

TRIBUTE TO TRACY PATTON, 2010
STATE WINNER OF LETTERS
ABOUT LITERATURE COMPETITION

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 28, 2010

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Tracy Patton and congratulate her as a state winner of the Library of Congress 2010 Letters About Literature competition.

Letters About Literature is a program developed by the Library of Congress in partnership with Target Stores and state Centers for the Book. It aims to promote reading and writing to young people in fourth through twelfth grades across the nation. Students are encouraged to read a book, then write a letter to the author, dead or alive, conveying their appreciation for the book and its impact on their lives. More than 70,000 students from across the nation that entered the contest, a 25% increase from last year's competition.

The Letters About Literature competition divided students into three divisions by age, and the top letter from each age level were chosen from the states. Level three included all high school students, in ninth through twelfth grades. Tracy was chosen as the Level 3 state winner for 2010 by West Virginia's panel of judges, comprised of authors, editors, publishers, librarians, and teachers. She addressed her letter to renowned playwright and poet William Shakespeare, about his tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*. Tracy is from Charleston, West Virginia and attends Capital High School. Tracy's teacher, Rosalie Blaul, submitted this winning letter.

It is an honor to pay tribute to Tracy Patton, a student that has committed herself to scholarship in reading and writing. Bright young minds such as hers are truly the future of the Mountain State, and I wish her congratulations.

PROTECTING GUN OWNERS IN
BANKRUPTCY ACT OF 2010

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 27, 2010

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5827, the Protecting Gun Owners in Bankruptcy Act of 2010. This legislation will ensure that individuals' Second Amendment rights are secure when they enter into bankruptcy.

In these challenging economic times, I have heard from families in Michigan's 15th Congressional District concerned they will lose their ability to protect themselves and their families should they enter into bankruptcy. As the Supreme Court recently ruled in *Heller vs. the District of Columbia* and confirmed in *McDonald vs. Chicago*, the Second Amendment affords individuals across the nation the right to keep and bear arms for the purpose of self defense. Hardworking Americans who have lost their jobs due to the economic downturn should not fear that they will be stripped of those rights because they are try-

ing to turn their lives around through bankruptcy proceedings.

Most States, including Michigan, do not protect gun owners in bankruptcy because firearms are not listed among the "household goods" exempt from the claims of creditors. In 2005, amendments to the bankruptcy code made it even more unlikely firearms would be considered a "household good." However, H.R. 5827 changes that. Specifically, it permits firearms—rifles, pistols and shotguns, up to an aggregate value of \$3,000—held primarily for the personal, family or household use of the debtor to be exempt from the claims of creditors under federal exemption law.

Enacting H.R. 5827 will allow the citizens of Michigan and across the United States the ease of knowing they can protect themselves and their families in good times and bad. This is an important bill and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for it.

HONORING THE AGENCIES INVOLVED IN CONTAINING THE RANGE 9 AND MERIDIAN BOUNDARY FOREST FIRES IN NORTHERN MICHIGAN

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 28, 2010

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the men and women who showed bravery and perseverance in fighting the Meridian Boundary and Range 9 Fires in northern Michigan's Crawford County and surrounding areas in May of this year. Through their impressive efforts the fire's damage was contained with minimal loss of structures and no loss of life.

On May 18, two separate forest fires broke out only two counties apart—one in Crawford County and the other on land within Camp Grayling's Range No. 9 near the border of Crawford and Kalkaska Counties. Federal, State and local agencies worked together, managing the two fires as one single complex. In total, 16 local fire departments worked alongside members of the Michigan Army Reserve National Guard and State and federal forest management officials, to have the fire 95 percent contained within 8 days.

In all, nearly ten thousand acres were impacted by the fires, with 12 residences destroyed and 6 residences damaged. These firefighters and responders acted with expertise in the field and crews worked around the clock to fight and contain the blaze. Without their determined efforts and quick response the situation on the ground likely would have been far worse.

Agencies involved in containing the Meridian Boundary and Range 9 Fires were: South Branch Township Fire Department, Higgins Township Fire Department, Frederic Township Fire Department, Beaver Creek Township Fire Department, Grayling Fire Department, Lovells Township Fire Department, Luzerne-Big Creek Township Fire Department, Tri-Town Fire Department, Merritt Fire Rescue Department, Clam Union Fire Department, Lake Missaukee Area Fire Department, McBain Fire Department, Lake City Fire Department, Otsego County Fire Department, Otsego Lake Township Fire Department, Vanderbilt Corwith Fire

and Rescue, Michigan Army Reserve National Guard, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment Forest Management Division and USDA Forest Service, Mio Ranger District.

Madam Speaker, the men and women of these agencies did excellent work controlling and containing the Meridian Boundary and Range 9 forest fires and keeping people in the surrounding communities safe. Therefore, I ask that you, and all of my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives, join me in recognizing their service, honoring their bravery, and thanking them for the heroic job they did in fighting these fires.

HONORING MR. IRVIN R. LAI

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 28, 2010

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a great loss to our community, Mr. Irvin Lai, who passed away on July 16, 2010, at the age of 83. My heart goes out to his son, Laurence; his daughters Arlene Lowe, Corinne Gill, Irene Jong, Kathleen Lih and Pauline Yau; his brother Collin and sister Mildred Wong; his 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren; and the rest of his family and friends.

Irvin was an extraordinary citizen, a role model for community activism and a powerful advocate for the Chinese American community. His selfless and just nature was cultivated in childhood during the Great Depression by his mother, Effie Lai, an unpaid social worker who helped Chinese immigrant women navigate the U.S. social welfare system. It was his mother's work, and his education in a segregated "Oriental" school, that taught him the importance of joining together and helping his community.

Lai first served his country as a teenage volunteer in the U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Marines during World War II, where he achieved rank of Chief Steward during his 2 years of service. In 1950 he was drafted into the Korean War, where he served for 2 years in the 4th Infantry Division, 42nd Field Artillery in Germany.

But it was upon his return from the war that Mr. Lai's civil rights activism really took off, when he joined the Los Angeles Lodge of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance in 1957. He worked his way up to national Grand President of the Alliance by 1985, and along the way he fought hard for equal political and economic rights for all Chinese Americans.

Irvin is probably best known for saving the Peking duck in America, when he led the charge to change a law that required Chinese restaurateurs to throw away large quantities of Chinese roast duck and dim sum, or receive costly citations. As a direct result of testimony from Mr. Lai before the State Legislature, a roast duck exemption was added to the health code.

Mr. Lai also stepped forward to help arrange the proper reinterment of Chinese remains unearthed during construction of the Gold Line Eastside Extension, and the preservation of artifacts found at the site.

I urge all my House colleagues to join me in honoring our community hero, Mr. Irvin for