

House lifted the moratorium on off-shore oil exploration and oil shale production. If the moratorium is lifted in the Senate as well, America will be one step closer to energy relief.

Lastly, the House passed legislation last week to uphold the landmark Supreme Court's decision in *DC v. Heller*. *DC v. Heller* upheld the 2nd Amendment rights of residents of Washington, DC that had been trampled on for over 30 years. I would have proudly supported the Childers amendment to H.R. 6691 and supported the amended bill on final passage. As a matter of fact I am a co-sponsor of legislation very similar to the Childers Amendment, H.R. 1399, the District of Columbia Personal Protection Act. I am glad to see that the House has taken a bi-partisan step to protect the Constitutional right to keep and bear arms.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to continue providing relief to those suffering from Hurricane Ike and I appreciate the speed with which this Congress has acted to help provide that relief thus far. However, just as we learned after Hurricane Rita, this process will be on going and it will take the continued effort of Congress, Texas, local communities and individual citizens to complete the recovery effort. I ask that all Americans continue to offer their thoughts and prayers to those along the gulf coast.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WAYLAND  
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

**HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 3, 2008*

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a fine educational institution in the 19th Congressional District of Texas. This year, Wayland Baptist University, located in Plainview, Texas celebrates its 100th anniversary of excellence in education.

Wayland Baptist University is a 4-year university with a total of 14 campuses and a student body of more than 6,000. Founded in Plainview in 1908 by Dr. James Wayland, the University has become one of the largest Southern Baptist institutions of higher education in the country.

Throughout its 100 years, Wayland Baptist University has seen much progress and growth. While maintaining its commitment to providing a quality Christian education, Wayland has been at the forefront of change. It was among the first universities in the country to admit women and minority students, offer distance learning programs, and to create programs directed toward military students.

Wayland places a strong emphasis on student success and provides an excellent learning environment. The school offers a wide variety of disciplines, from fine arts to engineering, as well as a wide variety of extracurricular activities. Athletics at Wayland provide a constant source of pride for the community, producing more than 800 All-Americans and 100 individual national championships in the last century.

Dynamic vision and devotion to students are the true marks of an exceptional educational institution. On this occasion of its 100th anni-

versary, I congratulate Wayland Baptist University and look forward to watching this institution thrive in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO ST. JOHN'S HEALTH  
SYSTEM

**HON. ROY BLUNT**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 3, 2008*

Mr. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate St. John's Health System in Springfield, MO, for their work to improve the quality of health care services provided to our seniors. St. John's Health System was recently recognized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for their outstanding commitment to improving Medicare patient outcomes as participants in a new chronic disease management demonstration program.

Nearly 70 percent of all deaths in America are attributable to chronic diseases. Chronic diseases like heart disease, cancer, and diabetes are some of the most common diseases but they are also the most preventable diseases. Working to prevent these diseases from being acquired in the first place should be our top priority. Managing these diseases so that adverse outcomes are minimized should be next on the list.

Unfortunately, most of the health insurance programs that the Federal Government operates do not place the same prioritization in its payment policies. We don't encourage individuals to seek preventative care and we barely reward individuals who change their lifestyles when diagnosed. We pay in the end with the final bill, but the Federal Government doesn't pay for the course of treatment that will deliver better health outcomes and a longer, more productive life. Ultimately all Americans pay the price for the high costs of chronic diseases.

Over the past 2 years St. John's Health System has participated in a national demonstration program. The results of this project will help to identify new, innovative models to deliver higher quality health care. St. John's was one of only five physician groups that achieved benchmark quality performance for all measures used during the evaluation. I am pleased that St. John's is being recognized nationally for their excellent care for the citizens of southwest Missouri. I hope that, following St. John's leadership, the final results of the demonstration program will bring meaningful changes in delivery of health care services for all of our seniors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE VET-  
ERANS OF OSS GREEK OPER-  
ATIONS GROUP II ON THE OCCA-  
SION OF THEIR RECEIVING THE  
BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR  
VALOR

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 3, 2008*

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the brave men of the Office of Strategic Services' Greek Op-

erations Group II who fought to liberate occupied Greece during World War II. This month, these heroes are being awarded the Bronze Star Medal for Valor for their service in defense of freedom.

In February 1943 at the height of World War II, the Greek government in exile sought help from the United States for Andartes, the Greek Resistance against Nazi occupation. In response, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), the forerunner of the CIA) formed top-secret Greek Operations Groups (OGs) from the 122nd Infantry Battalion. After undergoing rigorous training, almost 200 largely Greek-born or Hellenic-American soldiers launched their secret mission, undeterred by warnings that most would not likely survive the perilous fighting behind enemy lines. Chosen for their fluency or near-fluency in Greek, their physical fitness and ability to endure arduous service in rugged mountain terrain, and their intense motivation to oust the Nazi occupiers from the land of their ancestors, these teams were inserted behind enemy lines. From April to September 1944, the men of OG II fought alongside the Greek Resistance, delaying and harassing the Nazi withdrawal, eliminating enemy troops, and destroying their equipment in order to weaken the final defense of Germany against the Allies.

Operations Group II, led by Lt. John Giannaris, operating chiefly out of the tiny remote village of Pappas, conducted military operations primarily against the railroad in the mountains between Lamia and Domokos. During a four-month period the team participated in 14 missions during which they destroyed three locomotives and 31 railway cars, blew up 7,400 yards of rail line, and inflicted 675 casualties on the enemy. On September 8th, 1944, as the group approached a heavily patrolled area, it came under point-blank enemy machine gun fire.

OG II member Michalis Tsirmulas was hit. Under a withering assault, Lt. Giannaris ordered a withdrawal while himself crawling to aid Tsirmulas, only to learn he had been killed. After being severely wounded, Lt. Giannaris narrowly escaped capture, passing within earshot of German soldiers hunting him down. He was found by two local shepherdesses, who cared for him and contacted his men. In a daring daylight escape, Lt. Giannaris was spirited to safety in a British aircraft.

The story of the Greek-American OGs was highly classified for more than 40 years. The full account of these soldiers and their accomplishments was unknown even to the surviving participants. After fighting in Greece ended, most of them went on to other assignments in Europe and Asia. They returned home never knowing the enormous impact their mission had on events in Greece. Most never spoke of their experience with the O.S.S for many years, even to their families. Many years later, Giannaris, since promoted to Captain, recommended his men for an award. The Defense Department agreed and authorized the Bronze Star Medal for valor.

Recently, a search began for survivors and descendants of the deceased of OSS Greek OG II, undertaken by Dr. Robert Perdue, OG II historian and a retired agricultural research scientist. This month at a ceremony in Astoria, New York, the 22 enlisted men of OG II will be honored at a ceremony. One surviving enlisted member of OG II will attend as will families of six deceased members of the Group,