

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF MAJOR  
GENERAL MARK A. GRAHAM

**HON. DOUG LAMBORN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 29, 2007*

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Major General Mark A. Graham who became Commanding General of First Army Division West and Fort Carson on September 14, 2007.

Major General Graham, who entered the Army in 1977 upon his graduation from Murray State University as a graduate of the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps, holds a bachelors degree from Murray State University, a Masters in Business Administration from Oklahoma City University, and a Masters of Science from National Defense University. Major General Graham is also a graduate of Field Artillery Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, United States Army Command and General Staff College, and National War College.

After attending United States Army Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in 1990, Major General Graham served in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In 2000, Major General Graham was appointed Commander, 3rd Battlefield Coordination Detachment in Korea and went on to serve as Executive Officer to the Commander-in-Chief, United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/United States Forces Korea until July of 2003. Following this position, Major General Graham served as Chief of Staff for the United States Army Field Artillery Center and Fort Sill at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and later as Deputy Commander and Assistant Commandant of the United States Army Field Artillery Center and School at Fort Sill. Most recently, Major General Graham was the Deputy Commanding General, Fifth United States Army at Fort Sam Houston in Texas.

During his distinguished career, Major General Graham has received numerous decorations including the Defense Superior Service Medal, a Bronze Star, a Meritorious Service Medal with six Oak Leaf Clusters, a Joint Service Commendation, and an Army Commendation Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters. It is an honor to welcome him to Fort Carson and the Fifth Congressional District of Colorado.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND  
IDEALS OF NATIONAL CHEM-  
ISTRY WEEK

SPEECH OF

**HON. ADRIAN SMITH**

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 22, 2007*

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, National Chemistry Week recognizes the importance of chemistry to our modern society. Chemistry is vital to the economy and the success of the Third District of Nebraska. Nebraska is known for its food, fiber, and fuel industries—all of which rely on chemistry. Production of ethanol from corn and biomass, manufacture of biodiesel, and creation of safe and effective agricultural chemicals are all possible because of chemistry and chemists.

More chemists are needed to continue these innovations that are so important to our rural economy. We have bright, young people in the Third District known for their great work ethic and Nebraska values, and who are sought after for jobs all over the world. We need to encourage our young people to succeed in careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, also known as STEM careers. They are needed in Nebraska and all over the United States. More outreach is needed to encourage the next generation to consider chemistry and other STEM careers.

Students in chemistry clubs in Nebraska's Third District will perform outreach activities during National Chemistry Week. Students at Hastings College in Hastings, Nebraska, will give away ice cream and information on chemistry at the Student Union this week. The Chemistry Club at the University of Nebraska-Kearney will have a "Chemistry in Action" demonstration table in the Student Union and will visit area middle and elementary schools where they will perform experiments for students, including "pink slime" and liquid nitrogen demonstrations. I want to commend these budding chemists for reaching out to their fellow students and for introducing children to the joys of chemistry. That is what National Chemistry Week is all about.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 29, 2007*

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I was on a leave of absence on October 25, 2007 due to the San Diego wildfires. The following list describes how I would have voted had I been in attendance.

Rollcall No. 1001: Motion to Adjourn—"nay"; rollcall No. 1002: Motion to Adjourn—"nay";

rollcall No. 1003: On the House Now Considering H. Res. 774—"yea"; rollcall No. 1004: Tabling motion to reconsider—"yea"; rollcall No. 1005: Motion to Adjourn—"nay"; rollcall No. 1006: Ordering the Previous Question—"yea"; rollcall No. 1007: Agreeing to the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3963—"yea"; rollcall No. 1008: Motion to Recommit with Instructions—"nay"; rollcall No. 1009: Passage of the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act, H.R. 3963—"yea."

HONORING THE CHILD ADVOCACY  
CENTER OF GENESSEE COUNTY

**HON. DALE E. KILDEE**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 29, 2007*

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the wonderful work achieved by the Child Advocacy Center of Genessee County. The Child Advocacy Center will honor its volunteers and supporters at a dinner on November 2nd in Grand Blanc Michigan.

During the 1980s the Child Advocacy Center idea was developed to provide a safe haven for the victims of child sexual abuse. After the State of Michigan published a "Model Child Abuse Protocol-Coordinated Investigative Team Approach" in the 1990s as a guide to local communities, the idea of the Genessee County Child Advocacy Center was born. A concept paper was submitted to the Ruth Mott Foundation in 2001. The concept became a proposal and in 2005 the Center was fully functional. Using forensic interviewing techniques specifically designed for children, the Center coordinates representatives from child protection, law enforcement, prosecution, mental health and family court. The coordination puts the needs of the victim first and endeavors to enhance the safety and well-being of the children.

On Friday, November 2nd the Genessee County Child Advocacy Center will honor the persons in our community that have gone the extra mile to help the victims of child sexual and physical abuse. These individuals will come from the segments of the law enforcement and social services agencies that are the front lines in the fight against abuse. The winners of the "Our Stars" awards will be announced that evening.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me and applaud the work of the Child Advocacy Center and their partners. I am grateful for their service to our community. In a perfect world we would not need their services, but we do not live in a perfect world and we are fortunate to have these individuals step forward and strive to help and heal our most precious resource, our children.

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

IN RECOGNITION OF GENERAL C.  
ROBERT KEHLER

**HON. DOUG LAMBORN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 29, 2007*

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate General C. Robert Kehler being promoted General and becoming Commander of the Air Force Space Command at Peterson Air Force Base.

Prior to assuming command of AFSPC, General Kehler served as the Deputy Commander for U.S. Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska. Entering the Air Force in 1975 upon his graduation from Pennsylvania State University as a distinguished graduate of the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps, General Kehler went on to graduate from missile operational readiness training. This area of expertise has enabled him to serve in various roles from missile crew, to instructor, to evaluator and in wing-level staff positions.

After completing an Air Staff Internship and tour at Strategic Air Command headquarters, General Kehler served in the Office of Legislative Liaison of the Secretary of the Air Force, a capacity in which he was the expert on Capitol Hill for issues regarding the ICBM Modernization Program. While serving on the Joint Staff, General Kehler aided in the overhaul of the nuclear war plan structure and targeting. In addition to his recent position as Director of National Security Space Integration for the Office of the Under Secretary of the Air Force, General Kehler was also the Deputy Director of Operations at Air Force Space Command at Peterson where he was Commander of the 21st Space Wing.

It is a pleasure to welcome General Kehler back to Colorado. I know that AFSPC will benefit tremendously from his capable leadership.

**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM AND PATHFINDER MODIFICATION AUTHORIZATION ACT**

SPEECH OF

**HON. ADRIAN SMITH**

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 22, 2007*

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the House Committee on Natural Resources Chairman RAHALL, Ranking Member YOUNG, Subcommittee Chairwoman NAPOLITANO, Subcommittee Ranking Member MCMORRIS RODGERS and all of the staff for their work on the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program and Pathfinder Modification Authorization Act.

It is encouraging to see this longstanding issue finally reach a settlement. After years of study and review by the states, Federal Government, water users, land owners, and other interested parties, the time has come to resolve this matter once and for all.

I cosponsored this legislation as part of the consensus to recognize the reality of the challenges before us with collective decision-making and cooperation. However, this agreement does impact some of our farmers and ranch-

ers, and we must continue to be cognizant of the impact of the Endangered Species Act. As we move forward with the implementation of the Program, positive and negative economic impacts must be assessed and considered in order to minimize adverse effects of the recovery efforts.

I support moving forward with this legislation as the first step of many to protect and recover species and provide long-term water use for our communities.

**PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3963, CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2007**

SPEECH OF

**HON. SILVESTRE REYES**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 25, 2007*

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3963, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007.

For the past several months, Congress has debated an issue that should not be considered controversial—the healthcare of our Nation's most vulnerable children. The reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program, SCHIP, is vitally important for the Nation and particularly my district of El Paso, Texas, where currently, over 14,000 children in El Paso County are enrolled in the program.

In El Paso, with thousands of children who rely on SCHIP for a scheduled checkup or to receive items like eyeglasses and prescription drugs, this program is critically important. Health care is extremely expensive, and SCHIP is not only vital to children and families, but is important to our health care infrastructure overall. Our health care delivery system in the border region and across the country is already challenged as it is. Cutting SCHIP funding would only result in a greater burden on our hospitals. Without access to doctors for regular checkups and routine appointments, families would potentially wait until health problems reach catastrophic level and then seek care at the local emergency room. This is dangerous for children and families, and would also result in a much more expensive form of health care delivery.

Today's bill reauthorizes SCHIP for 5 years while providing health care coverage for 10 million of our Nation's children. The bill does not expand coverage; rather it allows those currently eligible, but uninsured, the opportunity to enroll. Two-thirds of uninsured children are currently eligible for coverage through SCHIP or Medicaid, and today's bill provides the funding necessary to administer proper outreach to those qualified for the program.

I applaud Mr. DINGELL and Mr. RANGEL for their leadership in reaching an agreement that included some of the concerns voiced by Republicans who originally voted against the legislation.

The health and quality of life of our children must be a priority, and I firmly believe that this bill addresses the need to provide quality healthcare to our Nation's uninsured children. This legislation received strong bipartisan sup-

port in the House, and I call on President Bush to stop playing political games with our children's healthcare.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

**THEODORE L. NEWTON, JR. AND GEORGE F. AZRAK BORDER PATROL STATION**

SPEECH OF

**HON. DARRELL E. ISSA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 29, 2007*

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, "We cannot dedicate . . . we cannot consecrate . . . we cannot hallow . . . this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced."

The words of Abraham Lincoln hold as much meaning today as they did when he spoke to them in Gettysburg in 1863. Today we remember two men who gave their lives for our protection. Border Patrol agents Theodore L. Newton, Jr., and George F. Azrak, are 2 of the 104 Customs and Border Patrol agents who have been killed in the line of duty.

Madam Speaker, today we will have the opportunity to honor the lives of two brave public servants when we vote to designate the United States Border Patrol Station in Murrieta, CA, as the "Theodore L. Newton, Jr. and George F. Azrak Border Patrol Station."

Border Patrol agents Newton and Azrak selflessly gave their lives in the line of duty. During their patrol on the morning of June 17, 1967, Agents Newton and Azrak stopped an old military ambulance at a checkpoint, and inside the vehicle, they found 800 pounds of marijuana. There were two men in the ambulance and two in a car following behind, all were convicted felons and all were well armed. The four armed men overpowered the two agents and forced them to drive to a remote cabin where they handcuffed and murdered Agents Newton and Azrak. Over 400 law enforcement agents and volunteers searched the remote terrain for 2 days before the agents were finally found.

The murders of Agents Newton and Azrak prompted the Border Patrol to adopt new safety measures—including increasing manpower, adopting more up-to-date technology and implementing a new policy requiring at least three agents and a backup unit to work at each checkpoint—to ensure that this terrible incident would not be repeated.

