

designated goals. This bill explicitly authorizes end-strength by 1,500 members to 47,000 and increasing Coast Guard funding to \$8.4 billion which has not been done since the 1970's.

The act also includes provisions regarding shipping and navigation, vessel size limits, maritime drug law enforcement, fishing vessel safety, liability limits for natural gas deepwater ports, claims against the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, dry bulk cargo residue, merchant mariner matter, and security.

Mr. Speaker, every year, 95 percent of the goods coming into the United States arrive at our nation's seaports. These goods are shipped from ports around the world, some from developed countries and others from developing countries. I am particularly concerned about ports in developing countries. Developing countries have limited resources which means their ability to maintain effective anti-terrorism measures is limited.

We can not allow terrorists to exploit this limitation. Rather, we should work with developing countries and others to build up their anti-terrorism measures. This assistance will benefit all of us. The developing countries will gain the support they need, and we will close a potential gap in our own supply chain. Every gap we close is one less gap that can be exploited by terrorists. I am pleased that this bill requires the Department of Homeland Security to develop a strategic plan to utilize existing assistance programs to assist foreign ports and facilities that are found by the Secretary not to maintain effective anti-terrorism measures. This bill furthermore authorizes the Coast Guard to lend, lease, and donate equipment and provide technical training to non-compliant foreign ports or facilities. The multiple layers of security enhancement authorized in this legislation will minimize the ability of terrorists to target to maritime commerce and negatively impact the global supply chain.

I am pleased that the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007 includes specific provisions relating to Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). Within this legislation, MSIs are defined as a historically Black college or university, a Hispanic serving institution, a Tribal College or University, a Predominantly Black institution, or a Native American-serving institution. Section 901 of this important legislation states that the Commandant shall establish a management internship program for students at MSIs, enabling them to intern at Coast Guard headquarters or Coast Guard regional offices in an effort to support the development of civilian, career-midlevel, and senior managers for the service. This legislation furthermore instructs the Coast Guard to work with the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium to create this internship program and authorizes \$2 million to be appropriated to this program.

Mr. Speaker, I have long stressed the importance of including this nation's MSIs in the effort to secure our nation. Section 903 of this legislation states that the Commandant shall establish a Coast Guard Laboratory of Excellence-MSI Cooperative Technology Program at three minority serving institutions to focus on priority security areas for the Coast Guard, such as global maritime surveillance, resilience, and recovery. It also calls on the Commandant to encourage collaboration among the minority serving institutions selected to

participate in the cooperative technology program and institutions of higher education with institutional research and academic program resources and experience. These and other measures included within this bill are absolutely imperative as the Office of Workforce Planning has recently revealed that only 5 percent of the officer corps is African American and only 12 percent of the officer corps is comprised of ethnic minorities, while in the last 3 years the numbers of minority ascensions have actually decreased.

The Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007 also increases oversight and efficiency of the TWIC program, which was originally mandated six years ago, yet continues to flounder. To date only 230,000 out of an estimated 845,000 applicants have enrolled in the TWIC program, while the deadline for enrollment is September 25, 2008. While this provision of the Coast Guard Authorization is both timely and important, there is still more which must be done in order to ensure that the program is both effective and efficient, which is why I have offered an amendment.

I would like to reiterate only few of the obstacles that workers have faced in my state of Texas as well in my district of Houston. For example, a marine worker enrolled at the Houston Port enrolled on December 13, 2007. To this date, he still does not yet have a TWIC card. He remained on hold for 4 hours and 10 minutes and was finally told by the operator that he would have to return to Houston to be fingerprinted again after APR. Incidentally, a representative of Higman Marine Services, Inc., asked the same question about their employee, and she was told that he should not return until June. This blatant inconsistency in service and information is simply unacceptable. Furthermore, another transportation worker went to the Beaumont center about 3 weeks ago to pick up his TWIC after being notified it was ready. He traveled from Hemphill, TX (117 miles), and was told that the card was accidentally shipped to Houston and he could drive there (85 miles) to pick it up. He presently does not have his card. The list of incidences in which workers have to continually overcome structural impediments is too long for me to name. It is from my concern for these workers that I have introduced my amendment.

