

National Lab Day is a terrific initiative that comes at a time when we need an “all-hands-on-deck” mentality to provide our children with a first-rate math and science education. We still don’t know how to cure cancer or AIDS, or completely ease the suffering of those with mental illnesses. We still have tremendous challenges regarding energy consumption. And we still don’t know all we should about our planet and the people who live on it. The answers to these important questions are beginning to be formed in our classrooms with young students who one day may go on to investigate these issues and make advances that will benefit all of us.

Scientists and teachers long have been concerned about the quality of science and math education. Yet, scientists and educators should not be the only ones troubled by our students’ mediocre performance in these subjects. Every citizen concerned about the long-term health of our Nation’s economy should be worried by our current educational performance. Parents who want their children to succeed in a new global economy should be interested. Patients in need of new medical advances and citizens who want to see technological progress should care about our Nation’s performance in this area.

It is clear that our Nation must improve mathematics and science education in our elementary and secondary schools. American students do not perform as satisfactorily in these subjects as compared with their peers in other nations, which threatens the long-term health of our Nation’s economy and our competitiveness. China, India, and Germany, to name three, are putting more emphasis on science and math education. These nations recognize that the jobs of the future will require a basic understanding of these subjects. In fact, the Department of Labor recently found that three-quarters of the 20 fastest-growing future occupations will need workers with significant mathematics or science preparation.

A decade ago, I had the honor to serve on the National Commission on Mathematics and Science Teaching for the 21st Century, which became known as the John Glenn Commission. In a report entitled “Before It’s Too Late”, we made clear that our Nation must increase the number of teachers in those fields significantly and provide more opportunities for teachers to enhance their math and science teaching skills. Ten years later, I still believe policymakers must do more to support the teachers that play a critical role in science and math education. The Commission recommended that teachers receive the greatest attention, even ahead of curriculum or other areas.

As a member of the House Committee on Education and Labor, I have been focused on ways to do just that. I have worked to boost resources for the underfunded Mathematics and Science Partnerships, which provides professional development opportunities to a wide range of teachers and helps them continue improving their skills. I have worked on a bipartisan basis with my colleague Rep. VERN EHLERS to ensure that reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act places the same importance on science as it does for other subjects, such as English.

In today’s tight budget environment, I applaud the Obama Administration for proposing historic increases in the federal government’s

commitment to science education in their Fiscal Year 2011 Budget. I was pleased to see \$300 million in the Department of Education budget for improving teaching and learning in science and math. When considering any replacement to the Mathematics and Science Partnerships program, we must recognize that great teachers are made, not born. I feel strongly that any new program must continue to support professional development activities for science and math teachers as they seek to improve their craft. In addition, any new program must ensure that professional development programs are widely available across the country, not just to a few schools that compete successfully because they are already top notch.

Improving our children’s abilities in science and math is critical for our economy, our national security, and our democracy. Everyone, from scientist to teacher to parent to businessperson, should be concerned with how well we educate our children in this area. I look forward to working with my colleagues to fulfill the goals of the Glenn Commission and regain our Nation’s leadership in science and math education.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution that recognizes the importance of science and math education and highlights the good work done at National Lab Day.

2010 ST. CLOUD CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AWARD WINNERS

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2010

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the St. Cloud Chamber of Commerce Small Business Person of the Year, and the Mark of Excellence and Entrepreneurial Success Award Recipients. These people and businesses have stood out to the Chamber as “those who have the courage to aspire to a higher level.”

As the Small Business Person of the Year, Kip Cameron, President and CEO of Granite-Tops, LLC has shown dedication and innovation in his industry. Cameron is one of the founders of the Midwest Stone Fabricators Association and when the economy changed last year, he found ways to expand his market, despite consolidating his operations.

The Mark of Excellence Award, which honors a family owned business, is given to Dick Bitzan, owner of D.J. Bitzan Jewelers. In 1966, Dick’s father’s “mission was to provide his customers with beautiful diamonds and unparalleled customer service.” In a new location, with a new generation behind the counter, Bitzan’s Jewelers is fulfilling its mission every day.

Paul M. Heath, M.D., and James M. Smith, M.D., of Midsota Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons are the recipients of the Entrepreneurial Success Award. Midsota was founded when the doctors saw a need to “deliver high quality surgical and aesthetics services in a private, intimate setting in Central Minnesota.” Dr. Heath and Dr. Smith share a passion for service and results and continue to shape their industry in Central Minnesota.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to congratulate these businesses and citizens. I ask this

body to join me in recognizing Kip Cameron, D.J. Bitzan Jewelers and Midsota Plastic Surgeons for their contributions to Central Minnesota.

IT’S TIME FOR A CHANGE IN
DEALING WITH SUDAN

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2010

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, “If President Obama is ever going to find his voice on Sudan, it had better be soon.” These were the closing words two weeks ago of columnist Nicholas Kristof.

Having first travelled to Sudan in 1989, my interest in this country has spanned the better part of 20 years. I’ve been most recently in July 2004 when Senator SAM BROWNBACK and I were the first congressional delegation to go to Darfur.

We saw the same scorched earth tactics from Khartoum in the brutal 20-year civil war with the South where 2.1 million perished.

I remain grateful for President Bush’s leadership in bringing about an end to the bloodshed with the historic signing of the CPA. But that peace is now in jeopardy.

Fast forward to 2009. I was part of a bipartisan group in Congress who called for the appointment of a special envoy shortly after President Obama was elected. What was once a successful model for Sudan policy is not having the desired effect today. I am not alone in this belief.

Last week, six respected NGOs ran ads in the Washington Post calling for Secretary Clinton and Ambassador Rice to exercise “personal and sustained leadership on Sudan” in the face of a “stalemated policy.”

Today I join the chorus of voices in calling on the President to empower Secretary Clinton and Ambassador Rice to take control of the languishing Sudan policy.

They should oversee quarterly deputies’ meetings to ensure options for consequences are on the table. In fact, I call on the President himself to exercise leadership in this regard, consistent with the explicit campaign promises he made about Sudan, promises which to date ring hollow.

There is a pressing need for renewed, principled leadership at the highest levels—leadership which is clear-eyed about the history and the record of the internationally indicted war criminal at the helm in Khartoum.

In addition to the massive human rights abuses perpetrated by the country’s leader, Bashir, Sudan remains on the State Department’s list of state sponsors of terrorism. The same people currently in control in Khartoum gave safe haven to bin Laden in the early 1990’s.

I believe that this administration’s engagement with Sudan, under the leadership of General Gration, and with the apparent blessing of the President, has failed to recognize the true nature of Bashir and the NCP.

While the hour is late, the administration can still chart a new course.

Today, I sent a letter to the President which I submit for the record, outlining seven policy recommendations and calling for urgent action on behalf of the marginalized people of Sudan.