

standard of excellence. Under Mr. Englett's direction, sports complexes were constructed, a strength center was erected, the gymnasium was renovated, and intercollegiate athletics were reinstated, after nearly 12 years of their absence.

In addition to his outstanding modifications to student life, Mr. Englett developed the Raider Club to supplement institutional scholarship assistance. In just 13 years, the Raider Club has raised over \$1 million in fundraising and has substantially increased scholarship aid.

During his tenure at Okaloosa-Walton, Mr. Englett expanded college athletics to encompass much more than sports. He devised a plan for gender equity, increased graduation rates, and because of his efforts, saw his team win 14 Panhandle Conference Championships. His fusion of athletics into college life elevated the school from academic excellence to overall distinction.

Northwest Florida is greatly indebted to Mr. Englett's foresight and ingenuity. His immense dedication to the community has led to an increased enrollment at Okaloosa-Walton College and a greater academic environment.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the U.S. Congress, I am proud to recognize Michael K. Englett on his outstanding achievements and exemplary service in Okaloosa County and northwest Florida.

TRIBUTE TO LANCE CORPORAL
GENTIAN MARKU

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, I want to pay tribute to a hero, LCpl Gentian Marku of Warren, Michigan. Today, I ask that the House of Representatives honor and remember this exceptional young man who died serving his country.

Gentian Marko immigrated with his family to the United States in 1997, at the height of civil unrest in Albania. Once arriving in the United States, Gentian left behind his troubled childhood, and became the intelligent, diligent, and responsible young man that we know. After graduating from Warren Woods Tower High School in 2001, Gentian had hoped to become a police officer. At the recommendation of his father, a former first captain in the Albanian military police, Gentian joined the Marine Corps to help his chances at acceptance to the police academy.

After enlisting in the Marines in August 2002, Gentian was assigned to the First Battalion, Marine Expeditionary Force. In 2003, Gentian returned to Albania during a 2-week exercise with the Marines and served as a translator during meetings with the Albanian military and civilian leaders. Gentian had said it was one of his proudest moments being able to do something for both of his countries.

On November 25, 2004, Lance Corporal Marku was killed in action in Fallujah, Iraq, in the Anbar province. At the time, the Marines had awarded him medals for good conduct, humanitarian service, combat action and other activities.

My thoughts, prayers, and deepest gratitude for their sacrifice go to Gentian's family. There are no words that can relieve their pain and I

can only offer to convey my deep respect and highest appreciation.

Madam Speaker, Lance Corporal Marku gave the ultimate sacrifice not only for the freedom and security of his family and our country, but for the people of Iraq. I wish to remember his bravery, conviction, and selflessness as he is honored today.

CONGRATULATING WILLIAM P.
BURKE, THE RECIPIENT OF THE
GREATER PITTSSTON FRIENDLY
SONS OF ST. PATRICK 2008
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to William P. Burke, of West Pittston, Pennsylvania, who is the 2008 recipient of the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick Achievement Award.

He graduated in 1956 from St. John's High School in Pittston and later from the Wilkes-Barre Business College where he majored in finance and accounting.

Mr. Burke served in the U.S. Army, First Armored Division, Fort Hood, Texas, from 1961 to 1963. Mr. Burke has been an active member of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick for 52 years.

President Harry S. Truman was guest speaker at the first Friendly Sons banquet Mr. Burke attended. Mr. Burke is a sustaining member and past president of the organization. He was the recipient of the Man of the Year Award in 1991.

Mr. Burke is a charter member of the Wolfe Tone Luzerne County Division I Ancient Order of Hibernians and is presently chairman of the standing committee. He is a member of the President John F. Kennedy Council 372 Knights of Columbus and its Fourth Degree, serving as comptroller for the past 40 years. He is also a member of the Knights of Columbus Choir.

Mr. Burke is a member of St. Casimir, St. John the Baptist, St. John the Evangelist, and St. Joseph Parish, Pittston, where he serves as an usher and a senior altar server. He is also a member of the parish finance council.

Mr. Burke has been a baseball coach in the West Pittston Little League and a basketball coach for the Wyoming Area Catholic High School.

He has served as chairman of the West Pittston Democrat Organization and he is a former member of the Luzerne County Democrat Executive Committee. He also served as parade chairman for the Pittston Tomato Festival.

Mr. Burke is a member of Fox Hill Country Club and the West Side Social Club, Avoca. After 37 years of employment with Pope and Talbot Company, he served for several years as director of purchasing for Luzerne County, a post from which he retired in 2006.