My amendment calls for the Secretary of Homeland Security to compile an assessment of the enrollment sites for transportation security cards issued under section 70105 of title 46, United States Code within 30 days of enactment. The assessment should, at minimum, examine: The feasibility of keeping those enrollment sites open 24 hours per day, and 7 days per week, in order to better handle the large number of applicants for such cards; the feasibility of keeping those enrollment sites open after September 25, 2008; and the quality of customer service, including the periods of time individuals are kept on hold on the telephone, whether appointments are kept, and processing times for applications.

My amendment furthermore calls on the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop timelines and benchmarks for implementing the findings of the assessment as the Secretary deems necessary. By identifying the areas in which enrollment sites for homeland security cards are ineffective and inefficient and creating a timeline through which to implement necessary changes and benchmarks

to ensure their progress and accountability, we will make this Nation a safer place accessible to labor and operations alike.

Long before the horrific events of September 11, 2001, citizens of America relied upon the Coast Guard to ensure the safety of our waterways, and we depend on them still. Therefore, I urge my fellow members of Congress to also support the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2007 and ensure this rich and necessary tradition remains a thriving and useful part of not only our national defense strategy but also to protect us and the environment from those threats by sea.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this rule and the underlying legislation.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. SPACE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 60th anniversary of the Nation of Israel.

I join a bipartisan group of my colleagues in support for H. Con. Res. 322—a measure recognizing the 60th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel and reaffirming the bonds of close friendship and cooperation between the United States and Israel. This measure passed the House of Representatives earlier this week by a vote of 417 to 0.

As a member of the Democratic Israel Working Group, I am proud to commend Israel and her people on the occasion of this significant milestone.

We and the international community are grateful to Israel for her contributions in the fields of agriculture, technology, and medicine to name a few. Furthermore, Israel is a true democracy in an unstable region of the world, and the nation has long been an ally of the U.S.

Again, I join my colleagues in commending Israel and in looking forward to a future of continued friendship.

SUNSET MEMORIAL

HON. TRENT FRANKS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 24, 2008

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I stand once again before this House with yet another Sunset Memorial. It is April 24, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun sets today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand. That's just today, Madam Speaker. That's more than the number of innocent lives lost on September 11 in this country, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,876 days since the tragedy called *Roe v. Wade* was first handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood

of almost 50 million of its own children. Some of them, Madam Speaker, died and screamed as they did so, but because it was amniotic fluid passing over the vocal cords instead of air, no one could hear them.

And all of them had at least four things in common. First, they were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone, and each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each one of their mothers, whether she realizes it or not, will never be quite the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever. Yet even in the glare of such tragedy, this generation still clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims, those yet unborn.

Madam Speaker, perhaps it's time for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves of why we are really all here. Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government." The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution, it says, "No State shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law." Madam Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here.

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is the clarion declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their Creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Every conflict and battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to our commitment to this core, self-evident truth. It has made us the beacon of hope for the entire world. Madam Speaker, it is who we are.

And yet today another day has passed, and we in this body have failed again to honor that foundational commitment. We have failed our sworn oath and our God-given responsibility as we broke faith with nearly 4,000 more innocent American babies who died today without the protection we should have given them.

Madam Speaker, let me conclude in the hope that perhaps someone new who heard this Sunset Memorial tonight will finally embrace the truth that abortion really does kill little babies; that it hurts mothers in ways that we can never express; and that 12,876 days spent killing nearly 50 million unborn children in America is enough; and that the America that rejected human slavery and marched into Europe to arrest the Nazi Holocaust is still courageous and compassionate enough to find a better way for mothers and their unborn babies than abortion on demand.

So tonight, Madam Speaker, may we each remind ourselves that our own days in this sunshine of life are also numbered and that all too soon each one of us will walk from these Chambers for the very last time.

And if it should be that this Congress is allowed to convene on yet another day to come, may that be the day when we finally hear the cries of innocent unborn children. May that be the day when we find the humanity, the courage, and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect these, the least of our tiny, little American brothers and sisters from this murderous scourge upon our Nation called abortion on demand.

It is April 24, 2008, 12,876 days since Roe v. Wade first stained the foundation of this Nation with the blood of its own children, this in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

CELEBRATING THE 125TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF BETHESDA HOS-
PITAL IN SAINT PAUL, MN

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 24, 2008

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Bethesda Hospital on its 125th anniversary in Saint Paul, MN. Since its founding in 1883, this hospital has been a leader in our community in providing quality health care services through a compassionate and holistic framework. Bethesda Hospital is now the largest long-term acute care hospital in the region and has earned a national reputation for excellence and innovation in health care.