United States Customs and Border Patrol agents have a long history of working tirelessly to make our country safer. Every day they protect our borders against terrorism and, when needed, step in to assist in the face of national disasters. Just last week, San Diego area CBP personnel were deployed to assist in wildfire emergency response.

However, it has not been tradition to name Border Patrol stations after people; they are instead named for location. Undoubtedly, the

Newton—Azrak Station will continue to be referred to by its Murrieta location, but its official title will be the “Theodore L. Newton, Jr., and George F. Azrak Border Patrol Station,” in honor of the heroes who gave their lives for the safety of others.

As we honor and remember the fallen agents, I would like to thank all of our Border Patrol agents and Customs and Border Protection personnel for their service and commitment to the safety and security of all Americans.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MIKE PENCE**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I was unable to vote on October 29, 2007. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: rollcall 1010 (On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended—H.R. 3224)—“nay”; rollcall 1011 (On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended—H. Res. 573)—“aye”; and rollcall 1012 (On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree—H. Res. 747)—“aye.”

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IN MEMORIAM OF LOUIS S. BLANCATO

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Louis S. Blancato—an anesthesiologist, professor, proud World War II veteran, and citizen of the world. In his memory, I introduce his New York Times obituary published on October 25, 2007.

Dr. Blancato practiced and taught medicine, earning over the span of his career illustrious posts as department chair at St. Luke’s Hospital and president of the New York State and American Society of Anesthesiologists. He served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps, and maintained a professorship at Columbia University.

He was a lover of his family, country, and Italian-American roots. A native New Yorker, he stepped outside the bounds of his home often, globetrotting in pursuit of good work and good friends.

OBITUARY: LOUIS S. BLANCATO

BLANCATO—Louis S., M.D. On October 23 in Rye, NY. Beloved husband of the late Nancy. Survived by Louis S., Robert, John and Amy and beloved grandchildren Celia and Carly. Also supportive three daughters and son-in-law.

Dr. Blancato was a dedicated practitioner and teacher of medicine with a long and distinguished career as an anesthesiologist. Department Chair at St. Luke’s Hospital and President of New York State and American Society of Anesthesiologists are among his many accomplishments. He was also a Professor at Columbia University. He received many awards and inspired many. Dr. Blancato was a graduate of Fordham University and the Flower Fifth Avenue Medical School and a proud World War II veteran of the U.S. Army Medical Corps.

Dr. Blancato’s family, country and Italian American heritage were the foundations of his life. A lifelong New Yorker and a citizen of the world through work, travel and many friendships.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, October 27 at noon in the Osborn Auditorium, 101 Theall Road in Rye. In lieu of flowers the family recommends individuals make a donation to a charity of their choice in the name of Dr. Louis S. Blancato.

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RECOGNIZING AND COMMENDING EFFORTS TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT AND HELP END THE WORSENING HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AND GENOCIDE IN DARFUR, SUDAN

SPEECH OF

**HON. LOIS CAPPS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 29, 2007*

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of H. Res. 573, a resolution that recognizes the tremendous efforts put forth by public advocacy groups to raise awareness and help end the worsening crisis in Darfur.

My district is home to many of these advocates, who work tirelessly to inform their neighbors and bring greater attention to this humanitarian emergency. Their work to end the genocide in Darfur is a critical part of our combined effort to stop the violence and the bloodshed that has claimed entire families.

In this time of international conflict, it is so important for us to educate and inform our neighbors about what we can do to help those in need. I am thankful for all of the people in my district who are working toward a peaceful resolution in Darfur. Their dedication to this cause is singular in its commitment, and I am deeply grateful for their contributions.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this important resolution.

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TRIBUTE TO THE NORTH CAROLINA BEACH HOUSE FIRE VICTIMS

**HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to memorialize the lives of Justin Anderson, Travis Cale, Lauren Mahon, Cassidy Pendley, William Rhea, Allison Walden, all students at the University of South Carolina, which I proudly represent here in this body, and Emily Yelton, a student of Clemson University.

Madam Speaker, when young men and women go off to pursue an education, their families hope for them a bright future and a long life. All seven of these young men and women lost their lives in a fire this weekend and I join with those that I represent at the University of South Carolina in offering condolences to these families. And I also say to the families of Clemson University, our heart goes out to all of them.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and this body join me in a moment of silence in memory of these young people.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. TOM PRICE**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 1012, I was inadvertently detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “no.”

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HONORING THE UTTAR PRADESH ASSOCIATION OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA’S DIWALI FESTIVAL CELEBRATION

**HON. JOE SESTAK**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. SESTAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Uttar Pradesh Association of Greater Philadelphia for bringing Diwali to Delaware County.

The U.P. Association of Greater Philadelphia is a non-profit organization formed 4 years ago to connect and provide a forum for people from the State of Uttar Pradesh and the surrounding regions in India. The association brings Indian culture to the community, adding to cultural understanding and awareness throughout the region.

One of the group’s main events is the celebration of Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights. Diwali is one of the few holidays celebrated throughout India, bringing people together in the spirit of the season. The origin of Diwali is unknown, although there are various legends and customs associated with it.

In Northern India, where Uttar Pradesh is located, Diwali marks the return of Lord Rama after 14 years of exile and his defeat of the demon Ravana of Lanka. This represents the triumph of good over evil and of light over darkness, a theme that is common to Diwali stories from other regions of India.

The UPAGP, along with the Indian Academy in New Jersey, reenacted the story of Lord Rama on Saturday night, and put on a spectacular cultural program that transcended religion, race, and nation. The message of light as a symbol of knowledge and goodness driving away darkness and ignorance is one we would all benefit from hearing more often.

I ask that everyone join me in commending the UPAGP for bringing Diwali and its message to Upper Darby, Delaware County, and the Greater Philadelphia area, in recognizing its contribution to the community, and in acknowledging the hard work and dedication of its members.

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HONORING MINNIE COX

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation designating the United States Post Office located at 100 W. Percy Street in Indianola, MS, as the “Minnie Cox United States Post Office”.

Minnie M. Geddings Cox, a graduate of Fisk University, was appointed postmistress of

Indianola, MS, in 1891, by President Benjamin Harrison, and was reappointed by President William McKinley; thereby, becoming the first Black postmistress of the United States.

On January 25, 1900, President McKinley raised the rank of the Indianola Post Office from fourth class to third class and appointed Mrs. Cox for a full 4-year term. However, in the fall of 1902, under the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, a controversy brought national attention to Mrs. Cox. Jim Crow laws overran Reconstruction in America and whites wanted blacks eliminated from leadership positions. Some of the local whites in Indianola met and drew up a petition requesting Cox's resignation. Increased tension and threats of physical harm caused Cox to submit her resignation to take effect January 1, 1903, and leave Indianola.

President Roosevelt believed Mrs. Cox had been wronged, and that the authority of the Federal Government was being compromised and refused to accept her resignation. Instead, he closed Indianola's post office on January 2, 1903, rerouted the mail to Greenville, MS, 30 miles away and Cox continued to receive her salary. For 4 hours in January 1903, the Indianola postal event was debated on the floor of the United States Senate, and appeared on the front pages of newspapers across the country. One year later, at the expiration of Mrs. Cox's term, in February 1904, the post office was reopened, but demoted in rank from third class to fourth class.

Minnie Cox and her husband Wayne W. Cox, who had been an employee in the railway mail service, returned to Indianola and organized the "Delta Penny Savings Bank." They had been substantial property owners before 1903, and they bought more land and became successful bankers as well. Minnie Cox died in 1933.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE  
PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION  
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 25, 2007*

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, today, I voted for H.R. 3963, which authorizes the State Children's Health Insurance Program, SCHIP. The provisions in the bill would make substantial progress in providing health care for children. It would provide coverage for 3.8 million more children than are covered now and preserve coverage for 6.6 million more. It would help ensure Ohio can expand its program to include an additional 20,000 children. It targets the lowest-income uninsured children for outreach and enrollment, ensures dental coverage and mental health parity.

I voted against a previous version of this bill because it excluded about 600,000 legal immigrants. I voted to raise the issue and show Congress they were wrong to do so. I voted for the veto override to show the President that his objections to government health insurance for low income children were outrageous. Today I voted to make the same statement. I urge him to do the right thing and sign this bill.

I believe all children deserve health care. Unfortunately, today's bill does not do that. It

does not even come close. It continues to shun immigrant children in the U.S. who are in full compliance with the law by denying States the option to cover them. It also drastically reduces support for coverage of parents, even though decades of evidence have shown that kids are far more likely to get the care they need if their parents are covered. It bars coverage of illegal immigrants, even if a State determines that it is cheaper and more humane for them to provide routine care than emergency care, which is frequently the case. In short, it sacrifices each of these groups of people as a bargaining chip.

This Congress is spending time and energy arguing over narrowly defined bills that treat a few of the symptoms but fail to address the problems that plague our health care system. Instead, this Congress should deliver the reform America is calling for. We should be moving ahead with H.R. 676, the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act, which would lower health care costs, provide coverage for everyone for all medically necessary services, and create a single best standard quality of care. America deserves—and wants—nothing less.

HONORING HISPANIC HERITAGE  
MONTH

**HON. RUSS CARNAHAN**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month.

As citizens across America celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, I wish to recognize the hours of hard work event organizers have contributed in order to provide greater understanding as they share their proud culture.

Especially I am reminded of the sacrifices many have made over the years to community and country.

Today, our armed services continue to rely on the dedication of men and women from Hispanic communities throughout the Midwest and Missouri.

While defending this Nation, and protecting a way of life that offers opportunity to Americans of varying race, they proudly serve.

For all who remain in harm's way today, in order to secure peace at home, we wish them the best, and look forward to their safe return.

CONGRATULATING SCRANTON TOMORROW AND ITS PAST PRESIDENTS ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 15TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Scranton Tomorrow, an organization celebrating its 15th anniversary and whose mission it is to establish the city of Scranton as the premier urban center in northeastern Pennsylvania.

As part of Scranton Tomorrow's celebration, they are honoring their past presidents, who

include Monsignor Joseph Quinn, Judge Terrence Nealon, Attorney Barbara Sardella, William Bender, Phil Condron, Glenn Pellino and Carlon Preate.

Scranton Tomorrow has launched several initiatives designed to fulfill its mission including Artspace, City Pride, the Lackawanna Riverfront Revitalization, First Night and support for the Scranton Business Alliance.

Artspace is a project designed to produce affordable space for artists to live, work, perform and conduct business while creating a sustained economic impact for the city of Scranton.

City Pride is an annual cleanup and beautification effort that showcases the extraordinary community pride underlying the effort to make Scranton a visually attractive city.

The Lackawanna Riverfront Revitalization project and the Downtown Heritage Greenway project involve a coalition of major stakeholders, including the Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority, the Scranton Area Foundation, the Lackawanna River Corridor Association, the Scranton Office of Community and Economic Development, Lackawanna County government, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, as well as riverfront property owners. The stakeholders are committed to creating a master plan for the revitalization of the river corridor.

