

I extend my most sincere congratulations to Kelsey Owens and I wish her the best of luck in her academic and athletic career.

RECOGNIZING THE CHATTY HATTY
RED HAT LADIES OF RAINBOW
SPRINGS, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a group of women from Rainbow Springs, Florida who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in their efforts to help the soldiers serving in Iraq. The Chatty Hatty Red Hat Ladies of Rainbow Springs have adopted soldiers serving in Iraq, sending them care packages each and every month. The Ladies deserve recognition for their efforts.

Earlier this year, the Red Hat Ladies contacted my office to find soldiers from the 5th District currently deployed in Iraq. The Ladies were looking to adopt a couple of soldiers from the district and to send them packages filled with necessities and goodies. These women wanted to let our troops know their friends back home support their service in the Global War on terror.

As you might imagine, those first few soldiers grew to nearly 30 soldiers that the Ladies eventually adopted. Each month they put together three large care packages for the troops, and once a quarter they send over a special box of movies so that the soldiers can have a "movie night," complete with packages of popcorn.

To help celebrate Christmas, the Ladies and their friends took up collections and donations to ship the troops a Christmas tree with all the trimmings, as well as individual stockings stuffed with gifts. This way the soldiers can enjoy Christmas, even though they are still serving in Iraq and missing their friends, family, and loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, volunteer groups like the Chatty Hatty Red Hat Ladies of Rainbow Springs are just one of the thousands of dedicated organizations throughout the Nation who support our troops overseas. Millions of Americans have donated their time and their money to ensure that our troops know the folks back home support their mission and hope they return home safely. The Red Hat Ladies are to be commended for starting this adopt-a-soldier program and for helping to brighten their days of service.

DEMOCRATIC PACIFIC UNION
SPONSORS INTERNATIONAL SYM-
POSIUM ON DEMOCRACY AND
CONGRESS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, this December 8–10, an international symposium on democracy and congress will be held in Taipei, Taiwan. The symposium is sponsored by the Democratic Pacific Union (DPU), a non-govern-

mental organization founded in 2005 in Taipei for the purpose of fostering better relations among members of parliaments from countries around the Pacific Rim.

This year's symposium will feature speakers from a number of countries, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the United States and Taiwan. Taiwan Vice President Annette Lu, the driving force behind this year's symposium, is to be commended for putting this conference together.

I support and endorse the symposium's goal: It is time for everyone in the international community to respect one another, to abide by international norms, and to respect the common values, namely, democracy, peace and prosperity.

I hope my colleagues will find the time to participate in this important symposium on democracy and congress.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM BLOCK

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to William (Bill) Block of Morrison County, Minnesota, who recently retired after serving 24 years as a Morrison County Commissioner representing District 5. Bill has rendered long, distinguished, and dedicated service for his community and the State of Minnesota.

First elected as a Morrison County Commissioner in 1983, Bill's list of accomplishments is both lengthy and varied. Under his stewardship, Morrison County expanded its airport, built a new Government Center, implemented a county-wide 9–1–1 system, promoted economic development, developed the Belle Prairie Park as a premier visitors destination, resolved a recurring flooding problem from Fletcher Creek, converted an abandoned railway into a recreational trail, and improved highway safety.

As County Commissioner, he brought together individuals with diverse and sometimes contentious positions through his dedication, hard work, and diplomacy. Admired by his fellow Commissioners, department heads, and county employees, I know that Bill will be sorely missed.

I wish Bill and his lovely wife Barb well as they move onto other life pursuits. Because of the many contributions he made to his community, Bill deserves to hang out his "Gone Fishing" sign.

I am proud and honored to share with my colleagues this well-deserved tribute to Bill Block, who has given so much of himself to enrich the lives of others and to serve his community.

RECOGNIZING PATRICIA BASS

HON. CHAKA FATTAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Patricia Bass, one of Philadelphia's and the Nation's leaders in our collective efforts to pro-

vide high quality, accessible care and treatment to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Ms. Bass played a central role in building Philadelphia's response to HIV/AIDS as the co-director of the AIDS Activities Coordinating Office. Today, I rise to salute Ms. Bass's tenure as Chair of the Communities Advocating Emergency AIDS Relief Coalition. CAEAR Coalition is a leading voice for the treatment and care needs of people living with HIV/AIDS. Ms. Bass has served as Chair of CAEAR Coalition for 6 years, leading the organization in its annual efforts to secure increased appropriations for the Ryan White CARE Act. She has also guided CAEAR Coalition's collaborative and evidence-based efforts over the past 3 years to reauthorize a strengthened Ryan White CARE Act that responds effectively to the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS in the United States. Consistently mobilizing its members across the county to advocate with their elected officials on behalf of the care and treatment needs of people living with HIV/AIDS, CAEAR Coalition epitomizes the important role that our constituents play in helping us to understand the needs of those in the communities we represent.

Ms. Bass's experiences and perspective as a nurse and African American woman who has worked on the frontlines of the epidemic inform her understanding of HIV/AIDS and its impact on communities of color, and her voice has been critically important in policymaking discussions and dialogue with Congressional leaders and staff.

I know that when the Ryan White CARE Act is reauthorized, the provisions in the final law will undoubtedly be better because of Ms. Bass's vision, leadership and long-term commitment to a coalition comprised of those giving and receiving care and committed to carrying those experiences directly to their elected representatives.

Today, I rise to thank Ms. Bass for her leadership and wish her much success in her continued efforts to ensure that people living with HIV/AIDS at home and abroad have the care and treatment they need.

TRIBUTE TO MARGARET FORGACH
CUMMINGS

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 6, 2006

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Margaret Forgach Cummings, a tireless public servant for the Pima County Sheriff's Department. Ms. Cummings, currently a Deputy Sheriff, will be retiring after serving the citizens of Pima County for more than 20 years. She has served my community with honor and compassion throughout her career.

She started her service as a volunteer crisis advocate with Pima County Attorney's Victim-Witness Program. Her stellar commitment and performance as an advocate laid the foundation for her to participate in a Meditation program with a grant from Volunteer in Service to America (VISTA). She was one of five individuals that initiated the program at the South Tucson Police Department.

Her reputation and selfless devotion as volunteer earned her the opportunity to become a Police Dispatcher for the South Tucson Police Department. Mastering that position, she