

HONORING GRAPEVINE ROTARY CLUB'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the Grapevine Rotary Club's 40th Anniversary. The Rotary Club organization was started in Chicago, Illinois in 1905 and currently has approximately 1.2 million members associated with 32,000 Rotary Clubs worldwide. In 1964, Grapevine Mayor, Ira E. Woods had the vision of starting a Rotary Club in the community. On June 22, 1967 a telegram was delivered from Rotary International with confirmation of their charter membership.

Grapevine Rotary Club is an organization who benefits many people both near and far. Locally, they assist needy students at Grapevine Middle School with a mentoring program and sponsor many events, including: a yearly essay contest, the Special Olympics at Grapevine High School, the annual banquet for the Special Olympians, and the yearly Senior Citizens Banquet. In years past they built a pavilion at a local park. And, for the past 15 years, the Rotary Club has put up American Flags on holidays along Grapevine's Main Street. They have also supported local charities such as GRACE and Nash Farm.

They have helped others across the country such as in New Mexico where they have worked with other Rotarians to purchase water rights at the St. Bonaventure Indian Mission and School on the Navaho Reservation.

Globally, they have: helped donate fire trucks and ambulances to Acuna, Mexico, Grapevine's sister city; supported cataract surgeries and helped provide artificial limbs for the needy in India; assisted students at a school in Tanzania and helped drill water wells in Peru and Ghana. The club sponsors teacher exchanges throughout the world including Latin America, Eastern Europe and India. The Grapevine Rotary participates in the One World program with Russia to help promote world peace.

Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize the tremendous contributions to the individuals, organizations and communities that Grapevine Rotary Club has benefited for the past 40 years. It is an honor to represent this humanitarian organization in the 24th District of Texas.

NICO FERRARO: AN INSPIRATION TO SAN DIEGO

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Nico Ferraro, who is being honored as the "Labor Leader of the Year" by The San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council, AFL-CIO.

Nico was initiated into the union on June 15, 1971, and knew it was for him. He went on to serve a five-year steamfitter apprenticeship with the United Local 638 in New York City.

His urge to travel and see the country continually took him to several western states until

he eventually landed in San Diego. Nico's political activism caught the attention of Local 230's officers and he was elected to the Executive Board in 1989. In 1992, he was elected as the Pipefitter Business Representative and served in that capacity until his appointment to Business Manager in 1997.

As Local 230's Business Manager, Nico represents the various divisions of the 1600 member local union in many ways. He is a Trustee to the pension and welfare funds, the Secretary to the Joint Apprenticeship Committee, President of the Southern California Pipe Trades District Council #16, President of the San Diego Building Trades, a member of the Board of Directors of the National City Park Apartments' 460 unit complex, built and managed by the Building Trades since 1968, and an Executive Board member to the Central Labor Council. One of Nico's proudest positions was serving on the Board of Directors of the Construction Tech Academy from 2002 to 2006. The academy is a uniquely designed High School dedicated to Construction, Architecture, and Engineering. The San Diego Building Trades honored Nico as the John Lyons Labor Leader of the Year in 2000.

In his role as Business Manager, Nico is focused on organizing, training, and political action. He is dedicated to improving the wages, pension and working conditions of his membership and demonstrating to all of San Diego the benefits of union membership. He has spoken on the record before the Industrial Welfare Commission.

Nico is involved in all aspects of the Labor movement. He has had numerous pro-union letters to various editors of San Diego newspapers published. To enhance his career as a union officer, Nico enrolled in the Labor Studies Program at San Diego City College. He completed the program in 1994 and continued his studies, earning a Business and Labor Studies Degree and graduating with honors in June 2000.

California Governor Gray Davis further honored Nico by appointing him to the Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Board, where he was asked to determine the wages, work hours and working conditions for the mining, drilling and construction industries.

Nico Ferraro truly has been an inspiration to all of San Diego.

HONORING THE REVEREND BILLY GRAHAM

HON. HEATH SHULER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Mr. SHULER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important milestone in the historic ministry of the Reverend Billy Graham. On Thursday, May 31, 1,500 of Reverend Graham's friends gathered for the dedication of the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, North Carolina. Among those friends were all three of our living former Presidents. Reverend Graham's ministry has touched more people in this world than could ever be able to attend such a dedication.

I am honored to have Reverend and Mrs. Graham as two of my constituents in Western North Carolina. The Grahams moved to Montreat many decades ago, and have made

an indelible mark on the area. I have the utmost respect for Reverend Graham.

The newly dedicated Billy Graham Library is appropriately built in the shape of a barn, which no doubt reminds Reverend Graham of his childhood on a nearby dairy farm. When Billy Graham was born some 88 years ago no one but God knew the influence he would have on the world.