First Night is an initiative aimed at celebrating the arrival of the New Year in a safe and family friendly environment that features food, fun and entertainment and brings together the business and residential communities in a festive atmosphere.

The Scranton Business Alliance is a collective of more than 200 city businesses dedicated to improving all aspects of the central business district through solid economic management, strengthening public participation, and making downtown a fun place to visit. By building on the central city business district's inherent assets, rich architecture, a solid infrastructure, a core of financial, government, and human/social service outlets, and a firm sense of place, the Scranton Business Alliance aims to rekindle entrepreneurship, cooperation, and civic concern.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Scranton Tomorrow and those who have inspired it. Their zeal to return the city of Scranton to a prominent place in the region has captivated the imaginations of Scranton's citizens and has been an important catalyst for the renaissance Scranton is currently enjoying.

ON SCHNEIDER REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER CEO RODNEY E. MILLER, SR.

**HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN**

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, 5 years ago, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and in particular, the island of St. Thomas and the Schneider Regional Medical Center, welcomed a young, passionate, health care administrator to be its president and chief executive officer. Rodney E. Miller took on the job of ensuring that comprehensive, quality health care was available not just for the residents of the U.S.

Virgin Islands, but for the Caribbean region as well.

By all accounts, Rodney Miller did an excellent job, administering the 250-bed acute care Schneider Hospital, as well as the Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Institute and the Myrah Keating Smith Community Health Center on St. John in a manner that has advanced health care in the territory.

Most noteworthy among his accomplishments was the emphasis on improved patient care and the opening of the Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Institute. With an announced emphasis on quality patient care, enhanced customer service and improved cleanliness of the health facilities, Miller embarked upon a course for change that was driven by the expressed needs of patients. He emphasized that being the only choice for health care for most of the residents of the island meant that quality care was a must. He equally emphasized that Schneider Regional should be a good place for employees as well.

With the opening of the Charlotte Kimelman Cancer Institute in 2006, Rodney Miller and his administrative and medical team worked to realize the dream of many in the territory for a "world class cancer care facility with an array of support services and resources" that would allow patients to seek treatment at home, closer to the comfort of family and friends. Rodney Miller's leadership in health care has been marked by this and other noteworthy accomplishments in the territory.

In addition to his duties as head of Schneider Regional, Rodney Miller immersed himself in the civic activities of the community, and in 2004 was named Person of the Year by Rotary II Club of St. Thomas. Just last year, he received the 2006 Wilbur "Bill" LaMotta Community Service Award from the St. Thomas-St. John Chamber of Commerce.

His peers in the health care profession have long acknowledged his extraordinary talent. In 2002, he received the Young Healthcare Executive of the Year Award from the National Association of Health Services Executives. In 2003, he received the American College of Healthcare Executives' Regents Award and in 2005, he was elected to serve as president of the National Association of Health Services Executives. In 2006, he was named one of the Top 25 Minority Healthcare Executives by Modern Healthcare Magazine.

Recently, Rodney Miller announced that he has accepted a new position in the Florida health care system. I know that he will distinguish himself there as well, but we in the Virgin Islands wanted to express our thanks to him for the good work that he did in the territory for the past 5 years. On behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands, particularly those on the island of St. Thomas, I wish Rodney Miller bon voyage and great success in his new endeavor. He has definitely left health care in the territory in better shape than when he got there, and for that we are all grateful.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. TOM FEENEY**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. FEENEY. Madam Speaker, I would like to express my regret for missing votes on the

House floor on Monday, October 22, 2007 and Tuesday, October 23, 2007. I was in my district for the launch of Shuttle STS-120: Discovery.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MARK UDALL**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I was unavoidably detained in returning to Washington, DC, on Monday, October 29th and so was not present for 3 votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows:

(1) H.R. 3224—Dam Rehabilitation and Repair Act of 2007—I would have voted "yea" on this excellent bill by our Colorado colleague, Representative JOHN SALAZAR;

(2) H. Res. 573—Recognizing and commending the efforts of the United States public and advocacy groups to raise awareness about and help end the worsening humanitarian crisis and genocide in Darfur, Sudan, and for other purposes—I would have voted "yea"; and

(3) H. Res. 747—Recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali—I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. NICK LAMPSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. LAMPSON. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 1010, 1011, and 1012 on 10/29/07, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. GENE GREEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to explain my absence from votes cast on October 29, 2007. I was in Houston yesterday, tending to a family health care issue, and was unavoidably detained.

On rollcall vote No. 1010, to approve H.R. 3224, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

On rollcall vote No. 1011, to approve H. Res. 537, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

On rollcall vote No. 1012, to approve H. Res. 747, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

IN CELEBRATION OF THE BOSTON RED SOX'S 2007 WORLD SERIES VICTORY

**HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. MARKEY. Madam Speaker:

The Red Sox we proudly honor today  
For another championship and remarkable play

That's two in four years, all of Beantown "hurrays!"

It's not the curse, but clutch play, for these kings of Fenway

We hail the team's defense, top-notch in the field

And a mighty potent offense that refuses to yield

From top to bottom, the Sox have shown  
Why in baseball's history books they will forever be known

The club led by Henry, Werner, and Lucchino  
And don't forget the dream team—Epstein and Tito!

But it's the players who win each big game  
And they all belong in baseball's Hall of Fame

Josh Beckett, a baseball legend-in-the-making

He won 4 playoff games, leaving foes with heads shaking

And then there was Schilling, Dice-K, and Lester

With unhittable splitters, the batters they pestered.

Papelbon is the closer night after night  
4 saves in the playoffs—to "the Nation's" delight

Youkilis at 1st, Mike Lowell the series MVP,

Rookies Pedroia, Okijima and Ellsbury

With Manny & Ortiz, everyone agrees  
the Sox are the best, from sea to shining sea

And Jason Varitek we cannot forget  
From all in the clubhouse, he commands respect

After 96 wins, the playoffs in full swing  
The Angels came calling, but the Sox clipped their wings

Down 3-1 to the Tribe, the Sox won it in seven

Two pennants in 4 years, we were in baseball heaven!

Then the Sox faced the tough Colorado team  
Sweeping in just 4, completing the "possible dream"!

Now the games are all played, the champagne popped and poured

Fire up those duck boats—let's all climb aboard!

Another great season, fans and experts agree  
The Sox are the newest baseball dynasty.

IN HONOR OF THE REVEREND MONSIGNOR MICHAEL J. CORONA, PHILLIPSBURG AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OUTSTANDING CITIZEN OF THE YEAR 2007

**HON. SCOTT GARRETT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of the extraordinary public service of the Reverend Monsignor Michael J. Corona of Phillipsburg, New Jersey. Today, the Phillipsburg Area Chamber of Commerce will recognize his commitment to his community, naming him Outstanding Citizen of the Year for 2007.

Monsignor Corona completed his theological studies at St. Mary's Seminary and University

in Baltimore, Maryland. He also earned a Master of Arts in Education at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey. He was ordained for the Diocese of Trenton in 1968 and has been pastor of St. Philip and St. James Parish in Phillipsburg, New Jersey since 1979.

Under his guidance, the parish has been active in the community. While activities like their soup kitchen and Thanksgiving food drive feed the bodies of those less fortunate in Phillipsburg; their compassion and love feed their souls. And, the parish elementary school provides a quality education to so many local children.

In addition to his work directly in Phillipsburg, Monsignor Corona spreads his skills and good nature through his work with the Diocese and other Catholic leadership organizations. He is a member of the Diocesan Presbyterial Council and College of Consultors, as well as the Director of Education for the Diocese of Metuchen. He is also the President of the International Catholic Stewardship Council's Board of Directors, an organization dedicated to the proposition that "all members of our family of faith are called to be Christian stewards and share their gifts of time, talent and treasure in proportion to the blessings they have received from God."

Monsignor Corona is an integral part of the community of Phillipsburg. I join his neighbors in commending him for his good work, his dedication to the people and particularly the children of Phillipsburg, and his commitment to continually improving this historic city.

IN HONOR DR. ROBERT ABEL

### HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Robert Abel's lasting contributions and dedication to the oceans. Dr. Abel's environmental stewardship helped make New Jersey a leader in sustainable ocean and coastal research, policy planning and marine science education.

Sadly, Dr. Abel passed away on October 10th, but he left behind a lasting legacy of support for protection of coastal and ocean resources in New Jersey and the Nation. On October 31st, at the Monmouth University Urban Coast Institute's 3rd Annual Ocean Champion Awards, Dr. Abel will be honored with a State Ocean Leadership Award presented posthumously to his widow, Mrs. Nancy Abel.

Dr. Abel began his distinguished career in government service as a chemical oceanographer with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts. He then served as Staff Oceanographer to the Vice President of the United States from 1960–1967.

Later, he was appointed as the founding Director of the National Sea Grant College Program. During his tenure, Dr. Abel was responsible for transforming the Sea Grant Program. He expanded it to include education-based projects for shore protection, fisheries, aquaculture and environmental protection.

As President of the New Jersey Marine Sciences Consortium, Dr. Abel ensured permanent New Jersey State funding for the Sea Grant Program, guiding the program to receive

the Nation's first and only non-university program college status. I had the privilege of serving as a fellow through the program, and have also had fellows serve in my office over the last 20 years, providing me with invaluable counsel on ocean issues.

Dr. Robert Abel was also a diplomat of the ocean. In 1981, he formed the Cooperative Marine Technology Program for the Middle East. He worked together with Israeli, Egyptian, Jordanian and Palestinian scientists, hoping that international environmental stewardship could help strengthen bilateral ties.

Madam Speaker, I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in celebrating the life of Dr. Robert Abel, and extending our sincere condolences and deep appreciation to Mrs. Abel. Dr. Abel's scientific and diplomatic efforts will continue to benefit and inspire my constituents, and his many international colleagues and friends, for years to come.

ED AND MARILYN FITZGERALD:  
HONORING LIFETIMES OF  
COMMUNITY SERVICE

### HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, during my years in public office, I have had the pleasure of meeting and working with many extraordinary constituents committed to a seemingly endless array of good works and causes. None has served their community more ably and admirably than my dear friends Ed and Marilyn Fitzgerald, recent recipients of the prestigious YMCA "Good Neighbor" Award. The Fitzgerald's volunteerism and decades-long service to the needy, to members of the Armed Forces and area veterans, and to the communities of Lomita, Wilmington, and San Pedro—all located in my Congressional District—make them richly deserving of this recognition.

I first met them years ago when their daughter Sharon applied to the Air Force Academy. Sharon received my top recommendation, and attained the rank of Captain before leaving active-duty to be a full-time mother. To this day, Ed and Marilyn are members of my Academy Nominating Committee.

Although technically retired, Ed and Marilyn have never stopped working, and probably log more volunteer hours than most people put in at the office. Whether it is teaching children to read at Taper Avenue School, or distributing food and clothing to the homeless at Beacon Light Mission, the Fitzgeralds do not waver in their efforts to help those less fortunate. Not content to help only with the basics, the couple also organizes movie and museum excursions for kids, whale watching trips, and other activities inner-city kids might not have a chance to experience.

