

being too cozy with industry and pressuring maintenance personnel to reduce the number of violations they cite among the carriers, we need to know that so we can stop it. If the FAA is trying to implement a dangerous and inadequately tested national air traffic pattern change and air traffic controllers believe people will die as a result, we need to know that so we can stop it. This legislation would help us to do that.

Among its provisions, H.R. 6493 would create an independent office of Aviation Safety Whistleblower Protection within the FAA. This office would be responsible for receiving complaints and information from FAA and airline employees about possible violations of safety regulations, federal laws, and standards. This office would allow FAA and airline employees to disclose anonymously their safety concerns without fear of retaliation.

RECALLING THE INFAMOUS ANNI-
VERSARY OF THE INVASION OF
CYPRUS

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recall the brutal invasion of Cyprus that occurred thirty-four years ago on July 20, 1974.

The people of Cyprus continue to suffer the consequences of that contemptible invasion. Even now, Turkish troops continue to illegally occupy Cyprus. The island remains torn by a militarized fence that slices a 113-mile line across the island.

I encourage both sides to fully comply with the guiding principles of the July 8, 2006 agreement. This agreement seeks to establish working groups that can operate together to reunify Cyprus into one bizonal, bicomunal federation. The July 8 agreement is an important achievement which gives us great cause to remain optimistic that a resolution is possible.

While we can mark the significance of the July 8 agreement, we cannot celebrate until the goal of a unified Cyprus is fully and finally realized. We cannot celebrate until the anniversary of the July 20 invasion is no longer a source of pain for Cypriots, and barbed wire fence no longer splits Cyprus into two disparate sections. The United States, the European Union, and the United Nations have all expressed their support for a solution that will reunify Cyprus. With the steadfast determination of the international community and the people of Cyprus, we will persist until the goal of a free, undivided Cyprus is realized at last.

Madam Speaker, I remain hopeful that Cyprus will once again be free and undivided. After thirty-four years of division, illegal occupation and oppression, the long-suffering Cypriot people deserve to live in freedom and unity today.

HONORING AN ACHIEVEMENT OF
THE UCWIP INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize one achievement of my former intern, Anu Ambikaipalan who participated in the Australian Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program, UCWIP. After an experience in Washington, she returned to Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia where she will soon graduate and pursue a career in law at a prestigious local firm.

Ms. Ambikaipalan was recently distinguished as a leader in her academic pursuits and was asked to deliver a keynote speech at a breakfast reception honoring "Women in the Law." I commend to your attention the insightful text of her speech to reiterate the importance of providing professional development opportunities for youth on Capitol Hill and how these experiences can translate into successful contributions to communities, even on the other side of the world. As Members of Congress, we must continue to support initiatives like the UCWIP which not only improve the lives of our constituents, but engage the global community. The text of her speech follows:

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen. It's great to see so many people here today, and especially university students. Being able to sleep in till 12 noon is one of the prized possessions of a university student, so I'm glad you could all make it.

It is indeed a privilege to be able to speak in front of so many accomplished women and men in the law here. I'd like to thank the Victorian Council of Law Students' Society and the convener of today's breakfast, Katie Elder, for asking me to speak to you this morning on my experience as an Intern in Congress in Washington, D.C., through the Uni-Capitol Washington Internship Program or the UCWIP.

In the summer of 2007, I along with 11 other Australian university students, were fortunate enough to receive the opportunity to work as Interns in the U.S. Congress.

As exciting as this was, I was brought back to reality when the response given by my friends to my impending internship was— "So, is it like the West Wing?" or "An Intern? . . . Like Monica Lewinsky?"

The UCWIP is a program run by Mr. Eric Federing, who directs and manages the program pro bono. It is now in its tenth year and includes 8 participating Australian universities from around Australia with approximately 60 applicants a year.

Applicants are required to choose from 13 Congressional offices which participated in the program. My first preference was an African American Congressman, Mr. Alcee Hastings, who represented the 23rd district of Florida. I chose Congressman Hastings because of his strong stance on racial equality and social justice. Having been in Congress for almost 18 years, the Congressman is an important member of the Democrat party's leadership and often champions the rights of minority groups.

When I arrived in Washington, D.C., in January 2007, I had no idea that the next two months would be a life changing experience.

I remember walking through the hallowed halls of Congress on the first day, nervous but also in complete and utter wonderment. As the weeks went on, I tried not to become too complacent as to where I was. Every

morning I would take the long route to my office so I could see the Capitol Building and remind myself that I was working at the centre of global politics.

When we arrived on Capitol Hill, the U.S. was witnessing monumental changes, with the Democrats regaining the majority in the House of Representatives and the Senate. The highlight for me personally, was when my Congressman gave me his only ticket to the historical swearing in of the first female Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi.

The biggest talking point in Congress with the change in power was the Iraq War and the troop surge.

We were fortunate enough to see both Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright give testimonies before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in relation to the troop surge.

As my Congressman sits on the Intelligence Committee, I was lucky enough to attend one of the very rare open Intelligence Committee hearings with Hon. John Negroponte, Director of National Intelligence and General Michael Hayden, Director of the CIA as witnesses.

However, the UCWIP was not all about work and serious political issues. The program is established to allow participants to gain a well-rounded appreciation of American culture and history. We were given a guided tour of the battlefields of Gettysburg, visited Philadelphia and met extraordinary individuals such as Mr. Joe Ichiuji, a Japanese-American who fought for the U.S. army in World War II, while his family were detained in concentration camps in America because of their Japanese descent.

We also attended major social events such as the inaugural ball for the new mayor of Washington, D.C., Adrian Fenty and the annual Roe v. Wade dinner run by the National Abortion Rights Action League, Pro-Choice America.

The most significant part of my internship was the opportunity to develop legislation to combat gang violence which the Congressman could introduce into this Congress.

This issue came to the forefront after the rapid increase in deaths resulting from gang violence in the Congressman's district. By the 5th January 2007, 8 people had been killed from gang violence. That was more than one person a day. One of those killed was a 2 year old boy who was left in the car as his parents fled from a drive-by shooting.

Since I had very little knowledge of gang violence, I decided to put my years of researching for law assignments into good use. I jumped onto Google. As I scrawled through pages of information, I realized that I had just opened Pandora's Box. Gang violence in America is one of the deadliest and most dangerous activities on the streets, and its scourge has permeated into mainstream American culture through music, movies and television.

Through my research, I discovered that the two problem areas were: (1) trying to deter youths from entering gangs and (2) the high rate of re-offending by youths once they were released from juvenile detention.

Looking through the limited legislation that had already been put through Congress, it was evident a fresh new approach was required. Clearly, the problem will never be solved by middle-aged, college educated, men and women from privileged backgrounds sitting on Capitol Hill, who are so far dissociated from the unemployed, impoverished and generally black young men who roam the streets, searching for drugs and money in order to survive. A connection has to be established between those making the law and the young people on American streets who live day by day in fear of their lives and in the shadows of gang violence.