

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to thank the West Springfield Civic Association for their hard work and dedication throughout the past forty years. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating an extraordinary group of devoted men and women.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH IN MORRIS, ILLINOIS

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2001

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the Immaculate Conception Church in Morris, Illinois.

In the fall of 1852, John McNellis, a local grain dealer, deeded two and a half acres of land to people who were interested in forming a Roman Catholic Church. Mr. McNellis also provided land for a parsonage and two schools, and he built a three story brick school because he felt that education was very important and believed that every child deserved to have an education. The church became the Immaculate Conception Church in Morris, Illinois.

On December 8, the church will start a year long celebration in commemoration of the establishment of the parish. The past 150 years have been full of progress and history. A fire almost destroyed the church in 1903, and in 1988, lightning struck the bell tower, causing an estimated \$90,000 worth of damage, but the church prevailed. Throughout adversity the church keeps growing due to the hard work of the parishioners and the community of Morris. Many additions have kept the grounds looking fresh. A new parish center was dedicated in 1988. A group of parishioners transformed the lawn between the church and the parish hall into a beautiful prayer garden in 1991. Another major project was the restoration of the rectory in the Father Poff Center, which houses the meeting rooms and offices.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the parishioners for all of their hard work and dedication to the church and to the city of Morris.

TRIBUTE TO LODGE FIGLI DELLA SICILIA NO. 227, COLUMBIAN FEDERATION AND VITO MANZELLA, 2001 MAN OF THE YEAR

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2001

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, the Lodge Figli Della Sicilia No. 227 "Sons of Sicily" is a lodge of the Columbian Federation of Italian-American societies, and is one of the largest Italian-American organizations in the State of Michigan. Serving the tri-county area of metropolitan Detroit, Lodge 227 includes over 250 families whose purpose is to promote and preserve the Italian-American heritage through language, culture, music, and social events. Each year the Lodge 227 holds its annual banquet, honoring distinguished Italian-American

cans in the community who have shown outstanding support and activism in their local community. On Saturday, September 29, as the Lodge Figli Della Sicilia celebrated its 65th Annual Banquet, they recognized Vito Manzella as their "2001 Man of the Year".

Faithfully committed to the preservation of Italian heritage, the Lodge Figli Della Sicilia No. 227 has been a cornerstone of the Italian American community since its founding in Detroit on February 10, 1936. As a dedicated member of over 30 years, President Salvatore Previti's outstanding leadership has motivated families to reach out to surrounding communities in friendship and charity. From preparations for the Columbus Day Parade and festivities to annual can and clothing drives for the Capuchin Food Kitchen during the holidays, the Lodge has truly become a part of the Metro Detroit family. The tireless efforts of Lodge 227 are outstanding, and will continue to be appreciated for years to come.

The Lodge Figli Della Sicilia's "2001 Man of the Year", Vito Manzella has demonstrated dedication and commitment to his family, his work, and his community for so many years. Born to Salvatore and Rosa Manzella in Detroit in 1967, who had just emigrated from Sicily 5 years before, Vito grew up in St. Clair Shores as a hard worker for the family business, Manzella's Fruit Market, and an athlete and leader in his community. Upon the untimely death of his father in 1995, Vito took over the store and has since continued the traditions of warmth and generosity Manzella's Fruit Market has always brought to the community. As a sponsor of churches and charities across Macomb County, Manzella's is a drop off site for "Toys for Tots", and after the September 11 tragedies, Vito donated 10 percent of profits from sales on September 19th, 2001. Vito's hard work and innovative ideas have been the driving force in the success of Manzella's, and his generous contributions and active involvement as a distinguished business owner and friend to all truly makes him this year's "2001 Man of the Year."

I applaud the Lodge Figli Della Sicilia No. 227 Columbian Federation and Vito Manzella for their leadership, commitment, and service, and I urge my colleagues to join me in saluting them for their exemplary years of leadership and service.

EDUCATION

HON. JOHNNY ISAKSON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2001

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. Speaker, within days, the Conference Committee on House Bill 1 will complete its work and President Bush's campaign commitment to "leave no child behind" will be before Congress for final approval.

As a member of the Conference Committee, I am very proud of the months of work, and the tireless efforts of Chairman JOHN BOEHNER. As a result of JOHN's leadership, America's public schools will have the resources, the tools, the flexibility, and the accountability to close the achievement gap between our best and our poorest performing children.

Since its inception thirty-five years ago, Title One of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-

cation Act was designed to improve the performance of America's poorest and most at risk students. One Hundred and Twenty Five Billion Dollars later the performance of these children has not improved and the gap between our poorest and our best has actually increased. America's children and America's taxpayers deserve better, and this Conference Report demands better.

In my home district in Atlanta, Georgia, there is a talented and nationally syndicated talk show host named Neal Boortz. Neal is a conservative libertarian whose favorite target for criticism is often public schools or as he calls them, government schools. While Neal sometimes carries his criticism to the extreme, he is often on target. Neal will be happy that this Education Reform requires exactly what he has sought: accountability, competition, and results.

There is another reason Neal Boortz should be very happy. His able and talented assistant, Belinda Skelton, is expecting her first child in May, and when that child reaches six years of age America's schools will have improved dramatically because of five major provisions of this reform.

1. President Bush's Early Reading First initiative will ensure that every child reaching third grade will be able to read and comprehend at that level.

2. Every child in third through eighth grade will be annually tested in reading and math to measure the progress of their improvement, identify any problems and provide remediation where necessary.

3. Test results will be disaggregated so that every teacher, every school and every parent knows exactly how each student is performing and progressing. There will be no more hiding poor performers by averaging scores by grade.

4. Schools that fail to improve student performance will be held accountable, and parents of children in failing schools will be given choices including public school choice and parental direction of federal Title 1 funds to public or private supplemental educational services to address their child's needs.

5. Local School Boards of Education will be given flexibility in federal funds to address the educational needs of their children and their community. Federal control and federal mandates are reduced, so schools are held responsible for results in the performance of children and not satisfying bureaucratic red tape.

Mr. Speaker, President Bush's pledge to "leave no child behind" is a promise to Belinda Skelton's child and every child. It is a commitment to America's future, and an acknowledgement of past failures. I urge each member of Congress to join with me and with the President in our commitment to "Leave No Child Behind." Vote yes for real reform, local control, accountability, and parental involvement in public education.

CELEBRATING MADAWASKA
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2001

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating