

for employment and its economic benefits than this gentleman from West Virginia. And when we are talking about the effects of mining, I would suggest that there is little difference between coal mining and gold mining. The effects, whether measured in terms of employment, or in terms of the environment or cultural values, are the same.

With that noted, I have engaged in the effort to reform the Mining Law of 1872 these past many years not just for the apparent reasons—the sins of giving away the public's valuable minerals mined for free, selling off Federal lands available almost for free and providing no comprehensive Federal mining and reclamation standards. But, I continue to wage this effort because I am pro-mining, because I no longer believe that we can expect a viable hardrock mining industry to exist on public domain lands if we do not make corrections to the law. I do so because there are provisions of the existing law which impede efficient and serious mineral exploration and development. And I do so because of the unsettled political climate governing this activity, with reform if not coming in a comprehensive fashion, certainly continuing to come in a piecemeal manner.

I believe that with enough courage, and fortitude, we can continue to address the problems facing mining, and dovetail our need for energy and minerals with the necessity of protecting our environment.

For at stake in this debate over the Mining Law of 1872 is the health, welfare and environmental integrity of our people and our Federal lands. At stake is the public interest of all Americans. And at stake is the ability of the hardrock mining industry to continue to operate on public domain lands in the future, to produce those minerals that are necessary to maintain our standard of living.

TRIBUTE TO ST. JEROME CHURCH IN THE BRONX

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 6, 2005

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to Saint Jerome Church in the Bronx. On October 2, 2005 they will hold rededication ceremonies in honor of the newly renovated Church.

St. Jerome Church was founded on September 24, 1869, and primarily served the large group of Irish immigrants arriving in America during the latter half of the 19th century. In 1898, the cornerstone was laid for the building that St. Jerome Church would call home for the next hundred years. So magnificent was the edifice that to this day it is called "The Cathedral of the Bronx." The stained glass windows and beautifully painted ceilings make Saint Jerome Church truly one of the most visually stunning churches in the city.

Throughout its history, St. Jerome Church has stood fast in good times and bad as a symbol of faith. Through two World Wars, the Korean War and Vietnam, the church has watched as many of its sons and daughters bravely served their country. Those who made the ultimate sacrifice have their names inscribed on the walls of the church as a reminder of the high cost of war.

In the fifties, as Puerto Ricans and others from the Caribbean made the Bronx their home, St. Jerome Church was there to welcome them with open arms. The priests made it a priority to learn Spanish as new spirit was breathed into the surrounding neighborhood. Even today, St. Jerome Church continues its legacy of welcoming newcomers to the Bronx as Mexican immigrants have revitalized the area.

Mr. Speaker, scripture tells us in Deuteronomy 15:7: "If there is a poor man among you, one of your brothers, in any of the towns of the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand to your poor brother; but you shall freely open your hand to him, and generously lend him sufficient for his need in whatever he lacks." St. Jerome Church has always striven to realize these instructions. Under the spiritual leadership of my friend, Father John Grange, over the last 26 years St. Jerome Church has grown into a powerful healing force in the Bronx, taking in Bronxites of all nationalities and providing them with food for the soul.

As the representative from the South Bronx, the poorest Congressional District in the nation, I am grateful to have a church in my community that works so hard, day in and day out, to provide for those who are in need. In an effort to provide better lives for themselves and their families, many immigrants make the Bronx their first home in the States. During those trying first few years, it is institutions like St. Jerome Church which help them manage their struggle by providing constant spiritual guidance. St. Jerome Church has in the past and continues to freely open their hand to the people of the Bronx. For 136 years of outstanding service to the people of the Bronx, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to St. Jerome Church as it is re-dedicated on October 2, 2005.

HONORING BEATRICE JOYCE ELLINGTON

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 6, 2005

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge and honor Beatrice Joyce Ellington who recently passed away on August 1, 2005.

I have known her since 1980. She was a remarkable person. In fact, if more people just acted as she did, our world would be a better place.

Joyce became the first African American woman to head the San Jose Public Library Commission in 1980. In 1974, Joyce successfully argued before the San Jose Unified School District Board and the City Council that vacant land, a valuable commodity in San Jose where a single-family home can easily cost over a half-million dollars, should be used for a library, instead of being sold. Joyce was recognized for her tenacity in pushing for the library in 2002 when the City Council was persuaded by her neighbors and the community at large to overlook the City's rule not to name a public building after a person still alive. At that time, the Empire Library was renamed to the Joyce Ellington branch library.

In addition to her accomplishments with the library, Mrs. Ellington was a founder in 1965 of the Northside Neighborhood Association, the oldest of its kind in the City of San Jose. Perhaps the greatest tribute to Joyce was her ability to gather community members of all races, creeds and religions to work together toward a common purpose in the community. The Northside community, where Joyce lived and did her service, is also one of the most diverse communities in California with neighbors, friends and families with roots in Africa, Japan, the Philippines, Mexico and elsewhere.

When I attended the service for Joyce, stories abounded of not only her community service, but also of her welcoming heart and home.

