

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 2007 CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS FOUNDATION ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE—THE IRAQ WAR: THE COSTS, THE LESSONS, AND THE FUTURE

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the 2007 Congressional Black Caucus annual legislative conference, the speakers who presented at the forum I hosted on the war, and the reason I selected the war for an issue forum.

On September 28, 2007, I hosted a forum to address issues related to the costs, lessons and future of the Iraq war. I was honored to have as my speakers: Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, Reverend James Forbes, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, Eugene Robinson, Senator JIM WEBB, and General Anthony Zinni. I thank each of them for taking time to share their views on these important topics. I also wish to thank all of the people who attended the forum and those who watched it live via the Internet.

This is the fifth time in a row I held a forum on the war for the annual legislative conference. I decided once again to focus on the war for several reasons. There is a continuous need to explain to the American people why the war has not ceased yet. Americans are utterly confused about the politics as well as the rationale for continuing. Day in and day out Americans hear rhetoric versus solid withdraw plans and solutions. Americans are outraged and tired of the loss of life and other human tragedies associated with fighting the war. The human, financial, spiritual, and loss of reputation cost for our great country is immeasurable. I will continue to express my opposition to the war and work to bring it to an end.

The forum speakers were phenomenal and provided their ideas on how America got in the war and how America can get out. Specifically, Dr. Dyson, a professor at Georgetown University, eloquently encouraged the audience to speak out against the war and described the similarities in the Bush's administration response to hurricane Katrina to the handling of the Iraq war. Rev. James Forbes, Jr., founder of the Healing of the Nations Foundation, passionately spoke about the moral failures of the war. Congresswoman BARBARA LEE of California, discussed the difficulties she faced in opposing the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Eugene Robinson, a Washington Post columnist, discussed the administration's use of fear to build support for the war. Senator JIM WEBB of Virginia, emphasized the need for the U.S. to get out of Iraq and addressed issues related to fraud, waste, and abuse. General Zinni, a former commander of U.S. forces, explained the U.S. interests in Iraq and discussed his ideas on how the U.S. can get out of Iraq.

I would like to express heartfelt thanks to the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation chair, Congressman KENDRICK MEEK, and the Congressional Black Caucus chairwoman, CAROLYN CHEEKS KILPATRICK, for all their hard work to organize the annual legislative conference, which provides members of the Congressional Black Caucus an opportunity to highlight issues that impact the lives of Ameri-

cans. The information shared by the speakers was informative and provided another outlet for critics of the war to openly express their views.

CELEBRATING THE LAUNCH OF UNIVISION'S NEW SHOW, "AL PUNTO"

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Univision on the launch of the new political news show "Al Punto."

"Al Punto" is paving the way to promote dialogue within the growing politically active and conscious Latino community. For 1 hour every Sunday, the show will bring together newsmakers, policymakers, business and political leaders, or entertainers to talk about the contemporary issues that affect the Latino community. The discussions will go beyond politics to include culture, science, and the arts. Furthermore, "Al Punto" will address current events in Latin America which impact the Latino community at home. This show will work to enlighten and empower the Latino community, as it will provide them with vital information on the current issues and news events that are impacting their everyday lives.

Again, I would like to recognize and congratulate Univision on the launch of "Al Punto" and for its contributions in educating the Latino community on political issues. I wish it continued success.

IN HONOR OF THE 2007 SACRAMENTO RIVER CATS

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise in recognition of the 2007 Sacramento River Cats, the champions of the 2007 Pacific Coast League and winners of the Triple-A Championship. I ask all of my colleagues to join with me in honoring this excellent achievement.

The River Cats remarkable playoff run began when they clinched the Pacific Coast League Southern Division by finishing the regular season with a record of 84–60. Despite falling behind two games to none against Salt Lake City in the first round of the playoffs. The River Cats came back to win the next three games. Using that positive momentum, the River Cats quickly beat the New Orleans Zephyrs in three games, winning the Pacific Coast League title for the third time in 5 years. The series final game was seen before a spirited and soldout crowd of 14,414 fans at Sacramento's Raley Field. During this impressive playoff run, the River Cats strung together seven straight playoff victories to end their season. The final victory came against the Richmond Braves in the second annual Bricktown Showdown. By defeating the International League Champion in the one game playoff, Sacramento was able to lay their claim as outright Triple-A champions.

This year's Sacramento River Cats team exhibited resilience in the face of adversity. De-

spite continually losing players to their parent affiliate, Major League Baseball's Oakland A's, to replenish their injured roster, the River Cats overcame more than 180 roster changes to win the championship. This meant that they accomplished the feat by receiving contributions from numerous and sometimes unlikely sources. No one epitomized this more than Nick Blasi, who spent much of the season with Class-A Stockton before becoming a playoff catalyst and the Pacific Coast League's Series MVP. Blasi hit a remarkable .457 in the playoffs.

Throughout this roster shuffle, every member of the 2007 River Cats demonstrated outstanding commitment to team play and hard work. Manager Tony DeFrancesco once again was a steady mentor for his young and ever changing roster. The River Cats featured some of baseball's brightest prospects who are destined to become the stars of tomorrow. The roster was anchored by contributions from recently promoted major leaguers: Daric Barton, Kurt Suzuki and Santiago Casilla, as well as prospects Jason Perry, J.J. Furmaniak and Brad Knox.

Under the leadership of President and CEO Art Savage, the River Cats players reaffirmed the front office's commitment to the people of Sacramento. On the Opening Day of the season, the River Cats unveiled the Mario Encarnacion Humanitarian Award which will annually honor a young student athlete who shows a commitment to his or her teammates and classmates. Furthermore, the River Cats Foundation has been providing support to Sacramento non-profits that assist with youth and family activities. The River Cats commitment to the community was reciprocated by the Sacramento fans, as the River Cats led the Pacific Coast League in attendance for an astounding 8th year in a row. 710,000 fans attended River Cats 71 home contests this year, and since beginning play at Raley Field in 2000, the River Cats have drawn over 6,000,000 fans.

Madam Speaker, now that the Sacramento River Cats have concluded their championship season, I am honored to pay tribute to the many hard working men and women of the River Cats organization who brought so much joy and pride to the people of Sacramento. Their successes are highly commendable. I ask all my colleagues to join me in celebrating the River Cats 2007 championship season.

IN RECOGNITION OF SOUTH TAMA COUNTY SCHOOL

HON. LEONARD L. BOSWELL

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. BOSWELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor South Tama County High School, a school in my Congressional district, for their outstanding achievements in the "President's Challenge," a program sponsored by the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

South Tama County High School, in Tama, Iowa, was named one of two President's Challenge State Champion schools in Iowa for the 2006–2007 school year. The President's Challenge is designed to encourage students to find new and exciting ways to integrate fitness