Billy Graham has ministered to hundreds of millions of people across the world, over 210 million of those contacts coming through the form of live audiences. Reverend Graham has ministered to Congressmen, celebrities, and heads of state. He has ministered to people without regard to their wealth, political affiliation, social status, or skin color; and he did it before such things were popular. Billy Graham has stood for what is right throughout his long career. He paid Reverend Martin Luther King's bail on numerous occasions, refused to speak in Little Rock while school segregation was being insisted upon by the state government, and he would not visit South Africa during Apartheid until The government would allow a desegregated audience.

Reverend Graham commented at last week's dedication that "I feel like I've been at my own funeral, listening to all these speeches. I feel terribly small and humbled by it all." That statement explains the character of Reverend Graham better than anything I can say.

Madam Speaker, the legacy of Billy Graham will live on long after he is gone, and I am proud to congratulate him on the opening of this new library which will help to carry his legacy forward. Billy Graham has served his Lord for a lifetime, and it is an honor to serve Reverend Graham in the United States Congress. May God continue to bless Billy Graham.

D/FW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT'S "WELCOME HOME A HERO" PROGRAM

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the "Welcome Home a Hero" program at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. The "Welcome Home a Hero" program is a daily gathering of volunteers to celebrate the homecoming of soldiers returning from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait. This program is one of the Nation's foremost morale builders for our troops with over 150 civic organizations, governmental departments, and businesses volunteering during its 3-year tenure. This tremendous effort has made the "Welcome Home a Hero" program one of the largest ongoing community service efforts in north Texas. These committed volunteers have given of their time so that our troops, as well as their families, can see how proud we are as a community, and as a nation, of their service and sacrifice.

Madam Speaker, the north Texans that participate in the "Welcome Home a Hero" program are the first people the troops see upon their return to the United States, and they speak on behalf of all Americans in thanking them and celebrating the safe return of each soldier. On June 12, 2007, the 500,000th soldier will come home for a well-deserved 2

weeks of rest and recuperation, and I am proud to share that the “Welcome Home a Hero” program at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport has been selected by the U.S. Military to host this celebration. I extend my personal gratitude to the program’s volunteers for their efforts in supporting our dedicated men and women in uniform who are proudly serving our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I am indeed honored to pause and pay tribute to these wonderful volunteers and valiant soldiers who represent the very best of the United States of America.

THE IRAQ STUDY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS IMPLEMENTATION ACT

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce legislation to implement the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group (ISG)—also known as the “Baker Hamilton Commission”—as a bipartisan foundation for long overdue strategic change in our policy in Iraq.

I am pleased to be joined by my colleagues Representatives FRANK WOLF, MICHAEL MCCAUL, and DANIEL LIPINSKI—and 41 other Members—in introducing this bill, and I am grateful for all their help in building support for this legislation. Representative WOLF deserves special recognition for the role he played in spearheading the creation of the Iraq Study Group and in pushing forward its recommendations.

The ISG was created in March 2006 at the request of a bipartisan group of Members of Congress, led by Representative WOLF, and was co-chaired by former Secretary of State James Baker and former chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Representative Lee Hamilton. In December 2006, the ISG released its recommendations and outlined a bipartisan approach to bringing a responsible conclusion to the Iraq war.

What this legislation does is to take these recommendations and establish them as official United States policy. Among the recommendations outlined in the bill are a new diplomatic offensive in the region that includes the creation of the Iraq International Support Group; giving the highest priority to training, equipping and advising the Iraqi military and security forces; assessing the full budgetary and personnel impact of the war in Iraq on the U.S. military; accelerating and increasing oil production and accountability including equitable distribution of oil revenues in Iraq; implementing and oversight of economic reconstruction programs in Iraq with the creation of a new Senior Advisor for Economic Reconstruction; ensuring that the President includes the cost of the war in his annual budget request; and setting conditions that can lead to redeployment of U.S. combat forces as early as the first quarter of 2008, including necessary diplomatic, infrastructure and security benchmarks.

It is clear to me that a Democratic majority in Congress cannot unilaterally legislate an end to this war and expect its architect and champion—President Bush—to sign on the

dotted line. In my view, the only way to end this war—and to end it in a way that minimizes the likelihood of greater regional bloodshed—is to broaden the tent of opposition, and engage concerned Republicans in pressuring the Bush Administration to change course. That is why I worked last year with Representative Joe Schwarz on a resolution insisting on benchmarks for Iraqi political stability and a process to hold the Bush Administration accountable.

That is why I am introducing this bill today. Democrats and Republicans must work together to change the course in Iraq, and implementing the major policy recommendations of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group is an overdue step in this direction.

