

called for a Bradley fighting vehicle, which was at a nearby roadblock, and he prepared his men for engagement. Sgt. Smith took charge and led the effort while they waited for the Bradley, which would bring an intimidating fire force.

Even though Sgt. Smith and his men were outnumbered by more than two to one, they continued to fight back. Without concern for his own life, Sgt. Smith jumped on an Army vehicle and began firing a .50 caliber machine gun. He fired and reloaded and continued to fire, killing 50 enemy soldiers until he was shot and killed.

Sgt. Smith's efforts saved the lives of all of his men and the more than a hundred American soldiers in the surrounding area. For Sgt. Smith, this was his job. In a letter he wrote to his family, which he never mailed, he said, "It doesn't matter how I come home, because I am prepared to give all that I am, to ensure that all my boys make it home."

Mr. Speaker, the Medal of Honor will never bring Sgt. Smith back to his family. He will not be able to play baseball with his son David. He will not be able to walk his daughter Jessica down the aisle when she gets married. He will no longer be able to kiss his wife Birgit goodnight. But because of his unyielding courage, his "boys" will have that chance with their families.

Since Sgt. Smith's death, Iraq has been liberated from a brutal dictator, had democratic elections, and is now a beacon for freedom and hope for all Middle East countries. The United States is safer today than we were before the fall of Saddam. I know that without the actions of Sgt. Smith and others like him, this goal could not have been achieved so promptly. Sgt. Smith's life was not lost in vain.

We are truly honored to have had a man such as Sgt. First Class Paul Ray Smith serve in our nation's military. He has become an inspiration to all men and women of the Armed Forces. His story will forever resonate in the history of this great nation and his name and legacy will never be forgotten. May God bless the Smith family and continue to watch over the country Sgt. Smith so loved.

IN HONOR AND REMEMBRANCE OF
YOLANDA CRACIUN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of Yolanda Craciun, loving mother, grandmother, community activist, and dear friend and mentor to many. Her passing marks a great loss for her family and friends, and also for the people of Cleveland's west side neighborhood, whom she supported, promoted and faithfully served.

Mrs. Craciun's family, including her late husband, John Craciun, were central to her life. The great care and love that she showered on them extended throughout Cleveland's west side neighborhood, where Mrs. Craciun led many efforts to uplift her neighborhood. The well-being of her community, anchored by her parish, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, was her lifelong focus. Her advice and support was continually sought by neighbors and neighborhood leaders. Greatly loved, respected and

admired by all, Mrs. Craciun was godmother to twenty-eight children.

Equipped with a compassionate heart, sharp mind and even sharper focus on the neighborhood she loved, Mrs. Craciun's efforts fostered hope and possibility throughout the Detroit-Shoreway neighborhood, where she lived her whole life. She was a founding member and trustee of the Detroit-Shoreway Community Development Coalition, leading the charge to restore the neighborhood with housing, economic and social initiatives. Her efforts to help others spanned every barrier, and touched the lives of countless people and family. Mrs. Craciun raised over \$100,000 for the Snowflake Program, used to decorate the neighborhood during holidays. She volunteered her time as a literacy tutor, was president of the PTA at St. Edward's High School, and served on many boards, including St. Augustine Manor and the Westside Substance Abuse Task Force Project.

Her humble nature precluded her from reveling in awards and accolades. However, her outstanding service was recognized by others. She was the recipient of many awards that highlighted her humanitarian efforts, including the 2004 Father Marino Frascati Neighborhood Champion Award, and the Giuseppe T. Fiocca Award, presented to her in 1998.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of Yolanda Craciun. She lived her life with joy, energy and in unwavering service to others. I extend my deepest condolences to her many friends and family members, especially her children: Jean, Mary, John, Joseph and James; and her grandchildren and sister. Her eternal faith in humanity and in the notion that together, we can make a positive difference, will continue to serve as an unending force of light, hope and possibility, throughout the Detroit-Shoreway neighborhood and beyond.

NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING
ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 6, 2005

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 797, the Native American Housing Enhancement Act of 2005.

For too long our Native American brothers and sisters have been treated like second-class citizens.

I believe I speak for everyone when I say that Native Americans deserve decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunities.

The Native American Housing Enhancement Act of 2005 is a step towards putting Native Americans on a fair playing field.

This bill makes changes to the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act (NAHASDA) which will make better use of resources and provide housing for Native Americans through more efficient means. By allowing tribal governments to exercise their preference for housing programs through the Indian Civil Rights Act, tribes can better direct these funds to expedite tribal housing.

This bill will also direct the Department of Housing and Urban Development to allow

tribes unlimited access to new housing funds even if they are still using funds from previous years.

Importantly, this bill also amends the National Affordable Housing Act to provide tribes eligibility for Youthbuild grants, which they were unfairly denied when NAHASDA was created in 1996.

This legislation conveys the intent of Congress that all Americans, including our first Americans, are entitled to the American dream.

I am proud to speak in strong support of this important initiative to help more Native Americans achieve the American dream.

TRIBUTE TO DORIT AND SHAWN
EVENHAIM

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 12, 2005

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dorit and Shawn Evenhaim for their dedicated efforts to improve the quality of life in our community. Throughout their lives Dorit and Shawn have contributed countless hours of community service by supporting various organizations and effectively leading several groups. Their ongoing service to the San Fernando Valley is truly immeasurable.

Dorit and Shawn's strong desire to serve the community dates back to their native Israel. They both grew up in Southern Israel in working class neighborhoods. Although they came from modest backgrounds, the principles and obligations of the Tzedakah were instilled at an early age. This is the Jewish ideal of aiding those who are less fortunate. This common bond that Dorit and Shawn shared growing up together eventually flourished into a romance as they served their military responsibilities in Israel.

Shortly following their military service they ventured to the United States with hopes of new opportunities. Shawn quickly immersed himself in his brother's painting business. Although he had only been in the United States for a short time, by 1992 Shawn became president of a large in-fill development company in the San Fernando Valley. Soon after, Dorit encouraged Shawn to open his own development firm called California Homes in 1994. California Homes has become one of the largest in-fill home builders in the Los Angeles basin.

One of the most important construction projects that Dorit and Shawn have undertaken was the creation of a new home for the Kadima Hebrew Academy in the San Fernando Valley. A member of Kadima's Board of Directors, Dorit was instrumental in convincing Shawn to take on this project. Dorit and Shawn quickly began searching for new investors who had the resources and desire to establish a new campus. Not finding the support needed, Dorit and Shawn took the search into their own hands. Shawn became aware of a private land auction in West Hills. Shawn, despite going up against several real estate investors, was the successful bidder, securing the facility and the surrounding land.

Dorit and Shawn's efforts not only encompassed the purchase and acquisition of land. They were also deeply involved in all aspects