

For centuries, the people of these countries refused to accept colonialism and fought stubbornly for their freedom in hideaways in cities, mountains, and forests. In 1838, the British gave up and emancipated the peoples of the Caribbean. The love of the Caribbean people for their freedom and the strength of majesties, like Granny Nanny, was too much to overcome.

When I think of the importance of Caribbean Emancipation Day, I think of the struggle and actions of individuals like Granny Nanny of the Maroons, the hero who typifies the spirit of these great nations. They remind me of American warriors such as Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman. Caribbean Emancipation Day belongs to the people of the Caribbean, but the celebration is truly an African celebration.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF ROSA PARK'S COURAGEOUS OPPOSITION TO SEGREGATION

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 28, 2005*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in full support of H. Con. Res. 208, which recognizes the pivotal contribution of Mrs. Rosa Louise Parks. Mrs. Parks is best known as the seamstress who became a courageous activist and changed America forever with bold defiance of segregation. Although she has been portrayed as a quiet woman, her actions have spoken volumes. Her refusal, on December 1, 1955, to yield her seat to a white patron on a Montgomery, Alabama bus resulted in a charge of disorderly conduct. However, her action precipitated the famous Montgomery Bus Boycott, which brought Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to national prominence and prompted the U.S. Supreme Court decision to rule that segregation in public transportation is unconstitutional.

As a result, many regard her as the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement." But there is far more to the story of the icon, Mrs. Rosa Parks. She was born on February 4, 1913 in Tuskegee, Alabama and educated at the Alabama State Teacher's College. Mrs. Parks and her husband, Raymond Parks, were very active in their local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). She, in particular, served both as secretary and youth leader. After the boycott, Mrs. Parks' civil rights advocacy did not end. In 1957, she moved to Detroit to continue her work through the Office of Congressman JOHN CONYERS, JR. Then, in 1988, after leaving his office, she started the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development to motivate youth to reach their highest potential.

During the past four decades, she has continued to remind Americans of the history of the civil rights struggle. As a pioneer in the struggle for racial equality, subsequent generations owe her the sincerest appreciation. Although she is the recipient of innumerable honors, including the NAACP's Springarn Medal (1979), the Martin Luther King Jr. Non-violent Peace Prize (1980), the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1996), and the Congressional Gold Medal (1999), we recognize the

need for a national celebration of her contributions to the Civil Rights Movement.

Mrs. Parks is a living symbol of courage and determination and an inspiration to freedom-loving people everywhere. Since 2005 marks the 50th anniversary of her act of civil disobedience and the beginning of desegregation efforts throughout America, Mr. Speaker, it behooves us to recognize her this year. It is my hope that in celebrating Mrs. Parks, this great Nation will continue to uphold her legacy.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BARBARA JOHNSON

**HON. GREG WALDEN**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 28, 2005*

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Barbara Johnson, a trusted and dedicated member of my staff who has served the U.S. House of Representatives and my constituents with distinction and an unwavering commitment to excellence.

Barbara keeps my district schedule in a meticulous fashion. Due to her efficient ways, I've never missed an official meeting on her scheduling watch. Every constituent seeking an appointment or my assistance receives a prompt and accurate response from Barbara, and visitors leave my office with a smile after dealing with her. Simply put, Barbara is a pleasure for people to work with and she's darn good at what she does.

In over three years of making district travel arrangements for me and my staff, there has never been a glitch. My colleagues can fully appreciate what a significant achievement that is. With a district larger than thirty-three states and my commuting back to my district every week, it is comforting to know that even the most ambitious travel schedule will go smoothly in Barbara's hands.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know, many times our constituents receive their first impression of us when they visit our offices. Barbara greets every visitor with a friendly smile and a warm welcome. People walking into my District Office know immediately from Barbara's cheerful demeanor and hospitable nature that they are welcome and are going to receive the best service I can render.

Although I could list many more of her significant contributions to our enterprise, her greatest asset is her ability to work with the fellow members of the team. She is always of good cheer and considerate of her fellow staff members. She is the calming force in stressful times and the mature, steady hand in any crisis. We tease her about being the "Mom," but without a doubt, she demonstrates that quiet and loving leadership that is often associated with an outstanding mother.

Sadly for our office and the residents of southern, central and eastern Oregon, at the end of this month Barbara will be leaving her service post in the United States Congress. Fortunately, she is moving on to new opportunities and a new phase in her very productive life. Although I am very happy that Barbara and her husband, Jim, will be enjoying the many new adventures that lie ahead for them, there is no doubt that Barbara will be sorely missed.

She leaves with my deepest gratitude for her service and the enduring friendship of all

who have had the good fortune to work with her. She may be living in another city, but she will always be a member of our team.

IN SUPPORT OF THE RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965

**HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 28, 2005*

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, on August 6, 2005, our Nation will commemorate a major milestone in our Nation's democracy: the signing of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. This bill, signed into law by President Lyndon Baines Johnson, ended an iniquitous era in our country that we should never revisit.

Mr. Speaker, we celebrate this bill because its mandate speaks to the most essential exercise of American citizenship—the right to vote.

If it were not for the Voting Rights Act, millions of Americans, particularly African Americans and other people of color, would not have access to this precious right.

I remember well the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., as he and so many others sacrificed their lives for the creation of this bill: "The most revolutionary action our people can undertake is to assert the full measure of our citizenship."

His words ring with the same truth today.

As a result of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, States with a history of racial discrimination were forbidden from using illegal and biased tactics to determine an individual's eligibility to vote.

The 1965 Voting Rights Act also required these States to obtain Federal approval before enacting any election laws and assigned Federal officials to monitor the registration process in certain localities.

In the 40 years since the passage of this bill, the number of African American registered voters has increased dramatically.

Nationwide, the number of African American elected officials has grown from just a handful in the early 1960s to more than 9,000 today.

In addition, Americans of all ethnic backgrounds have found strength in the promise of the Voting Rights Act.

However, despite these accomplishments, it remains clear that America still has much work to do before the mandate of the 1965 Voting Rights Act is fully realized.

As we saw in the 2000 presidential election and as reported by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, there is a new brand of voter discrimination and intimidation.

As a result of inconsistent State voter registration laws, inefficient voter equipment and in many instances, subjective oversight at the polls, millions of Americans were denied their right to vote in 2000.

As recently as July 2004, it was revealed that Florida State officials were preparing to use an erroneous voter registration list for the November 2004 elections.

Although this voter list was abandoned, it reveals the gross inefficiency that continues to burden our elections process.