The active military and veterans' communities in Los Angeles County—among the Nation's largest—have also benefited from the Fitzgerald's advocacy. Both volunteer at the Long Beach Veterans Hospital, transporting immobile veterans to and from doctor's appointments, and both devote hours of their time to helping the many veterans, including homeless veterans, in the Harbor Area. They reach beyond helping their neighbors by rais-

ing awareness nationally on behalf of America's POWs and MIAs.

And I only recently learned of Marilyn and Ed's fundraising campaign to gather and ship audio-video equipment to our troops in Iraq. Separation during wartime can severely affect morale—a problem the Fitzgeralds believe our soldiers and their families should not have to endure. With Sharon's husband serving in Iraq, this tireless twosome is even working on a better way to correspond with family members stationed overseas.

Madam Speaker, other communities have selfless people like Marilyn and Ed. But I am grateful to them every time we meet. They are true patriots.

ON INTRODUCTION OF GOOD SAMARITAN CLEANUP OF ABANDONED HARDROCK MINES ACT OF 2007

### HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am again introducing legislation designed to help promote the cleanup of abandoned and inactive hardrock mines that are a menace to the environment and public health throughout the country, but especially in the west.

In the 107th, 108th, and 109th Congresses, I introduced similar bills aimed at that result. Following the bill's first introduction in the 107th Congress, revisions were made to incorporate a number of changes developed in consultation with interested parties, including representatives of the Western Governors' Association, the hardrock mining industry, and environmental groups.

The bill I am introducing today is also the product of further consultations, including with the Environmental Protection Agency. It represents years of effort to reach agreement on establishing a program to advance the cleanup of polluted water from abandoned mines.

The bill is cosponsored by our colleague from New Mexico, Representative PEARCE. I greatly appreciate his support.

#### THE BACKGROUND

For over one hundred years, miners and prospectors have searched for and developed valuable "hardrock" minerals—gold, silver, copper, molybdenum, and others. Hardrock mining has played a key role in the history of Colorado and other states, and the resulting mineral wealth has been an important aspect of our economy and the development of essential products. However, as all westerners know, this history has too often been marked by a series of "boom" times followed by a "bust" when mines were no longer profitable. When these busts came, too often the miners would abandon their workings and move on, seeking riches over the next mountain. The resulting legacy of unsafe open mine shafts and acid mine drainages can be seen throughout the country and especially on the western public lands where mineral development was encouraged to help settle our region.

#### THE PROBLEMS

The problems caused by abandoned and inactive mines are very real and very large—including acidic water draining from old tunnels,

heavy metals leaching into streams killing fish and tainting water supplies, open vertical mine shafts, dangerous highwalls, large open pits, waste rock piles that are unsightly and dangerous, and hazardous dilapidated structures.

And, unfortunately, many of our current environmental laws, designed to mitigate the impact from operating hardrock mines, are of limited effectiveness when applied to abandoned and inactive mines. As a result, many of these old mines go on polluting streams and rivers and potentially risking the health of people who live nearby or downstream.

#### OBSTACLES TO CLEANUPS

Right now there are two serious obstacles to progress. One is a serious lack of funds for cleaning up sites for which no private person or entity can be held liable. The other obstacle is legal.

While the Clean Water Act is one of the most effective and important of our environmental laws, as applied it can mean that someone undertaking to clean up an abandoned or inactive mine will be exposed to the same liability that would apply to a party responsible for creating the site's problems in the first place. As a result, would-be "good Samaritans" understandably have been unwilling to volunteer their services to clean up abandoned and inactive mines.

Unless these fiscal and legal obstacles are overcome, often the only route to clean up abandoned mines will be to place them on the Nation's Superfund list. Colorado has experience with that approach, so Coloradans know that while it can be effective it also has shortcomings. For one thing, just being placed on the Superfund list does not guarantee prompt cleanup. The site will have to get in line behind other listed sites and await the availability of financial resources. In addition, as many communities within or near Superfund sites know, listing an area on the Superfund list can create concerns about stigmatizing an area and potentially harming nearby property values.

We need to develop an alternative approach that will mean we are not left only with the options of doing nothing or creating additional Superfund sites—because while in some cases the Superfund approach may make the most sense, in many others there could be a more direct and effective way to remedy the problem.

#### WESTERN GOVERNORS WANT ACTION

The Governors of our western States have recognized the need for action to address this serious problem. The Western Governors' Association has several times adopted resolutions on the subject, such as the one of June 2004 entitled "Cleaning Up Abandoned Mines" sponsored by Governor Bill Owens of Colorado along with Governor Bill Richardson of New Mexico and Governor Kenny Guinn of Nevada.

#### LEGISLATIVE RESPONSES TO THE OBSTACLES

To respond to the need for funding, I have joined as a cosponsor of H.R. 2262, the "Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act of 2007," introduced by the distinguished Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, Representative RAHALL of West Virginia, which has now been ordered reported from that Committee. That legislation will establish a Locatable Minerals Fund to receive royalties

and fees related to hardrock mines on Federal lands that, among other things, can be used for the reclamation and restoration of lands and waters adversely affected by past mining on Federal lands.

And the bill I am introducing today responds to a legal obstacle, the potential liability under the Clean Water Act that now deters many would-be "good Samaritans" from undertaking efforts to clean up abandoned hardrock mines.

To help the efforts of "good Samaritans," this bill would create a new program under the Clean Water Act under which qualifying individuals and entities could obtain permits to conduct cleanups of abandoned or inactive hardrock mines. These permits would give some liability protection to those volunteering to clean up these sites, while also requiring the permit holders to meet certain requirements.

The bill specifies who can secure these permits, what would be required by way of a cleanup plan, and the extent of liability exposure. Notably, unlike regular Clean Water Act point-source ("NPDES") permits, these new permits would not require meeting specific standards for specific pollutants and would not impose liabilities for monitoring or long-term maintenance and operations. These permits would terminate upon completion of cleanup, if a regular Clean Water Act permit is issued for the same site, or if a permit holder encounters unforeseen conditions beyond the holder's control. I think this would encourage efforts to fix problems like those at the Pennsylvania Mine.

The new permit proposed in this bill would help address problems that have frustrated federal and state agencies throughout the country. As population growth continues near these old mines, more and more risks to public health and safety are likely to occur. We simply must begin to address this issue—not only to improve the environment, but also to ensure that our water supplies are safe and usable. This bill does not address all the concerns some would-be Good Samaritans may have about initiating cleanup projects—and I am committed to continue working to address those additional concerns, through additional legislation and in other ways. But this bill can make a real difference and I think it deserves approval without unnecessary delay.

For the benefit of our colleagues, here is a brief outline of the bill's provisions:

**Eligibility for Good Samaritan Permits**—Permits could be issued to a person or entity not involved in creation of residue or other conditions resulting from mining at a site within the bill's scope. Any other similar person or entity could be a cooperating party to help with a cleanup.

**Sites Covered by the Bill**—The bill covers sites of mines and associated facilities in the United States once used for production of a mineral (other than coal) but no longer actively mined, but does not cover sites on the national priority list under Superfund.

**Administration**—The permits would be issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or by a state or tribal government with an approved Clean Water Act permitting program.

**Remediation Plans**—To obtain a permit, an applicant would have to submit a detailed plan for remediation of the site. After an opportunity

for public comments, the EPA or other permitting authority could issue a permit if it determined that implementing the plan would not worsen water quality and could result in improving it toward meeting applicable water quality standards.

**Effect of Permit—Compliance with a Good Samaritan permit would constitute compliance with the Clean Water Act, and neither a permit holder nor a cooperating party would be responsible for doing any remediation activities except those specified in the remediation plan. When the cleanup is done, the permit expires, ending the Good Samaritan's responsibility for the project.**

**Report and Sunset Clause**—Nine years after enactment, EPA must report to Congress about the way the bill has been implemented, so Congress can consider whether to renew or modify the legislation, which under the bill will terminate after 10 years.

## INTRODUCTION OF THE AMERASIAN PATERNITY RECOGNITION ACT

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, our immigration law has long recognized that children born outside our country to an American father and a foreign national mother are U.S. citizens.

Unfortunately, there remains a group of forgotten sons and daughters who, despite being born to American fathers, have been unfairly denied U.S. citizenship. These are the offspring of American servicemen and Asian women during the Vietnam and Korean Wars whose fathers did not personally take the steps of acknowledging paternity necessary to make their offspring citizens. But, the American government did that for them by acknowledging that their fathers were American citizens.

Many of these individuals have lived through devastation during war, have been mistreated by their governments because of their mixed race, and many now live in the United States, but only as legal permanent residents.

There is no doubt that Amerasians are the sons and daughters of American fathers. Our American government already made that determination when we admitted them to the United States as legal permanent residents.

To correct this unfair inequality in our law, I am introducing the Amerasian Paternity Recognition Act, along with bipartisan cosponsors, to ensure that Amerasians are accorded U.S. citizenship just like the offspring of other American fathers are.

It is time for us to finally close a chapter in our history that has too long denied Amerasians the opportunity to become citizens and be recognized as the Americans that they are.

SUPPORTING THE OBSERVANCE OF  
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS  
MONTH

SPEECH OF

**HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 29, 2007*

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 230, a resolution supporting the observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This resolution provides a special opportunity to increase awareness on the importance of regular self-examinations, as early detection is the key to increasing survival rates.

This is also an occasion on which we can recognize the more than 2.4 million breast cancer survivors and remember those who are no longer with us on account of this deadly disease. This past October, survivors and activists have reminded us why it is so important to support research throughout the entire year to find a cure for breast cancer.

In this country, this disease strikes 1 woman every 3 minutes, and it is the leading cause of death among women ages 45 to 54. The numbers are staggering—we simply must continue to adequately fund research and ensure that services and treatments are accessible to those who need them.

Mr. Speaker, in honor of those who have fought a courageous battle with breast cancer, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

TRIBUTE TO MOUNT OLIVE AFRICAN  
METHODIST EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH

**HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, Mount Olive African Methodist Episcopal Church of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina will commemorate its 100 years of Christian service at a Centennial Anniversary banquet on November 17, 2007.

Mount Olive AME had a very humble beginning. A small group of faithful African American Christians came together in the Myrtle Beach area in the late 1800s and constructed a one-room structure known as the Bush Shelter. It was in this simple building that this group met to worship under the leadership of Reverend Jackson Hemingway.

In 1907, this group joined with other Christians in the area to organize Mount Olive AME Church. Three years later, a new church was built on the site of the old Myrtle Beach High School Baseball Field. Bishop B.F. Lee led the dedication of the new one-room, wood framed church. Reverend H.B. Salters was the leader of the congregation, and later became a bishop in the AME Church as well. Under his leadership, the church also served as a school for local Black children who attended school only six weeks to five months each year.

After a period of significant growth the church moved to a new location on Carver Street. In 1959, the parishioners' dreams of a new sanctuary were realized.

