is an honor for me to stand today to join his wife, Marby; his children, Maresa, Rob, and Jared; as well as the family, friends, and colleagues who have gathered today in extending my sincerest thanks and appreciation to Robert LaTorracca for all that he has given to our community. He is an inspiration to many and leaves a legacy that will continue to have a positive impact on the lives of others for generations to come. I wish he and Marby the very best as they enjoy his retirement and many more years of health and happiness.

PETE WHEELER, COMMISSIONER, GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICE

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 9, 2006

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and contributions of Pete Wheeler, the Georgia Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, who is being honored this Veterans Day as Georgia's "Veteran of the Century." Pete Wheeler is an incredible person and a true friend to all those who have served in our country's armed forces.

Pete Wheeler's dedication to public service and our veterans is deep-rooted. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1942 and served in the Army Infantry. He retired as a Brigadier General in the National Guard in 1978. After graduating from the University of Georgia, he began his career with the Georgia Department of Veterans Service In 1949, and has worked personally with the 11 U.S. Presidents and 11 Georgia Governors since then. In 1954, he was appointed Georgia Chairman, National Veterans Day Committee and he still serves in that capacity. He was appointed to the U.S. Veterans Advisory Commission by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1967. Upon his appointment in 1994, he served as chairman of the World War II Memorial Advisory Board for President Clinton and President George W. Bush.

A true and faithful friend to veterans, Pete Wheeler has been an advocate of their causes for more than half a century. On a national level he is looked upon among the State Directors and Commissioners as the "Dean of Veterans." He has been instrumental in many innovative programs to benefit veterans and their families, including starting the first ever "State Supermarket of Veterans Benefits" in 1966, a one-stop service for veterans and their families to gather information regarding Federal and State benefits to which they might be entitled. During his tenure, established two State veteran's cemeteries and played an influential part in the establishment of the GA National Cemetery in Cherokee County, Georgia, and the Annual Service Officer School was established. This workshop brings together veterans benefit counselors from field offices as well as leadership from the State's veterans groups and national offices involved in veteran's issues. This has been an annual event for 47 years.

His awards include the Silver Helmet Award, presented by AMVETS; Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge George Washington Honor Medal; the American Legion Gold Honor Medal and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Silver Medal of Merit.

Veterans and all Georgians are fortunate to have Pete Wheeler working for them. He is a model of civic pride and community service. Pete Wheeler has made an immeasurable contribution to our State, and our Nation.

WELCOMING THE UNITED JEWISH COMMUNITIES GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO LOS ANGELES

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 9, 2006

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to welcome the 2006 United Jewish Communities General Assembly to Los Angeles. It is an honor to host this national gathering and showcase our very own LA Jewish Federation, which has deep roots and a long and accomplished history of community service.

The UJC's tireless advocacy on behalf of seniors, children, and countless others in need is critically important and deeply valued. The reach of their care and concern extends across the United States, Israel and to Jewish communities around the world. I am particularly proud of the UJC's efforts to expand the Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORC) program, which brings dignity and much-needed help to the elderly. I would also like to commend their immediate mobilization to rebuild neighborhoods and kibbutzim in Northern Israel recovering from Hezbollah rocket attacks.

Collectively, UJC shines as a beacon of the Jewish value of tzedakah. Individually, each one of the dedicated UJC staff, volunteers and contributors deserves recognition for making a real difference in people's lives, one person at a time. I look forward to working with UJC in the future to achieve the goals we share.

TRIBUTE TO DARLENE HUNTER DAVIS

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 9, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Darlene Hunter Davis, the Illustrious Commandress of Oman Court Number