Mr. Burke and his wife, Nora, are the parents of three children. They also have nine grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Burke on the occasion of this

special honor. Mr. Burke's dedication to family and community has improved the quality of life and highlighted the value of service above self.

HONOR THE LIFE OF LIEUTENANT
RAFAEL VAZQUEZ

HON. RON KLEIN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Lieutenant Rafael Vazquez of the Palm Beach Fire Rescue. Known as "Ray," this brave firefighter died tragically on Monday, March 3, as a result of a random shooting in West Palm Beach, Florida.

The details of Lt. Vazquez's death are heartbreaking. The 42-year-old lieutenant had just finished eating lunch with his wife, Michele, and their 4-year-old son when, ever the caring parent, Ray decided to go back inside the restaurant to exchange a toy that had come with his child's meal.

It was a fateful decision. Once inside, Ray was met by a deranged gunman, Alburn Edward Blake, who opened fire. When it was over, Lt. Vazquez lay dead and four others were injured. Then Alburn Edward Blake turned the gun on himself.

Ray's life was one of tireless dedication toward protecting his fellow citizens. Formerly a firefighter with the town of Lake Park, he was hired by the Palm Beach Fire Rescue in February 2001 and was promoted to Rescue Lieutenant in January 2007. He had been assigned to Rescue 28 in Royal Palm Beach, Florida. Lt. Vazquez is survived by his wife Michele, an officer with Palm Springs Public Safety, and their 5 children, ages 4–21.

In closing, I think the best way to honor Ray's life in Congress is to let his wife Michele speak for him in her own words. She says, "I don't understand why these horrible things happen. But no horrible thing can take away our memories. My husband was an outstanding father and the most giving husband. He was my best friend; I'm going to miss him so much."

A dedicated firefighter, father, and human being, Lt. Ray Vazquez deserves all the honor and praise this distinguished body can bestow upon him.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL
LAND ASSISTANCE, MANAGE-
MENT, AND ENHANCEMENT ACT
(FLAME ACT)

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Federal Land Assistance, Management and Enhancement Act, or the FLAME Act.

Last year, our country saw the devastating effects of catastrophic, emergency wildland fires in southern California. For the past several years, we have witnessed tragic fire seasons that have put American lives and our

treasured public lands in harm's way. Fire seasons are getting longer and more intense due to climate change, drought, and other factors.

As a result, Federal fire suppression spending has increased substantially over the past 10 years and projections appear to indicate that this trend will continue into the foreseeable future.

The dramatic rise in these costs is eroding other nonfire programs and impacting the core mission of the Federal land management agencies. In the case of the Forest Service, for example, wildland fire suppression activities now account for approximately 48 percent of its budget. This year's alarming and irresponsible budget request from the Forest Service, which cuts over half of the funding for State and private forestry, continues the sad trend: our Forest Service is turning into the fire service.

Furthermore, both the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior have had to "Rob Peter to Pay Paul" by borrowing funds from other agency accounts to cover the escalating costs of wildland fire suppression. Last year, for example, the Forest Service spent \$741 million more than was budgeted for wildland fire suppression, and the Department of the Interior spent \$249 million more than was budgeted for wildland fire suppression. And in the case of the Forest Service, the costs of catastrophic, emergency wildland fire suppression activities account for the vast majority of suppression expenditures, as 2 percent of fires account for 80 percent of costs.

Madam Speaker, it is clear that something needs to be done to resolve this problem. That is why today I am introducing the FLAME Act.

The FLAME Act establishes a Federal FLAME fund for catastrophic, emergency wildland fire suppression activities. The FLAME fund would be separate from the budgeted and appropriated agency wildland fire suppression funding and is to be used only for catastrophic, emergency wildland fires. The Federal land management agencies will continue to fund anticipated and predicted wildland fire suppression activities within their annual budgets.

The Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior may declare catastrophic, emergency wildland fire suppression activities eligible for the FLAME fund by issuing a Suppression Emergency Declaration. The declaration will evaluate the size, severity, and threat of the individual wildland fire incident.

The FLAME Act continues our stewardship of all lands by making funds available for catastrophic, emergency wildland fire suppression activities on State and private land consistent with existing agreements. Funds will also be available for catastrophic, emergency wildland fire suppression on Indian lands.

The FLAME Act also requires that the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior submit a long-overdue report to Congress containing a cohesive wildland fire management strategy. This report will improve efforts to prevent fires on our public lands. This report will address critical fire prevention issues such as identifying a system for assessing the level of fire risk to communities, and indentifying a system to ensure that the highest priority fuels reduction projects are being funded first.