In 1973, the church was expanded to include an education building. The expanded facility enabled Mount Olive AME to host its first annual conference for the AME churches in the Marion District. This new structure also helped the church grow its education mission. One source of great pride are the church's youth programs, which provide Christian fellowship among young people. The year long programs usually culminate with an annual Christian retreat at Allen University in Columbia, South Carolina.

The church has grown other missions including Sunday School, Women's Missionary Society, Sons of Allen youth leadership mentoring, a media ministry which provides video and audio cassettes to the sick and shut-in, and a street ministry to those needing spiritual guidance.

The church also has outreach programs that serve to better the community as well. Members of Mount Olive AME provide assistance to help community members with their housing needs, utility bills, job referrals, drug counseling, voter registration, parenting skills and the church voluntarily stocks a food pantry. Under the dynamic leadership of Reverend Roger I. Washington since 1998, Mount Olive AME continues to uphold the vision of its founders.

Madam Speaker, I invite you and my colleagues to join me in commending Mount Olive AME Church for a century of faithful service. Its members continue to be beacons of hope in Myrtle Beach. They provide compassion and care for not only its members but also the least among them. I congratulate Mount Olive AME for its rich 100 year history, and I look forward to seeing the good works of the church as it continues to grow and serve the Myrtle Beach community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, on October 29, 2007, I missed the following rollcall votes because I was attending to other congressional matters in my District: rollcall vote No. 1010, passage of H.R. 3224, the Dam Rehabilitation and Repair Act of 2007; rollcall vote No. 1011, passage of H. Res. 573, Recognizing and commending the efforts of the United States public and advocacy groups to raise awareness about and help end the worsening humanitarian crisis and genocide in Darfur, Sudan; and rollcall vote No. 1012, passage of H. Res. 747, Recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali.

If present, I would have voted "aye" on each measure.

A TRIBUTE TO REVEREND RANDOLPH THOMPSON ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 80TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

**HON. G. K. BUTTERFIELD**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, it is with great admiration and respect that I take this time to recognize a dear family friend and one of this Nation's most distinguished citizens, Reverend Randolph Thompson. On October 28, 2007, the Thompson Family will gather at Sammy's Shrimp Box Restaurant in the Bronx, New York for a very fitting occasion—to celebrate Reverend Thompson's 80th Birthday.

Madam, Speaker, I am honored to rise today to share with my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives the accomplishments of this remarkable man. Reverend Thompson was born in Cat Island, Bahamas on October 28, 1927. He received his early education in the Bahamas. In 1948 Reverend Thompson was licensed to preach at Bethel Baptist Church in Nassau, Bahamas. He was ordained in 1953 at Oak City Baptist Church in Method, North Carolina. In 1954 Reverend Thompson received his B.A. Degree from Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina, and in 1957 he received his M.Div Degree from Colgate Rochester Divinity School in Rochester, New York.

As Reverend Thompson traveled about from state to state he remained true to his commitment to be active, productive and dedicated to every facet of his community. He served as Interim Pastor of Pilgrim Baptist Church in St. Paul, Minnesota; Pastor of Victory Baptist Church in the Bronx, New York for 27 years; Director of Baptist Education Center in New York; President of the Nassau Bahamas Association; Chairman of the Committee of the United Missionary Baptist Association in New York; Assistant Dean of Empire State Congress of Christian Education in New York; Instructor of Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention in New York; Pastor of Jackson Chapel First Baptist Church in Wilson, North Carolina; President of NAACP in Wilson, North Carolina; Vice Chairman of the Housing Committee for the Baptist World Alliance in Miami Florida; Parliamentarian for the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Greater Miami; Dean of J.T. Brown Seminar School for Ministers and Missionary Workers in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. He also served as Extension School Instructor at Florida Memorial College in Miami, Florida and Bible Expositor with the Baptist Council of Greater Miami.

Madam Speaker, I first met Reverend Thompson during my teen years when he accepted the call to become Pastor of my home church in Wilson, North Carolina, Jackson Chapel First Missionary Baptist Church. Reverend Thompson brought a new vision and perspective to our Church and made a tremendous difference in our community. My father was the Chairman of our Deacon Board and the two men shared a strong bond of love and friendship. When my father many years later became sick while visiting New York City, it was Reverend and Mrs. Thompson who were there during this time of need.

Reverend Thompson has received countless awards for exemplary service to his community. As a testament, the Victory Baptist Church in the Bronx, New York presented Reverend Thompson with a plaque in recognition of 50 years of outstanding service in the ordained ministry and 27 years of service as pastor. He was also presented with a plaque from the Governor General of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas for outstanding service to the community in the tri-state areas of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

Madam Speaker, for 51 years Reverend Thompson has been married to the former Bernice Coleman of New York City. Mrs. Thompson is a retired New York City Counselor. Reverend and Mrs. Thompson are the parents of five children: Evania Thompson, Esquire is a Law Librarian who currently teaches at the College of the Bahamas; she and her spouse, Robert Frazier have one son, Khalil Frazier; Danita Thompson, MBA, is a High School Math Teacher in the Bronx, New York and is a graduate of Hampton and Atlanta Universities; Danita is the Co-founder and CEO of Onyx Vizion Production Company; Randolph C. Thompson, Esquire, is a Private Attorney at Law in Washington, DC and New York and is a graduate of Hampton University and Catholic University Law School; Stephen Thompson who is a recent M.A. recipient in the Faculty of Social Sciences is a graduate of Connecticut's Wesleyan College, Hebrew University and is also an aspiring writer; and Ranice Adegbile, a Graduate of Brown and New York Universities is a homemaker; she and her spouse, Oluwole Adegbile have two children, Ayoka and Ayomiku.

I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Reverend Randolph Thompson.

#### TRIBUTE TO MARY BERGAN

#### HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to my good friend Mary Bergan for over 35 years of service to the California Federation of Teachers (CFT), and for her tireless work to protect the rights of teachers and students and promote excellence in education.

From the time I was first elected to the California State Assembly and Mary was chosen Legislative Director of CTA, we have worked together on numerous legislative matters. I have enormous admiration and appreciation for her work. Over and over again in Sacramento and in Washington, I have sought Mary's advice on key educational reform and finance issues.

Mary received her Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of California at Berkeley in 1965, and upon graduation, entered the Peace Corps. She was sent to Tunku Kurshiah College in Serenban Negri Sembilan, Malaysia, to teach English and literature. Upon returning to the United States, she became an English teacher at Hillview Junior High School in Pittsburg, California. She became involved with the local American Federation of Teachers (AFTA) and was elected President. She was such an outstanding teacher and effective union leader that only 3

years later, she was offered a staff position as field organizer with the CFT.

Mary's work in the field of education advocacy is legendary. She represented CFT on various task forces and committees through both the California Department of Education and the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges. She served on the Chapter 2 Advisory Committee, the Advisory Committee on Student Assessment, and task forces on educational finance, credential requirements, school restructuring and higher education reforms. She wrote and secured passage of key legislation ensuring the rights of female students and staff in California schools and colleges. Her incredible effectiveness earned her the admiration and respect of her colleagues.

In 1990, Mary was elected a Vice President of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, and in 1991, was elected CFT President. Through the years, she has held numerous leadership positions with AFT, where she was instrumental in instituting important advances in childhood education and health care reform. Also, during the 1980s, she chaired the California Democratic Party's Labor Caucus and she was a delegate to the Democratic National Conventions in 1976, 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004.

Madam Speaker, Distinguished Colleagues, I ask you to join me today in saluting Mary Bergan, a champion of teachers' rights and public school education. Her dedication and selflessness are an inspiration to us all.

#### COMMENDING STAFF SERGEANT JEFFREY CAMACHO AND HIS FAMILY FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE TO SERVICEMEMBERS

#### HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding service to our community provided by Staff Sergeant Jeffrey Camacho, his wife Erika and their children to wounded United States servicemen and women receiving medical care at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany.

The Camacho family resides on Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany and has assumed the task of welcoming the servicemen and women from Guam who are receiving medical care at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center. They extend their care to the families of the injured servicemembers and have become a focal point for our Guam community's efforts to provide assistance to our men and women who have been wounded. The Camachos are volunteers at Landstuhl and at Fisher House. They also open their home to the servicemembers and their families. Many times, the families of injured soldiers need a place to feel normal, to share dinner, and to enjoy Chamorro hospitality. Sometimes it is the simplest gestures, such as making kadu or sharing a disc of the latest Chamorro songs that make recuperation easier for the soldiers and their families. The Camacho family, through their gracious hospitality, has touched the lives of so many people from Guam and we want them to know that we appreciate their efforts.

I met with Jeffrey and Erika Camacho last month during a Congressional Delegation visit to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Germany. I was honored to visit with them and to hear their story of their care and compassion for injured servicemembers and their families. Jeffrey and Erika are performing a great service for our country. Recently, they opened their home and provided comfort to the parents of a soldier who was evacuated from Iraq to Germany. I commend them for their care and concern for their fellow Guamanians.

Jeffrey Camacho was born in Agana Heights, Guam and is a 1999 graduate of George Washington High School in Mangilao. He is assigned to the Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance Division of the 603rd Air and Space Operations Center at Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany. His wife, Erika Arceo Camacho was born in Tamuning, Guam and graduated from George Washington High School in Mangilao in 1995. The Camachos have two children, Kalena Arceo Camacho, age 9, and Kaleb Camacho, age 3.

Staff Sergeant Jeffrey Camacho and his wife Erika are great Americans whose concern for their fellow citizens and their home island of Guam has led them to open their hearts and their home to the families of our wounded soldiers. The families who have been touched by their graciousness are grateful for their warm hospitality. For our families from Guam, they have provided a home away from home. I commend them for all that they have done and for the sacrifices that they make to help others. They are an inspiration to us all.

#### A TRIBUTE TO OREGON CATTLE- MEN'S ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT SHARON LIVINGSTON

#### HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share with you and my colleagues the story of a remarkable woman and leader from eastern Oregon, Sharon Livingston. Sharon is the President of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association and a tremendous friend to rural America. When this week draws to a close, so too will Sharon's tenure as president. Before that occurs, I want to pay tribute to Sharon for the contributions she has made to an outstanding industry.

Sharon embodies the best in rural Oregon frontier women; she loves the land, she embraces the Oregon "can do" spirit, and she values the dignity of everyone she meets. Sharon is a patriot with unflagging pride in her country. She is a great steward of the land, proud of her industry, and intent on doggedly defending the private property rights, water rights, and grazing rights of ranchers. Sharon leads her industry with assertiveness and kindness, always mindful that the American rancher raises the healthiest and highest quality beef in the world. She, like her fellow Oregon beef producers, places a very high priority on providing food of unsurpassed quality for dining room tables around the world.

Sharon's strong values were established at an early age, having grown up in the small community of Long Creek, OR, where she has lived for more than 60 years. The first three

years of her life were spent living in a 2-room house on her grandmother's homestead. The water source for their house was a spring outside the front door and a path led to the bathroom. That property is still a part of her ranch and she values it far beyond the price it might bring on the open market.