In 1883, Bethesda Hospital was established by Reverend A. P. Monten, D.D., pastor of the first Swedish Lutheran Church in Saint Paul, along with the sponsorship of the Tabitha Society of the Swedish Lutheran Minnesota Conference. Rev. Monten and his fellow Swedish Lutherans converted a single family home near Lake Como in Saint Paul into a hospital with 20 beds to serve individuals who were impoverished and sick.

Today, Bethesda Hospital stays true to its deep roots, still helping those with illnesses recover, regardless of their ability to pay. Bethesda Hospital has also remained in Saint Paul these past 125 years. It has expanded its capacity since its modest origins, now providing 262 beds for patients, employing 740 staff, and treating about 1400 patients on an annual basis.

Bethesda Hospital has grown greatly throughout its history. In 1892, Bethesda moved from its Lake Como neighborhood to downtown Saint Paul at 9th and Wacouta Streets, near the Union Depot. This new facility featured two operating rooms on the third floor which were known to be the best operating rooms in the whole state.

Despite additions to Bethesda's facility at 9th and Wacouta, it eventually outgrew that location. By 1932, after an intense fundraising campaign to construct a new hospital, it reopened at what is still its current home, just steps away from the State Capitol.

As Saint Paul and its surrounding area has changed over the years, Bethesda Hospital has also adapted to meet the community's developing needs. During the closing and consolidation of hospitals in 1986, Bethesda joined together with St. John's and St. Joseph's Hospitals to merge under the newly created HealthEast Care system. Three years later, Bethesda was officially designated as a Long-Term Acute Care Hospital to focus on treating patients who require extensive and rigorous therapy to recuperate.

Bethesda Hospital is now a specialty hospital serving a wide-range of patients of all ages and illnesses, such as student football players with concussions, car accident survivors, and patients dealing with multiple sclerosis, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.

Bethesda Hospital's inter-disciplinary teams of trained professionals develop individualized treatment plans for patients that may not only include behavioral, cognitive, occupational, physical, respiratory, and speech therapies, but also a variety of recreational therapies such as art therapy, pet therapy, and virtual therapy.

Bethesda Hospital has been widely acclaimed for its award-winning programs and services. In particular, the Brain Injury of Minnesota as well as The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities have paid tribute to the hospital's outstanding service in the area of brain injury.

Building on its specialty in treating brain injuries, Bethesda Hospital continues to respond to the serious health care needs we face. Currently, Bethesda Hospital is collaborating with the Minneapolis VA Medical Center, Minnesota National Guard, the Department of Defense, and the Veterans Affairs Central Office in Washington, DC to identify ways that Bethesda Hospital can serve the veterans and injured soldiers across our nation who are returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. I am so pleased that Bethesda Hospital plans to answer the call and serve our troops and veterans who have served us so honorably. Bethesda Hospital has the expertise to conduct critical predeployment baseline cognitive skills testing and follow-up post deployment testing to evaluate our veterans' health conditions and track their recovery.

Madam Speaker, in honor of the legacy of caring that the dedicated donors, staff, patients, and volunteers at Bethesda Hospital have created, I am pleased to submit this statement for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD recognizing the 125th anniversary of Bethesda Hospital.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CITIZEN
AND COMMUNITY PREPARED-
NESS ACT OF 2008

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 24, 2008

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Citizen and Community Preparedness Act of 2008, which reaffirms the Federal Government's commitment to helping our communities prepare for and respond to acts of terrorism, natural disasters and other emergencies.

I am glad to be joined today in introducing this bipartisan bill by the Ranking Member of my Subcommittee—the Subcommittee on Emergency Communications, Preparedness and Response—the gentleman from Pennsylvania, CHARLIE DENT.

I am also pleased to have Homeland Security Committee Chairman BENNIE THOMPSON, as well as Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE, as original cosponsors of this legislation. They are true leaders in the area of emergency preparedness and have been instrumental in the drafting of this bill.

If a disaster—whether large or small—occurs in a community, local responders and disaster-relief organizations will be there to help, but citizens need to be ready as well.

In fact, when individual citizens, families and communities are prepared, the fear, anxiety,