As an early and consistent opponent of this war I do not believe that embracing these recommendations is the only action we in Congress must take, but it is important as a foundation. I, for one, will also continue to push for a strategy of military disengagement in Iraq and phased redeployment of our forces, because I do not believe we should ask our soldiers to referee a civil war.

Ending American military participation in this war and managing the consequences of the Bush Administration’s failures will not be easy and it will not come overnight, but it will come—and the ISG recommendations offer a means of moving toward these goals.

Many of us embraced the ISG’s recommendations when the report was first released last year, and many of us believe that the report still provides a comprehensive blueprint for a way forward in Iraq and the Middle East, from both the military and the diplomatic perspective.

I do not believe the ISG recommendations or my bill will offer a complete solution, but they will offer a start.

We went into war as a badly divided country; I hope we can end it differently and that is my motivation in offering this bill today.

A TRIBUTE TO THE 2007 ELLIS ISLAND MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 5, 2007

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the 2007 recipients of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. The Ellis Island Medal of Honor is presented annually by the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations (NECO), representing more than 250 organizations that span the spectrum of ethnic heritages, cultures and religions. Since the organization’s founding in 1986, approximately 1,700 American citizens have received Ellis Island Medals of Honor, including six American Presidents, several United States Senators, Congressmen, Nobel Laureates, outstanding athletes, artists, clergy, and military leaders.

As we all know, citizens of the United States can trace their ancestry to many nations. The richness and diversity of American life makes us unique among the nations of the world and is in many ways the key to why America is the most innovative country in the world. The Ellis Island Medals of Honor not only celebrate select individuals but also the pluralism and de-

mocracy that enabled our ancestors to celebrate their cultural identities while still embracing the American way of life. This medal is not about money, but about people who really seized the opportunities this great country has to offer and who used those opportunities to not only better their own lives but make a difference in the lives of those around them. By honoring these outstanding individuals, we honor all who share their origins and we acknowledge the contributions they and other groups have made to America.

In addition, NECO awards one International Ellis Island Medal of Honor each year. This year’s international honoree was Victor Phillip Dahdaleh, Chairman, Dadco. Mr. Dahdaleh is Canadian.

And for the first time in its history, NECO presented a Global Humanitarian Award to H. E. Sheikh Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, President of the 61st Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

When the immigrant station at Ellis Island, New York, opened on January 1, 1892, it admitted 700 immigrants into the United States on just its first day of operation. By the time the center closed in 1954, 17 million immigrants had passed through its doors. The Ellis Island administration and staff, on average, processed up to 5,000 people per day. Many of these newcomers had little or no knowledge of English, hardly any money, and many arrived with only the clothes on their backs. They arrived risking their lives in exchange for freedom and a better way of life.

I, once again, commend NECO and its Board of Directors headed by my good friend, Nasser J. Kazeminy, for honoring these truly outstanding individuals for their tireless efforts to foster dialogue and build bridges between different ethnic groups, as well as promote unity and a sense of common purpose in our Nation. As Rosemarie Taglione, Executive Director of NECO has said so eloquently on a number of occasions: “NECO’s message of tolerance and harmony among diverse ethnic groups is, perhaps, even more important today than it was 20 years ago.”

Madam Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing the good works of NECO, and congratulating all of the 2007 recipients of the Ellis Island Medals of Honor. I also ask unanimous consent that the names of this year’s recipients be placed into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD following my statement:

Dr. Gregory Adamian, H. E. Sheikh Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, George Altirs, Peter Arnell, Dr. Elias Ayoub, Dr. Ernest M. Barsamian, Michelle Bodden, Edgar Cahn, Leo Chen, Dr. Aram V. Chobanian, Jaekun Chung, Mario Ciano, Denis A. Cortese, MD, Hon. Leslie Crocker-Snyder, Victor Phillip Dahdaleh, Nicholas J. Daniello, MD, Dr. Joel Alan DeLisa, Kirti Desai, Dr. Akshay Desai, Michael J. Dowling, James J. Dowling, Blaise Durante, Hon. Jacob Eapen, MD, MPH, Mory Ejabat, Richard A. Elias, MD, Hani Findakly, PhD, Arthur Flegel, Jon Fortgang, Douglas Foshee, Philip Friedman, Cynthia R. Garrett, Obren Gerich, Joi Gordon, Col. R. L. Grabowski, USMC, MSGT Nicholas G. Grand, USAF (Ret.), Patrick Grant, Hon. Chuck Hagel, George Hamilton, William Harrington, Esq., Richard Heckmann, Col. Jack H. Jacobs, USA (Ret.), Rev. John I. Jenkins, CSC, Ik Joong Kang, Dr. Sarkis Kechejian, Don Keenan, Do-Young Kim, David E. Kimmel, Jr., Dr. Steven S. Koh, George J. Kostas, Les Kuczynski,