

president of the Baptist Ministers Conference of Baltimore and Vicinity, an organization which represents some 250,000 congregants.

Outside of serving the Lord and leading souls to His kingdom, Pastor Vaughn's greatest joy comes from his family. He has been blessed with 44 years of blissful marriage to his wife, Lillian. They have three children, Corrogan Vaughn, Lynnette Vaughn, and Cassandra Vaughn-Fox; a son-in-law, Larry Fox, Jr.; and three wonderful grandchildren.

Whenever I see Pastor Vaughn in the community, his grandchildren are not far behind. No matter what his daily commitments may be, he picks them up from school every day and spends quality time with them, sharing his wisdom and his love.

Baltimore is truly blessed to be able to call a stalwart such as Dr. Alfred C.D. Vaughn one of our very own. As a son of two preachers, I can say with certainty that it is fitting to give God praise for this dynamic leader. For 50 years he has preached the Gospel with truth and honor, not to glorify himself but to save souls and make others' lives better. He is the kind of man who, just by his presence, makes us want to stand taller and reach for the very best that is within us. As my father once said, he is a man whose presence is presence enough.

I am honored that God allowed our lives to eclipse. And today I thank Pastor Vaughn on behalf of Baltimore and our entire Nation for his dedication, commitment to God and his church and his community.

THE FIRST AMENDMENT— RELIGION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the first amendment is first in our Bill of Rights because the provisions in it are the most important. Without those provisions the rest of the Bill of Rights are meaningless.

The first amendment states in part that "Congress," that's us, "shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

This amendment, like many others, was a reaction to colonial life under King George III. The Church of England was the official Church of England and some of the colonies. The Framers hoped to protect the exercise of any religion by prohibiting the establishment of a national religion. A national religion like the Church of England was supported by taxation. Attendance at services was even mandatory. No marriage or baptism outside of the Church was sanctioned. There were civil and even criminal penalties for members of religious minorities.

So the U.S. Constitution's framework made it possible for all religious groups

to gain legal protection. The freedom to practice one's own religion is the reason why the colonists settled and founded this great country. That is the primary reason why people left England, to seek religious freedom.

The Founding Fathers did not believe that government and religion had to be entirely separate, however. The first President, George Washington, said in his first inaugural address, declared as his "first official act" his "fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe" and that this Almighty Being "might bless this new government."

President Washington also echoed this religious attitude in his farewell address in 1796 when he said, "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports."

When our Constitution was drafted, the elderly statesman Benjamin Franklin said that if the Good Lord is concerned about a sparrow that falls from the trees, He certainly would be concerned about a new Nation at its birth, and he encouraged Congress to go in prayer. And Congress did so that morning and prayed, and ever since then our Congress starts each morning with a prayer.

The first Congress recognized the importance of religion in government when it enacted the Northwest Ordinance in 1787, and it begins: "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

The first amendment includes the free exercise clause. Like the establishment clause, the framers included the free exercise clause to protect religious minorities from persecution. The establishment clause prohibits government creation of, support, or endorsement of a national religion. And the free exercise clause protects individual religious beliefs and practices from government interference.

The significance of the free exercise of religion clause is that it affirms the value of religion in American culture and even promotes public display of religion.

Many Americans believe that the first amendment created a separation between church and state, but those words do not exist anywhere in the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, nor the Declaration of Independence.

These words came from a letter written by Thomas Jefferson in 1801 to the Danbury Baptist Association, who was concerned about the Congregationalist Church becoming the national religion, and that is why Jefferson made the comment to the Danbury Baptist Association that there is a separation between church and state. These words do not promote a prohibition by government against religion in the public sector.

Billy Graham once said that "The Framers of our Constitution meant we

were to have freedom of religion, not freedom from religion." But antireligious radicals are on the offensive, trying to make the United States free from religion. These radicals want the United States to be a secular government like France. But that's not what our Founding Fathers intended when they created our country.

When Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, he proclaimed that God gives us all of our rights. He wrote that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights."

Jefferson's reference to God is echoed throughout this Nation. Our currency mentions God. Our government buildings have religious scenes and words etched into them. We pledge allegiance to the Nation under God. We even have the great lawgiver Moses on the far wall looking directly down on the Speaker's chair.

So, Mr. Speaker, the mention of God in our culture is not an establishment of religion. It's a fact that this Nation was founded on religious beliefs and religious values. That is an historical fact.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1630

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CLAY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PAULETTE MARIE McFARLAND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, we have lost Paulette Marie McFarland, 58, who was a trailblazer, an innovator in early childhood development, dying of pancreatic cancer on Tuesday, October 23, 2007, at her home in Chatsworth, California.

She was born Paulette Marie Mahan in Bluefield, West Virginia, on August 12, 1949. She received her bachelor's in early childhood education from Hampton University in Newport News, Virginia, and her master's in education from Mount St. Mary's College in Los Angeles, California.

Paulette taught in the Los Angeles Unified School System for 30 years and spent the majority of her tenure at Van Nuys Elementary. She received many accolades during her career, which included Teacher of the Year for her school region. Paulette served as a Master Teacher for student teachers for Cal State University, Northridge and University of California, Los Angeles. She participated in the Bilingual Teacher Classroom Program and reviewed the latest research in education

and applied that knowledge to her teaching strategies.

She always admired educators and their ability to create challenging and novel ways to encourage students in learning. As a bilingual teacher, she strove to make education an exciting, joyful, and motivational tool. She was one who is able to motivate and challenge students in a positive and stimulating manner where students are encouraged to reach their potential and value their own self-worth. She was that person. Most importantly, she was an outstanding teacher, and she was one who loved and enjoyed teaching.