Madam Speaker, catastrophic, emergency wildland fires can cause tragic loss of life. and

property. I am proud to be joined in introducing the FLAME Act today by my colleagues Mr. NORM DICKS and Mr. RAÚL GRIJALVA. I look forward to working together to ensure that our country has the necessary tools to combat catastrophic, emergency wildland fires.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, on March 4, 2008, I was unavoidably detained and was not able to record my votes for rollcall Nos. 88–90.

Had I been present I would have voted:

Rollcall No. 88—"yes"—To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to lease certain lands in Virgin Islands National Park, and for other purposes.

Rollcall No. 89—"yes"—To direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey the Alta-Hualapai Site to the city of Las Vegas, Nevada, for the development of a cancer treatment facility.

Rollcall No. 90—"yes"—To provide for the release of certain land from the Sunrise Mountain Instant Study Area in the State of Nevada and to grant a right-of-way across the released land for the construction and maintenance of a flood control project.

IN RECOGNITION OF MRS. CORA SAXON

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I would like to request the House's attention today to pay recognition to a special day in the life of a constituent of mine, Mrs. Cora Saxon.

On March 17th, Mrs. Saxon will celebrate her 100th birthday. To help commemorate this special occasion, her friends and family are surprising her with a luncheon in Anniston, Alabama on March 8th.

Mrs. Saxon was born in Clay County, Alabama and was the first daughter born into the family. She was named after each of her aunts, taking her full birth name as Susie Cora Cordia Betty Jo Marie. She later married Henry Elbert Saxon with whom she had one daughter, two grandchildren, and four great grandchildren. She is expecting great great grandchildren to be born in April.

In 1941, Mrs. Saxon and her husband bought a farm on which she later began making candies for a living. Over the years, her small enterprise grew and thrived and was later named Saxon Distributors and Candy Kitchen, Inc. From their humble beginnings, her company grew to 14 stores across Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee.

I would like to congratulate Mrs. Saxon on reaching this important milestone in her life. I wish her a happy birthday and the best in the future, and of course, thank her for so many sweet memories.

ON THE LOSS OF EVE CARSON

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I received news today of a horrific event that has shocked and deeply saddened the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill community, which I represent.

The Chapel Hill police informed us today that UNC's student body president, Eve Carson, had been shot to death a short distance from campus yesterday morning. This senseless act of violence ended the life of a promising young leader and left a community of family, friends and admirers mourning in disbelief. The police department is sparing no effort to find the people who committed this heinous act and to bring them to justice.

Eve was originally from Athens, Georgia. Since the time she arrived in Chapel Hill in 2004, she excelled in her college career. In addition to being elected student body president, she was a Morehead Scholar, a North Carolina Fellow, a member of the Phi Beta Kappa honor society, and was double majoring in political science and biology.

Eve put a high priority on service to her community. During her college career, she mentored middle school students, taught science to elementary school students, and served as a running coach for young girls.

To Eve, service knew no borders. She spent her summers volunteering in Ecuador, Egypt and Ghana, and she co-chaired a student organization devoted to alleviating hunger around the world.

I recently met Eve at a reception hosted by UNC's Chancellor James Moeser. My wife and I were impressed with this lovely young woman who—it was clear to see—had so much potential to make a difference in the world. She expressed to me her interest in working abroad after graduating in May, perhaps in Africa. At the time of her death, my office was working to help her find a way to realize her goal.

Unfortunately, Eve will not be able to realize that goal.

Our community is deeply sad at the loss of this special person. We also regret the loss for all those who would have been touched by Eve's big heart in the future. This is truly a loss for us all.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Eve's family and friends and with the UNC community as they gather on Polk Place this afternoon to remember Eve and to grieve together.

Madam Speaker, I ask permission to include a brief biography of Eve Marie Carson at this point in the RECORD.

BIOGRAPHY OF EVE MARIE CARSON

Eve Marie Carson, 22, was elected student body president at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in February 2007. Her term would have ended in April.

A native of Athens, GA, Eve was born Nov. 19, 1985. She came to Carolina in the fall of 2004 as the recipient of a prestigious Morehead Scholarship. A member of the Phi Beta Kappa honor society, she was a pre-medicine student majoring in both political science and biology. As a North Carolina Fellow, she was part of a four-year leadership development program for undergraduates.

While at UNC-Chapel Hill, she was extremely active in both leadership and service