Madam Speaker, in addition to being a life-long rancher, Sharon Livingston has also been a teacher and a coach, graduating from Eastern Oregon University following 12 years of school in Long Creek. As a teacher and coach, her skills as a trainer and motivator became her strengths as a leader in the ranching industry. She always does her homework, she works hard to understand complex issues, and she is adept at helping others to grasp the need to go in new directions.

When I was in Burns, OR this summer to meet with ranchers who had their grazing land obliterated by devastating wildfires, Sharon was there to offer encouragement and to ensure that the needed relief was on its way. As you can imagine, Madam Speaker, with livelihoods in serious jeopardy, emotions can run high. Sharon was there as a voice of reason and a message of hope. She made a difference. Her straightforward ways, her openness, and her confidence in the future helped immensely to set us all at ease about dealing with the effects of the catastrophic fire.

Her pride in her industry and her community is strong and deep, but she would tell you that her greatest pride and greatest joy is derived from her family. Tragically, she lost her husband, Fred Livingston, to cancer in 1992. Sharon married Fred in 1957. Sharon gives him high praise when she describes Fred as a cowboy, a calf roper, and a fine man.

Sharon and Fred raised three children: Rilla, Clayton, and Fred John (FJ). Rilla and Clayton live in the Pendleton area, and FJ is Sharon's partner on the ranch. Sharon has four grandchildren whom she treasures. Sharon loves her ranch, her cattle, and her horses. She says that her heart swells with pride when her oldest grandson rides and helps with the cattle. She takes great joy and satisfaction seeing yet another generation value the lifestyle that has meant so much to her. She looks forward to the very near future when her twin granddaughters and another grandson learn to ride and rope. You can be sure that Sharon will be there to teach them.

Madam Speaker, I am so proud of my friend, Sharon Livingston. She is a woman of her word and a woman of conviction. You only have to meet Sharon once to know that she has a keen intellect and a caring heart that makes her a natural born leader. I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting this amazing woman who has served so ably as president of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association.

HONORING CHARLES G. WIMSATT

### HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Charles Wimsatt, an outstanding man with a long history of service to our country and to Kentucky. Mr. Wimsatt has been an active member of American Legion Post 121 in Bardstown, Kentucky for nearly 60 years.

Mr. Wimsatt joined the Army in 1953, serving as a medic. He retired from the Army with the rank of Corporal.

Mr. Wimsatt has made it a personal priority to serve his fellow veterans through his work with American Legion Post 121. He is currently in his 4th term as Post Commander. Under his command the post reached its 100 percent membership goal for the first time in 15 years. Mr. Wimsatt also directed recent facility renovations.

Beyond his service to the American Legion, Charles Wimsatt has found time to be active in many other worthy causes. He has played an integral part in fundraising for his local National Guard unit and is currently raising money for a VA medical facility in Germany. Mr. Wimsatt also served on the Black Mud Volunteer Fire Department for 46 years.

It is my privilege to honor Charles G. Wimsatt today, before the entire United States House of Representatives, for his service to our country and his tireless efforts on behalf of American Legion Post 121. Mr. Wimsatt has made a significant difference to his Old Kentucky Home.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 1010 on H.R. 3224, 1011 on H. Res. 573, and 1012 on H. Res. 747, I was detained due to traffic and was not able to vote.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on all 3.

#### ENDORING THE CALL FOR FAIR, COMPREHENSIVE SENTENCING REFORM IN NEW YORK

### HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to add my voice to the many urging New York State—and the country, at large—to reform its sentencing. The New York Times editorial, "Rational Sentencing," published October 25, 2007, takes up that challenge, forcefully arguing that draconian measures enacted over 30 years ago have done nothing to curb drug use. They have, however, maintained an inflated prison population, hamstrung the discretions of judges, and burdened the state with exorbitant cost. A failed system demands creative solutions—and it demands that they come speedily.

It is incumbent upon the state to empower judges and end indeterminate sentencing that allows them to set minimums and maximums but little else. It should deal with nonviolent offenders in a sensible, compassionate manner, offering community-based treatment in lieu of jail time. It should restore prison-based education and training programs, ridding jails of their revolving-door culture and arming inmates with marketable skills. It should create a permanent and independent sentencing

commission tasked with advising legislators, so that we may never again devolve into an unfair system.

After decades fraught with injustice, smart and widespread reform is long overdue.

#### RATIONAL SENTENCING

New York sparked a disastrous national trend during the 1970s with laws that often penalized first-time drug felons more severely than rapists or murderers. Imitated throughout the country, New York's so-called Rockefeller laws drove up the prison population tenfold and cost the states a fortune, but did nothing to curb the drug trade. Worse still, they tied the hands of judges and destroyed countless young lives—by requiring long prison terms in cases where leniency and drug treatment were clearly warranted.

New York has made incremental changes to the Rockefeller laws in recent years, but has stopped short of restoring judicial discretion. Governor Eliot Spitzer seemed to be pushing in that direction this year when he appointed a commission to study the range of state sentencing practices.

The commission's preliminary report contains many valuable recommendations for fixing the sentencing system as a whole. But the superficial treatment given the Rockefeller laws has raised fears among fair-sentencing advocates that the commission intends to duck the issue in its final report, due next spring. That cannot be allowed to happen. Voters deserve a thorough airing of this issue and a full menu of options for reforming the most draconian drug laws the country has yet seen.

The report rightly calls for ending New York's byzantine system of "indeterminate sentencing," under which a judge imposes a minimum and a maximum sentence and the Parole Board decides when to release an offender. It calls for sentencing certain non-violent offenders to community-based treatment instead of prison. It also recommends restoring prison-based educational and training programs, which have been shown to cut recidivism by giving inmates marketable skills.

Most important, the report calls for the State to establish a permanent, independent sentencing commission to advise legislators. Already working in several states, such commissions have independence and statutory authority. At their best, they help legislatures make rational decisions and avoid disastrous policies that have failed elsewhere, like New York.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately yesterday, October 29, 2007, I was unable to cast my votes on H.R. 3224, H. Res. 573, and H. Res. 747 and wish the RECORD to reflect my intentions had I been able to vote.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1010 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 3224, the Dam Rehabilitation and Repair Act of 2007, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1011 on suspending the rules and passing H. Res.

573, Recognizing and commending the efforts of the United States public and advocacy groups to raise awareness about and help end the worsening humanitarian crisis and genocide in Darfur, Sudan, and for other purposes, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 1012 on suspending the rules and passing H. Res. 747, Recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali, I would have voted "yea."

HONORING THE PORTLAND  
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the Portland Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

The Portland Volunteer Fire Department serves 64 square miles of Sumner County outside the city limits. The department has received three U.S. Homeland Department of Security grants.

Without volunteer fire halls, like Portland, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the state of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the Portland Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Kenny Crowson, Asst. Chief George Knuckols, Captain Richard Lanius, Lt. Jessica Knuckols, Lt. Bobby Wilson, Tony Green, Brent Dyer, Josh Covington, Tav Matthews, Arthur Benjamin, Samantha Roberson, Scott Meece, Lindi Costner, Williams Keen, Russ Caudill, David Roberson, and Jim Youngblood.

IN MEMORY OF JOE CRAPA

**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, we were saddened with the news last week that an outstanding public servant had lost his battle with cancer. Joseph R. Crapa was serving as the executive director of the bipartisan U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) at the time of his passing on October 25. It was my privilege to know Joe and to work with him and his fellow commissioners and the staff at USCIRF in their dedicated efforts to protecting religious freedom throughout the world.

I would like to share the touching remarks our colleague Rep. DAVID OBEY gave at Joe's

funeral on October 29 at St. Peters Catholic Church on Capitol Hill. Joe had served as Congressman OBEY's chief of staff from 1987 to 1997, the last three years as Democratic counsel to the House Appropriations Committee. I also insert for the RECORD a news release from the USCIRF mourning the passing of its executive director.

We express our deepest condolences to Joe's wife of 40 years, Barbara Vaskis Crapa of Alexandria, Virginia; his son Judd, daughter-in-law Gretchen, and grandsons Sebastian and Baird.

REMARKS BY CONGRESSMAN DAVID OBEY—  
FUNERAL FOR JOSEPH R. CRAPA

Joe Crapa could do just about everything! He taught high school.

He represented 1,000 teachers in budget negotiations.

He taught college courses in literature, writing, and government.

He was a fundraiser, and outreach director for the congressional Democratic leadership.

He was a key figure in a government relations firm.

He represented three separate government departments in dealing with Congress—Commerce, USAID, and EPA.

Building on his experience growing up in "rural" Brooklyn, he served as staff director for a House Agriculture Subcommittee.

He was staff director for two of the "easiest" people in Congress to work for—Chuck Schumer and me.

He worked at my side for 10 years.

Finally, he served as Executive Director of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

He did all of those jobs well.

He had a superb professional career! But WHAT he accomplished professionally in his life is not nearly as impressive as HOW he did it.

This is a tough and often indifferent town. If you are not alert, it can wear you down. Temptations always abound to cut corners and settle for boilerplate mediocrity. But not Joe!!

Joe was a tough, street smart pol in the best sense of that term, but what epitomized him most of all was his deep understanding of human nature and his unflinching honesty. I cannot tell you how many times he said to me, "Dave, that's the dumbest idea I've ever heard of." And sometimes his language wasn't that sweet. Joe was determined to strip away the irrelevant, the secondary, the trivial, in order to reach the fundamental.

Where did that come from? I think it came from a character and intellect that was expanded and burnished by his exposure to the questions that count by the Jesuits and then as a PhD student in literature, being exposed to the core realities of human experience.

As a practical, operational public man, he—with no guilt—accepted the compromises that are the stock in trade in politics. He understood what Will Rogers meant when he said, "When two people agree on everything, one of them is unnecessary." He understood, as my great Irish friend John Hume once told me, that "in a democracy politics is a substitute for violence."

But Joe also had rock hard convictions on a few essentials:

He fiercely believed that the widening gap between the most privileged and the poor is obscene.

He believed, as Bill Moyers has said, that politics "must be more than who gets what; that it should rise above the merely transactional and become transformational; that it must even the starting gate so that people equal in humanity but not in resources have a reasonable opportunity to pursue a full and decent life."

He passionately believed that every world citizen had a right to pursue their religious beliefs free from persecution or dictation and he was immensely proud of his relationship at the Commission with those of every philosophical bent, including Frank Wolf, who was similarly passionate.

He believed in a religion of tolerance and respect.

He worried that politicians could trivialize and cheapen religion. He did not believe it was legitimate for politicians to claim God as their own celestial party chairman, as a fellow New Yorker once warned against.

As Barbara pointed out Saturday, he believed that a respectful but separate relationship between church and state was essential to preserve and protect both religion and democracy.

Joe loved his last job, but I will always see him as a superb example of so many on Capitol Hill who never serve in public office, whose name is never on the door, who day in and day out love their country and try to make this a better world.

