

Santa Rosa County where he served for twenty years. During this time, he has also served as a deacon of First Baptist Church of Milton, working in various roles including Director of the Junior Department and Director of the Adult Department. Gerald is also a member of The Gideons International and the Kiwanis Club of Milton.

Madam Speaker, Gerald Barnes is a Northwest Florida community leader who has spent a lifetime serving the public. My wife Vicki and I wish him a happy birthday and his entire family all the best for the future.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JOHN R. CARTER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 27, 2009*

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, on October 26, 2009, I was unable to be present for all rollcall votes due to an unexpected travel delay.

If present, I would have voted accordingly on the following rollcall votes:

Roll No. 814—aye;

Roll No. 815—aye.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. LAURA RICHARDSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 27, 2009*

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 1 minute and revise and extend my remarks.

On Monday, October 26, and Friday, October 23, I was unavoidably delayed on my return to Washington from American Samoa and

Samoa where I had been monitoring ongoing relief and recovery efforts of FEMA and others currently underway in response to the devastating earthquake and tsunami that struck those islands on September 29. As the Member of Congress with the nation's largest concentration of Samoan Americans on the mainland and as a member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, undertaking this fact-finding mission was directly related to my representational, legislative, and committee responsibilities.

Because of this excused absence I was not present for rollcall votes 814 through 815.

Had I been present I would have voted as follows:

1. On rollcall No. 814. I would have voted aye. H. Res. 368—Congratulating the University of Iowa Hawkeyes wrestling team on winning the 2009 NCAA Division I National Wrestling Championships (Rep. Loeb sack—Education and Labor).

2. On rollcall No. 815, I would have voted aye. H. Res. 562—Congratulating Syracuse University for winning the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Men's Lacrosse Tournament (Rep. Maffei—Education and Labor).

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
ASSISTANCE FOR POLITICAL  
STATUS EDUCATION PROGRAM  
FOR GUAM

**HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO**

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 27, 2009*

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, today I have introduced a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to award grants and extend assistance to the Government of Guam for the purpose of helping to facilitate a polit-

ical status public education program for the people of Guam.

This bill is introduced in recognition of the Secretary of the Interior's administrative responsibility for the economic, social and political development of the territory of Guam. Executive Order 10077 signed in 1949 transferred the administration of Guam from the Secretary of the Navy to the Secretary of the Interior, and Congress has provided certain levels of self-government for the people of Guam since the enactment of the Organic Act of Guam in 1950.

However, the political status of the territory of Guam remains unresolved. The Guam Legislature has passed local laws authorizing the holding of a political status plebiscite. Any plebiscite requires a public education program to inform the people of Guam of various political status options.

This bill specifically authorizes federal assistance for such a public education program. Federal funding for political status public education programs is not without precedent. U.S. Public Law 101-45 provided \$3,500,000 to the Territory of Puerto Rico to "participate in the legislative process involving the future political status of Puerto Rico." Additionally, the now independent Republic of Palau was appropriated by U.S. Public Law 101-219, "such sums as may be necessary for a further referendum on approval of the Compact, if one is required, or other appropriate costs associated with the approval process in Palau."

The people of Guam have expressed their desire for a new political status in the past, however, such political status aspirations were not realized, despite past efforts by Guam's representatives, the administration and Congress. As a result, a commission of the Government of Guam has been established to prepare for a new plebiscite.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to review this bill.