Paulette believed some of the major challenges today are low achievers, child and drug abuse, gangs, and development learning disabilities. And she promoted the importance of the individual increase in parental involvement providing parent education, smaller classes, and tutoring programs as possible solutions.

Paulette was not only committed to her students and her family, but the community at large. For many years, she served on the planning committee for the NAACP Image Awards. She was an active fund-raiser for the Chrysalis Homeless Center, the United Negro College Fund, and other charitable organizations. She participated in the Literacy Campaign for the American Broadcasting Company, and volunteered in food and clothing drives.

For the last 2 years, Paulette served as scholarship chairperson for the San Diego African American Alumni Association, and with her husband, Roland, served as president for 4 years. She secured funding for more than 100 students, making it possible for them to pursue a college education.

On December 4, 1982, Paulette married Roland McFarland, vice president for broadcast standards and practices at Fox Broadcasting Company, at Hollywood Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles, California.

Her memory lives on through her beloved husband, his children, Curtis McFarland and Roslyn Daniels; mother, Odessa Mahan; father, David Mahan; sisters Beverly Cummings and Margo Mahan; brother, Garner Mahan, and many cherished grandchildren, family, and a host of friends. May she, indeed, rest in peace.

BORDER PATROL AGENTS RAMOS AND COMPEAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today is 324 days of incarceration for two former U.S. Border Patrol agents. Agents Ramos and Compean were convicted in March of 2006 for shooting a Mexican drug smuggler who brought 743 pounds of marijuana across our border into Texas. These two decorated Border Patrol agents, who were doing their duty to

protect the American people from an illegal alien drug smuggler, are serving 11- and 12-year prison sentences.

This week, the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans began hearing oral arguments for the agents' appeal. During the hearing, one of the three judges on the case, Judge E. Grady Jolly, said, "It does seem to me that the government overreacted here. For some reason, this one got out of hand."

The judges in this appeal will need to examine why the judge allowed the smuggler to plead the fifth amendment despite his immunity agreement, and why the jury was not allowed to hear crucial evidence that the smuggler was a repeat offender. The judges will also need to look at why the prosecutor charged the agents under a statute that was intended for violent criminals carrying guns, not for law enforcement officers acting in the line of duty.

Nothing can erase the suffering these agents have undergone and the months they have spent in prison in solitary confinement away from their families. However, a judgment in favor of Ramos and Compean in this appeal would be an important victory and the first act of justice these agents have seen since their arrest.

Mr. Speaker, the injustice of this case should not go unexamined. Last night, I hand-delivered a letter to JOHN CONYERS, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, to request a hearing on this case. Chairman CONYERS responded that he would carefully review my letter and my request.

In the eyes of the American people, the prosecution of these border agents was not justified. The comments by the appeals judge are justification enough for the House Judiciary Committee to review this case to determine exactly why this case got out of hand.

An unbiased review of this case by Attorney General Mukasey, a hearing by the House Judiciary Committee, and a Presidential pardon for these agents are all steps that can and should be taken to rectify this gross miscarriage of justice.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the family of these two border agents, Compean and Ramos, that we in Congress will not give up the fight for justice until their loved ones are at home.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. As a strong supporter of H.R. 6, the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, I wanted to take a few moments to speak about this important bill, which we passed earlier today in the House, and how delighted I am and my constituents are for its passage. It is a historic step forward in our goal toward reaching energy independence.

H.R. 6 raised CAFE standards to 35 miles per gallon by 2020, cutting oil consumption by 1.1 million gallons per day, also, eliminating greenhouse gases equivalent to 28 million cars from our roads. That's 28 million cars.

Among many important additional initiatives, it includes new energy efficiency standards to reduce demand. It extends renewable energy tax credits for solar and other renewable sources. It includes a renewable fuels standard that contains safeguards to reduce carbon emissions and protect our environment. It also contains a renewable electricity standard, requiring utilities to get 15 percent of their power from renewable sources by 2020. It also assists and empowers small businesses to cut costs and scale up innovative energy solutions.

It will create thousands of new good-paying green jobs and build on the work that has begun in places like the Ella Baker Center in my district in Oakland, California, which is helping to lead the green jobs revolution.

Mr. Speaker, this bill takes the right steps forward to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, to save our constituents money, and to fight global warming. Most importantly, it echoes the innovative steps that have already been taken by individual cities, States and districts like my district in the East Bay of California, Alameda County, to be specific.

In many ways, the California Bay Area, and my district in particular, are in the forefront of the innovation and research on alternative energy climate change and the environment. Ongoing research into alternative and renewable energy at the University of California at Berkley, one of the premier public universities in the country, of course I am an alma mater of the University of California at Berkley and very proud of that, we hold the promise of a cleaner and brighter future for our children, our country and the world.

Businesses in my district have also taken the lead in greening their activities to reduce waste, improve energy efficiency, and save water, minimizing the impact on our environment.

Innovative programs like the Ella Baker Center, which I already mentioned, and funded in part through the City of Oakland, are also training youth in my district about the importance of environmental stewardship and providing them with new job opportunities and new career paths. Community-based organizations in my district have also taken the lead in advocating for environmental justice and equity for all of our constituents. Together, my community is at the forefront of a robust environmental movement that is quite literally changing the world for the better.

The passage of the Energy Independence and Security Act will help these grass-roots efforts expand and grow through Federal initiatives designed to put the United States on a path to energy sustainability.