Because I believe so many of you see Joe the way I see him, I would like to share with you part of a letter I wrote to Joe when he went into the hospital for the last time:

"Joe—Judd was in my office yesterday and told me the latest on your health situation. I wish to God you had received better news. I'm about to leave to catch a plane for Wisconsin, but before I did I wanted to put a few thoughts down on paper so that you know how I feel about you.

When I was first interviewing you to run my office, my first impression in the first 10 minutes we talked was that there was no way in God's green earth that I could ever develop chemistry with this fast talking refugee from Brooklyn. I have been forever grateful that you proved me wrong.

I hope you know how grateful I am for everything you did with and for me. . . . I was blessed to have your energy, know how, insight, judgment, and wisdom. I hate to think how little I would have accomplished without having you beside me during these years.

But even more than that, I appreciate the personal support and friendship you gave me in those years, even down to today. Politics is a tough life and those of us who live it know how exposed and vulnerable we all are.

During these years, you were able to give me sound advice on every front, but the most valuable aspect of your counsel was the fact that underneath it all was a moral core that was true to both you and me. That is a special link between "brothers" that I hope we both treasure.

You are a great public servant, a great friend, and a great human being. Thank you for understanding and accepting my weakness and shortcomings and for enhancing my strengths. Please know that there are many, many, many people in this town who feel the same way about you. . . ."

And as we say in the House of Representatives, I ask unanimous consent that these sentiments be considered the views of all of you here who knew, respected, and loved him.

USCIRF MOURNS PASSING OF EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR JOSEPH CRAPA

WASHINGTON.—Joseph R. Crapa, the Executive Director of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, died Thursday after a struggle with cancer. Mr. Crapa, 63, had led the Commission since 2002.

"Joe had sharp political instincts but a soft personal touch," said Michael Cromartie, current Chair of the Commission. "He had an unwavering, principled commitment to advancing the work of this bipartisan Commission in protecting religious

freedom worldwide. Everyone who knew and worked with Joe found him to be a remarkably committed public servant."

"We have lost a uniquely talented leader, trusted counselor and beloved friend to each of the Commissioners," said Commission Vice Chair Preeta D. Bansal, who served as Commission Chair in 2004-2005. "I respected tremendously his commitment to the substance of our work and his appreciation for the critical issues at the juncture of religion and foreign policy at this unique period in our history. His sharp political and human instincts and his deep love for humanity were crucial to our work in this sensitive arena. We loved him and will miss him dearly."

"It was an honor to serve on the Search Committee that recommended Joe Crapa to be the Executive Director of the Commission," said Vice Chair Richard D. Land. "As a Republican appointee, I was most happy to enthusiastically endorse and commend this faithful Democrat who loved America and loved the freedom for which it stands. He was a tireless proponent of religious freedom around the world and was instrumental in making the Commission an extremely effective voice for religious freedom. It was an honor and a privilege to have known him and served with him. All of us who knew him will miss him."

"Joe Crapa took a newly established Commission, at a crucial time in U.S. history, and, during his tenure, turned it into a respected voice on post-9/11 foreign policy and a source of new research and insights into the influence of religious freedom and related human rights on world affairs," said Felice D. Gaer, Chair of the Commission in 2002-2003, when Mr. Crapa joined USCIRF, and in 2006-2007.

"Joe's great love of people and respect for religion transcended all differences. With ebullience and panache, he effectively directed the Commission through a transformative period when the salience of the universal and inalienable right of religious freedom has been demonstrated daily by world events," said Nina Shea, who has served as a Commissioner since USCIRF's founding in 1999. "He will always be an inspiration for me and those who had the privilege of working with him."

Prior to coming to the Commission, Mr. Crapa served as Chief of Staff to Senator Charles E. Schumer (D-NY). Mr. Crapa spent the four prior years as Assistant Administrator at the U.S. Agency for International Development. He also served as Assistant Secretary at the Department of Agriculture and Associate Administrator at the Environmental Protection Agency, where his portfolio included Congressional Relations and Public Affairs.

For 10 years, Mr. Crapa served as Chief of Staff to Rep. David Obey (D-WI), currently the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, and also as counsel to the House Appropriations Committee. He was an Adjunct Professor of Government at Georgetown University (1990-1995) and was a Stennis Fellow of Congress (1995-1997). He also was a Lecturer for the Washington Campus, a consortium of universities where he lectured on Congress and the policy process.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Mr. Crapa graduated from Cathedral College Preparatory Seminary. He received a B.A. from St. John's University, an M.A. from Duke University, and a Ph.D. at the University of Arizona, where he was a National Defense Teaching Fellow.

The Commission extends its most sincere condolences to Mr. Crapa's wife Barbara, son

Judd, daughter-in-law Gretchen, grandsons Sebastian and Baird, and his extended family.

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HONORING THE ORLINDA  
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the Orinda Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

The Orinda Volunteer Fire Department was established in 1973 and today is made up of 20 brave, hardworking men and women. These firefighters also serve as medical first responders.

Without volunteer fire halls, like Orinda, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the state of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the Orinda Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Dusty Johnson Sr. Assistant Chief Nancy Johnson, Captain Dusty Johnson Jr. Captain Charlie Groves, Captain David Spivey, Clay Frey, Justin Barnhill, Bubba Dorris, Nick Poe, Jason Hemper, Ashley Johnson, Amanda Groves, Travis Garman, Mike Brinley, Jason Vanderheyden, Derrick Crossfield, Larry Phillips, Peter Pecori, Tommy Clowers, Judy Barnhill, John Barnhill, Rachael Payne, Paul Jones, Noah Payne, and Daniel Couch.

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IN MEMORY OF HOWARD NEWTON

**HON. MIKE ROSS**

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Howard Newton of Dumas, Arkansas, who passed away September 25, 2007, at the age of 89.

Howard Newton was a decorated World War II veteran, a retired farmer and an inspiration to all who knew him. Upon graduating from Tillar High School, he enlisted in the Army where he honorably served his country earning numerous medals including the Silver Star, the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. His bravery and courage was exemplified by his selfless leadership in battles including the noted rescue of trapped Allied forces in Bastogne, Belgium, during World War II.

After the war, Howard Newton returned home to Desha County to pursue his true pas-

sion of farming the land that he loved. He worked thousands of acres of farmland in Desha County and was the first farmer in the area to irrigate cotton. He continued his work in agriculture by chairing the committee to build a Farm Bureau office in McGehee that would eventually benefit thousands of farmers from across the region.

In addition to his leadership in the field of agriculture, Howard Newton was also a man of devout faith. He was a member of the Newton Chapel United Methodist Church where he served as board member and Sunday School teacher, as well as a familiar face in the congregation, and always someone with open ears for conversation and fellowship.

Howard Newton will forever be remembered for his outstanding service to our country and his community. I extend my deepest condolences to his wife, Frances Rands Newton; his daughter, Gene Beard Curry of Pottsboro, Texas; his sister, Hazel Wheeler of Sulphur Springs; his stepchildren, Sarah Jones of Soldotna, Alaska and Allan Rands of Dumas; and to his numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews and friends. Howard Newton will be greatly missed in Dumas, Desha County and throughout the State of Arkansas, and I am truly saddened by this loss.

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HONORING THE MT. VERNON  
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the Mt. Vernon Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

In 2005, Mt. Vernon Volunteer Fire Department responded to 14 wild land, brush and grass fires. They ran 24 vehicle accidents and E.M.S. calls, eight residence fires, and 23 others for a total of 69 responses.

Without volunteer fire halls, like Mt. Vernon, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the state of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the Mt. Vernon Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Ray D. Hicks, Faye Hicks, David Dyer, Cheryl Dyer, Coel Bean, Rickey Bean, Randy Bean, Mary Bean, Harold Hatcher, Eddy Hatcher, Jason Rhoton, Shawn Hatcher, Shannon Hatcher, Johnny Young, Denise Rhoton, Crystal Key, Robert Cox, Adam Bryant, and Craig Copes.

CONGRATULATIONS TO KIMBERLY WOODARD AND JOI SHEFFIELD ON WORK DONE FOR THE ELIAS MOTSOALEDI PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL IN SOWETO, SOUTH AFRICA.

### HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and congratulate Miss Joi E. Sheffield and Miss Kimberly A. Woodard as they embark on a journey to improve the lives of young boys and girls in South Africa through education.

Miss Sheffield and Miss Woodard are launching their first event, in partnership with The Silver Spring (Maryland) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated, Shari Sheffield, The Perfect Glass LLC and TV One, by hosting a charity event this evening at the Verizon Center's concert featuring legendary recording artist Stevie Wonder. Proceeds from their event will benefit The Elias Motsoaledi Pre-Primary School in Soweto, South Africa in the Gauteng Province.

The Elias Montsoaledi Pre-Primary School is a temporary school located in the informal settlement of Montsoaledi. The school was built in 2002 with donations from The Links, Incorporated. The Elias Montsoaledi Pre-Primary School is a private school that does not qualify for funding from the South African government and is reliant on private funding and donations for school tuition and fees, teacher's salary, books and supplies, and meals.

In May 2007, Miss Sheffield and Miss Woodard traveled to South Africa as part of a Links, Incorporated-sponsored trip, where they visited The Elias Montsoaledi Pre-Primary School, among many others. Following that experience they walked away committed to working to improve the lives of the children they met in Soweto, South Africa.

Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate Miss Sheffield and Miss Woodard on the work they are doing in support of those seeking educational excellence in South Africa, and I wish them well in their endeavors.

### HONORING THE MONTEREY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

### HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the Monterey Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

In 2000, the Monterey Volunteer Fire Department bought a new pumper fire engine for their 1985 Ford fire engine. The Monterey Fire Department is privileged and honored to serve their community and their country.

Without volunteer fire halls, like Monterey, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the state of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the Monterey Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Richard Milligan, Assistant Chief Kevin Peters, Johnny Bowman, Mike Looper, Jeff Hicks, Matt Parrott, Jody Key, John Webb, Jonathan Sisco and Terry Coggsdale.

### IN MEMORY OF EARL CLEMONS, JR.

### HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Earl Clemons, Jr., formerly of Pine Bluff, Arkansas, who passed away October 20, 2007, at the age of 83.

Earl Clemons, Jr., dedicated his life to his family, his community and his country. He was born in the small Delta town of Tamo, in Jefferson County, and his deep affection for the Delta region can be measured by the enormous contributions he made to the agriculture community of Arkansas, something he dedicated his passions and energies to throughout his long life. It can always be said he lived life to the fullest and impressed upon each person he met the value of giving back, something that was evident in his numerous leadership roles he held in life.

Upon graduation from Grady High School, Earl Clemons, Jr., served his country in the 103rd Infantry Division of the U.S. Army. After his service, he returned home and earned a degree in agricultural engineering from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. He took his enthusiasm for agriculture back to his hometown of Tamo where he refined his craft on the family farm. Over the years, he gave everything he had to agriculture and to the Delta region. His famous "Farm Tour" was a detailed history of agriculture in the Delta that included visits to a local cotton gin, cotton oil mill and river port where grain was loaded.

