

I want to congratulate Kenneth Feld and Ringling Bros. on the occasion of the 10 anniversary of the Center for Elephant Conservation and I invite my colleagues to come and visit this unique and inspiring facility.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS AT
FRIENDS OF THE FAMILY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 28, 2005

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Denton County organization Friends of the Family for celebrating its 25th anniversary. This is a great accomplishment, and I am proud to have an establishment such as this in the 26th Congressional District of Texas.

Friends of the Family is an organization that works to provide crisis intervention, safe shelter, counseling, support services, and advocacy for all those impacted by domestic violence or sexual assault. The organization also facilitates community awareness and involvement through education, information, and violence prevention programs.

From a starting budget of \$10,000 in 1980 to this year's \$1.5 million budget, the organization has grown a great deal in 25 years. With the program employing licensed professional counselors, social workers and psychologists, instead of relying solely on volunteers, they now serve about 7,000 people annually.

Congratulations to Denton County's Friends of the Family on their anniversary. Twenty-five years of service is a milestone to be celebrated.

IN HONOR OF THE CLEVELAND
INDIANS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 28, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Major League Baseball's Cleveland Indians Organization, in partnership with the Hispanic Community Services Coalition as they unite in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month and Viva Cleveland!

Viva Cleveland!, a joyous event, will be held at Jacobs Field on September 16th and will showcase the Parade of Flags representing 21 Latino nations, and carried aloft by youth of Hispanic heritage. The Parade of Flags promises to reflect the diverse, rich and colorful fabric that comprises the brilliant mosaic of our Cleveland community.

The players, administrators and fans of the Cleveland Indians organization carry on a century-old legacy of community outreach focused on cultural and charitable causes throughout northeast Ohio. Their individual and collective service continues to provide an array of life-enriching programs for baseball fans of all ages. The vital programs implemented by the Cleveland Indians and in partnership with other community agencies, serves to elevate the quality of life for countless families and individuals throughout our community. The

Cleveland Indians' support of the young people of our region is offered through three programs: Educational, Recreational and Humanitarian. These programs provide the necessary support and guidance to assist our youth in attaining their educational and professional goals, and also promotes strength in character by fostering self-confidence.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and celebration of the Cleveland Indians Organization, as they partnership with the Hispanic Community Services Coalition to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month and Viva Cleveland! Their collective and individual efforts serves to celebrate our diversity and provides humanitarian assistance where needed, thereby enhancing the lives of countless people, and bolstering the spirit of the City of Cleveland, and far beyond.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND
IDEALS OF "LIGHTS ON AFTER-
SCHOOL!"

SPEECH OF

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 27, 2005

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.J. Res. 66, a bill supporting the goals and ideal of "Lights On After-school," a national celebration of after-school programs.

While my district of El Paso, Texas is fortunate to be served by several excellent after-school programs, I am here to say we need more.

As more families have two parents who work every day—and single parents struggle to balance the duties of providing for their kids and caring for them—more children are left without supervision after school. The After-school Alliance estimates there are 14.3 million of these children across America.

Without available after-school programs, many of these children will be left to wander the streets between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., the time of day when juvenile crime is most likely to occur and children are most likely to experiment with drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes. Or they might just sit in front of the television or video game console all afternoon.

By creating more after-school programs—at schools, community centers, and faith-based organizations—we provide children a fun and productive place to go after school. Also, parents have peace of mind knowing their kids are safe and are thus better able to focus on their jobs.

Mr. Speaker, the American people support after-school programs, and so should we. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting "Lights on Afterschool" and the movement for more afterschool programs in America.

NORTH TEXANS EMBRACE A VIC-
TIM AND NURTURE A SURVIVOR

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 28, 2005

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I want to tell America about a very special girl named

Aurica and the very special people who are helping her.

In April, 2005, Congresswoman DEBORAH PRYCE led a Congressional delegation on a fact-finding mission to Albania, Moldova, Italy and Greece. Congresswoman THELMA DRAKE and I accompanied Ms. PRYCE to see the effects of the growing epidemic of sex trafficking in women and children. Our finding? That sex trafficking is a real and growing threat to women and children everywhere. Our solution? To fight for the rights of these precious victims one person at a time.

It was during our trip to Moldova, that I first met Aurica. What an amazing young woman. We were visiting a shelter housing girls—most in their teens—who had been victims of sex trafficking. These women had been brought back to their homeland and were being taken care of with the hopes they could in some way return to normal lives after their horrendous experiences.

We had spoken with these women and were leaving when the director of the program said there was one young woman who was unable to join the group. She was bedridden and very ill, but was willing to meet with us. Thus began our adventure. What we saw was a beautiful 19-year old with haunted eyes—unable to walk, unable to eat, unable to leave her bed.

Aurica had left her country to go to Turkey to work in a shop, hoping to send money home to her family to help support them. While she was there, she was kidnapped and placed in a building with others like herself who had been tricked and kidnapped to become sex slaves. In her desperation to avoid the plight she heard from others, she climbed out of a window in the dead of night. But it was late and she was tired. At the sixth floor, she lost her grip and fell to the ground. When she was found, her back was broken, and her leg, and her pelvis were broken. After being treated at the hospital, she was taken to a prison. The iron walls of confinement did little to improve her condition.

Her doctors and her family secured her release from Turkey. She was brought home and was treated at the International Organization for Migration. And it was here, amid the dark clouds of pain and suffering, that I saw Aurica's sunlight. And so she was so brave, so tough, and yet so in need of so much help. She needed surgery. But the surgery would have been difficult if not impossible in her country. We talked to her. We could see the pain on her face. Yet we could also see the courage in her eyes.

It has been said that every journey begins with a single step. That April day, I decided to do my part to fight sex trafficking by saving at least one person—Aurica. And we embarked on a journey to give her the health care she deserved, desired, and desperately needed. The first step was a phone call. Pedro Nosnik is a specialist in neurology and internal medicine. I explained to Dr. Nosnik what had happened to Aurica and asked a simple question: Can you help? Dr. Nosnik set us up with Dr. Ralph Raushbaum of the Texas Back Institute in Plano, the largest spine specialty clinic in the United States. TBI physicians, led by Dr. Barton Sachs, volunteered to treat Aurica at no expense. This type of care would normally cost more than \$200,000.

The next step was getting her to the hospital. Before the treatment, we had to deal with the issue of travel. Her condition ruled out