In addition to his work in the field of agriculture, Earl Clemons, Jr., was also a man of devout faith. He was a member of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Pine Bluff. His belief in the importance of community led him to serve in many civic organizations such as the Grider Field Airport Commission and the local Board of Directors of Simmons First National Bank in Pine Bluff.

I extend my deepest condolences to his wife, Bennye Jane Haskins Clemmons; his two sons, Earl "Skip" Clemons III of Little Rock and Neil Clemons of Chicago, Illinois; his two daughters Jane Clemons of San Francisco, California and Rose Clemmons Gladner of Little Rock; and to his six grandchildren and numerous friends. Earl Clemons, Jr., will be greatly missed in Pine Bluff, Jefferson County, the agriculture community and throughout the state of Arkansas, and I am truly saddened by this loss.

### HONORING THE LANCASTER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

### HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the Lancaster Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

The Lancaster Volunteer Fire Department is a small, rural fire department in a close-knit community. The department hosts the Fire Hall Jam every August.

Without volunteer fire halls, like Lancaster, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the state of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the Lancaster Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Tim Manning, Asst. Chief Larry Moss, Keith Williams, Honorary Lifetime Member Bradley Helm, Tim Bates, Larry Watts, Danny Bass, Ellic Gullett, James Grenty, Kevin Moss, and Keith Boyd.

### CELEBRATING AMERICA'S HERITAGE ACT

SPEECH OF

### HON. DAVID LOEBSACK

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 24, 2007*

Mr. LOEBSACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1483, Celebrating America's Heritage Act. I thank Congressman REGULA, Chairman RAHALL, and their staff for their hard work on bringing this deserving and important legislation to the floor for full consideration. This bi-partisan legislation will authorize additional funding to existing National Heritage Areas, ensure adequate management of these areas, and establish six new Heritage Areas which enjoy broad community support.

The National Heritage Area program is unique in that it involves whole communities in public/private partnerships to recognize, and appreciate our Nation's shared history for generations to come. I'm so pleased that both sides of the aisle support the goals of the National Heritage Area program. President Herbert Hoover said, "Honor is not the exclusive property of any political party." This bill proves that honoring our past is also not the exclusive property of any political party.

President Hoover, a native Iowan, was born in West Branch, Iowa on August 10, 1874. Thanks in part to the Silos and Smokestacks, or America's Agricultural Heritage Partnership program, President Hoover's birthplace, and other similar historic sites are preserved and included in the 37 county, 20,000 square mile

region of Iowa which showcases over 100 farms, agribusines and heritage sites to a world wide audience.

The Silos and Smokestacks program boasts over \$1.2 million in Federal grants awarded with a match from our local Iowa communities of \$8.3 million. Of these grants, 27 were awarded to schools allowing 1,619 students to learn about Iowa's heritage.

With the increased funding authorized in this legislation for the existing National Heritage Areas, over 300,000 students in the Silos and Smokestacks area will have a chance to learn about Iowa's agricultural history and heritage. I urge my colleagues to support this culturally important legislation.

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HONORING THE WEST SIDE  
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the West Side Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

The West Side Volunteer Fire Department was established on April 1, 1994. A State grant provided 12 sets of bunker gear and pagers. West Side Volunteer Fire Department responds to incidents including structure fires, trash or brush fires, vehicle fires, accidents with injuries, and EMS First Responder calls.

Without volunteer fire halls, like West Side, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the State of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the West Side Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief John Naylor, Assistant Chief Paul Simon, Captain Jack Barton, Matt Studd, Scott Tresler, Jeremy Genter, Jeremy Vassar, Jeff Smith, Dale Fulghum, Donnie Simon, Ashley Powell, and Nicholas Barton.

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HONORING THE WESTMORELAND  
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the Westmoreland Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

The Westmoreland Volunteer Fire Department was organized in 1958. The department members logged over 1,600 training hours in

2006, and the department responded to 148 calls for fire and rescue services and assistance on emergency medical situations. The department has 23 members.

Without volunteer fire halls, like Westmoreland, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the State of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the Westmoreland Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Mark Jenkins, Asst. Chief Tim Shelton, Scott Vantrease, Rick Myers, Phil Crook, Kevin Bandy, Todd Camp, Jon Pullen, Christina Pullen, Tim Reagan, Brad Penick, Eric Harrison, Jason Graves, Larry Gross, Tommy Kirby, Brandon Gross, Sean Milam, Brandon Carter, Jermy Akins, Brent Simons, Greg Carr, Megan Harrison, Devin Branham, and Troy Moss.

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THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY BRIDGE  
RECONSTRUCTION AND INSPEC-  
TION ACT OF 2007

**HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DeFAZIO), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, and I introduce the "National Highway Bridge Reconstruction and Inspection Act of 2007", which will improve the safety of Federal-aid highway bridges, strengthen bridge inspection standards and processes, and increase investment in the reconstruction of structurally deficient bridges on the National Highway System.

The tragic collapse of the I-35W Bridge, which occurred in my home state of Minnesota on August 1, 2007, demonstrates the need to make a commitment to invest in the maintenance and reconstruction of our nation's infrastructure. Many facilities are being stretched to the limit of their design life and beyond.

Of the 594,101 bridges in the National Bridge Inventory, 26.2 percent of America's bridges—more than one in four—are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. There are 73,784 structurally deficient bridges and 80,317 functionally obsolete bridges. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), more than \$65 billion could be invested immediately in a cost-beneficial way to address existing bridge deficiencies.

We must take action to put in place a framework to address this situation, and ensure that the safety and structural integrity of the nation's highway bridges do not continue to deteriorate.

Since the collapse of the I-35W Bridge, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit have conducted in-depth hearings into

the Highway Bridge Program and the National Bridge Inspection Program. During those hearings, we have found a number of significant problems that must be addressed to ensure the overall safety of the nation's highway bridges. The National Highway Bridge Reconstruction and Inspection Act of 2007 establishes a framework for risk-based prioritization of bridge infrastructure investments and ensures that the limited resources available today will reach those facilities most in need of repair.

The National Highway Bridge Reconstruction and Inspection Act require the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to immediately update the National Bridge Inspection Standards to establish uniformity among States in conducting inspections and evaluations. The bill also strengthens training, certification, and qualification requirements for all highway bridge inspectors.

The bill requires States to inspect structurally deficient bridges each year using the best practicable technologies and methods. All other bridges would be required to be inspected every 2 years. The legislation allows FHWA to extend the biennial inspection requirements if FHWA determines that granting the extension will increase the overall safety of the State's bridge inventory.

In response to concerns raised in a U.S. Department of Transportation Inspector General report, the bill requires States to calculate the load rating for highway bridges that have a structural deficiency in a load-carrying member and ensures that the safe load-carrying capacity for such bridges is properly posted.

Our legislation also requires the Department of Transportation to conduct a risk-based prioritization for the reconstruction of deficient Federal-aid highway bridges. The National Academy of Sciences would then independently review the process of prioritization to ensure that investment and resource decisions are based on need, not politics.

The bill also calls on States to develop a 5-year performance plan for the inspection of highway bridges and the reconstruction of structurally deficient and functionally obsolete Federal-aid highway bridges. The performance plans will provide a roadmap for addressing bridge needs, and will ensure greater accountability.

The bill authorizes an additional \$2 billion for reconstruction of structurally deficient bridges on the National Highway System. These funds are in addition to funds authorized for the Highway Bridge Program under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users. These funds are distributed to the States by formula, and Congressional or Administration earmarks are specifically prohibited.

Finally, the bill limits the transferability of Highway Bridge funds. The funds authorized by this bill are not transferable to other Federal-aid highway programs. In addition, the bill provides that a State may transfer Highway Bridge Program funds to other Federal-aid Highway programs only if the State demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the State has no structurally deficient Federal-aid highway bridges. This "fix-it-first" approach will ensure that bridge program funds are utilized as intended by Congress in SAFETEA-LU—to improve the safety of highway bridges.

The bridge collapse of August 1, 2007, has served as a wake-up call for many policy-makers and leaders around the country. We must take the lessons of the I-35W Bridge, and use them to create an accountable and reliable bridge program that guards the safety of all users. The National Highway Bridge Reconstruction and Inspection Act of 2007, which Mr. DEFAZIO and I introduce today, begins the process of ensuring that such a tragedy will not happen again.

HONORING THE SOUTHEAST  
COMMUNITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the Southeast Community Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

The Southeast Community Fire Department is made up of 41 volunteers, including 9 board members, and serves over 10,000 people. The department responds to fires, motor vehicle crashes, medical calls, and other service calls. In 2005, the Southeast Community Fire Department responded to nearly 450 calls.

Without volunteer fire halls, like Southeast, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the State of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the Southeast Community Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Mickey Summers, Asst. Chief Henry Thayer, Capt. Terry Turner, Engineer William Summers,

Rodney Pryor, Raymond Summers, Billy Templeton, Randy Thaxton, Sam Clark, Aaron Bruce, David Kellogg, Charlie Johnson, Ken Weidner, Tommy Dale, Rich Goddard, Sonny Briggance, Luke McKnight, Brandon Clark, Rick Donley, Darrell Templeton, Chasey McKnight, Johnny Smith, James Civils, Lee Daniels, Steven Johnson, Patrick Foster, Aaron Kinser, Jamie Blair, John Reeser, Micheal Webb, and Kyle Withers.

HONORING THE SOUTH CARTHAGE  
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the South Carthage Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

The South Carthage Fire Department has operated from the same fire station, located on Main St., next to City Hall, since it was founded in 1963. The department has serviced the community for 44 years.

Without volunteer fire halls, like South Carthage, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the state of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the South Carthage Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Ed Lankford, Asst. Chief Tony Hembree, Captain A Team Blythe Myers, Bobby Hewitt, Richard Ellenburg, Scottie Grisham, David McCall, Captain B Team Grover Ellenburg Jr., John Antle, Todd Currie, Tracy Fields, Chris Dennis,

Alicia Fields, Derrick Brooks, David Brown, Brian Owensby, Aaron Sterling, Ricky Slack, Safety and Training Officer Terry Wood, Kennie Bryant, and James Way. Reserve Fire Department Members: Steven Myers, Chris Fields, Jonas Bullington, and Johnny Richardson.

HONORING THE SMITH COUNTY  
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. BART GORDON**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 30, 2007*

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the Smith County Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

The Smith County Volunteer Fire Department was founded in 1986. Volunteers contracted a building, and the community bought a surplus Tennessee Air National Guard Dodge power wagon with a 250-gallon fiberglass tank. The department has nine active members.

Without volunteer fire halls, like Smith County, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the State of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the Smith County Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Ronnie Jackson, Asst. Chief John Robinson, Gerald Bush, George Eisenbach, Josh Collins, Mike Posey, Jake Watts, Eddie Barnes, and Josh Tisdale.