Joyce was the sort of person who, when she saw a problem simply took responsibility to be part of the solution. That's why she led the effort to establish a lighting district so that the northside neighborhood could have street lights. That's why she looked after her neighbors. It's why she cared about literacy. It wasn't enough that her own children were readers and getting a good education. She understood that it was also important for all the children in her community to love reading and books. She is most certainly a dearly missed community leader, friend and teacher. She not only taught us lessons of service, but also opened the doors for us to teach ourselves at the library so aptly named after her.

A PROCLAMATION CONGRATULATING MS. CHRISTINA TRIPLETT ON WINNING THE RISING UP & MOVING ON AWARD

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 6, 2005

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, Ms. Christina Triplett has overcome adversity and hardship from a young age to become an outstanding young woman; and

Whereas, Ms. Christina Triplett was able to keep her siblings together as a family in a trying environment; and

Whereas, Ms. Christina Triplett has committed herself to helping others in similar situations cope with the ordeal and to being a positive influence to all those around her.

Therefore, I join with family, friends and associates, as well as the entire 18th Congressional District of Ohio in celebrating your receipt of the Rising Up & Moving On Award. You are an inspiration to us all.

JULIAN BOND AFFIRMS THAT GAY RIGHTS ARE CIVIL RIGHTS

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 6, 2005

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, for more than 45 years, Julian Bond has provided leadership in the fight against prejudice and its terrible effects in the United States. From his early days as a student leader, to his current position as Board Chair of the NAACP,

with distinguished elected service in between, Julian Bond has been in the forefront of the fight for justice in America. Given his extraordinary leadership in the struggle against discrimination based on race, and given the efforts of some to argue that the fight against homophobia is somehow entirely different from the fight against racism, Julian Bond's eloquent, forceful defense of the right of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people to be treated fairly is noteworthy.

On Saturday, October 1, Mr. Bond addressed another important civil rights organization, the Human Rights Campaign, at the HRC's Washington Dinner. His speech, not surprisingly for a champion of human rights, is a strong defense of the right of people to be free from prejudice based on their sexual orientation, and an explicit affirmation that the fight against racism and the fight against homophobia have a common basis.

As he said in that speech, "denial of rights to anyone is wrong, and . . . struggles for rights are indivisible."

Mr. Speaker, because of the eloquence of his repudiation of the effort to divide those who fight against racism from those who fight against homophobia, and because of his extraordinary stature in the fight to make sure that the rights spelled out in our Constitution are in fact fully enjoy by everyone, Julian Bond's words at the Human Rights Campaign Dinner deserve the attention of every Member of this body, and I ask that those remarks be printed here.

I am more than honored to receive this award, and want to express my thanks to all responsible for it. I want to promise you that I intend to live my life as if I actually deserve it.

I believe it represents a common acknowledgement that denial of rights to anyone is wrong, and that struggles for rights are indivisible.

I feel tonight a little like the great abolitionist Frederick Douglass must have felt in April, 1888. Douglass, by then an old man, was addressing a women's convention in Seneca Falls, New York. They praised him for his devotion to the cause of women's suffrage. Forty years earlier, at the world's first Women's Rights Convention, when Susan B. Anthony made a motion that American women had the right to vote, it was Douglass who seconded the motion.

In 1888, Douglass reflected back on that moment and told his audience, When I ran away from slavery, it was for myself; when I advocated emancipation, it was for my people; but when I stood up for the rights of women, self was out of the question, and I found a little nobility in the act.

You have all made me feel noble tonight.

I am proud to represent an organization that has fought for justice for all for nearly 100 years, and while we've won many victories, we know—you know—there are other battles yet to be waged and won.

At the NAACP, we were proud to have opposed the federal marriage amendment and its wrong-headed versions in several states. President Bush backed amendments banning same-sex marriage, calling marriage "the most fundamental institution of civilization."

Isn't that precisely why one should support, not oppose, gay marriage?

The NAACP recently passed a resolution to strengthen families, including yours. We promised to "pursue all legal and constitutional means to support non-discriminatory policies and practices against persons based on race, gender, sexual orientation, nationality or cultural background."

We know there was a time, not so long ago, when black people in this country couldn't marry the person of their choice either. The California Supreme Court was the first, in 1948, to strike down laws prohibiting interracial marriage.

Now the California legislature has become the first to legalize gay marriage.

As California goes, so goes the Nation. It's just a matter of time.

Almost twenty years after California legalized interracial marriage, the United States Supreme Court heard the aptly named case *Loving v. Virginia*.

A married couple—Richard Loving, a white man, and Mildred Jeter, a black woman—won a ruling from the Court that Virginia's miscegenation laws were unconstitutional. That case enabled me to get married in Virginia. That case recognized marriage as one of the inviolable personal rights pursuant to happiness.

That's why when I am asked, "Are Gay Rights Civil Rights?" my answer is always, "Of course they are."

"Civil rights" are positive legal prerogatives—the right to equal treatment before the law. These are rights shared by all—there is no one in the United States who does not—or should not—share in these rights.

Gay and lesbian rights are not "special rights" in any way. It isn't "special" to be free from discrimination—it is an ordinary, universal entitlement of citizenship. The right not to be discriminated against is a common-place claim we all expect to enjoy under our laws and our founding document, the Constitution. That many had to struggle to gain these rights makes them precious—it does not make them special, and it does not reserve them only for me or restrict them from others.

When others gain these rights, my rights are not reduced in any way. The fight for "civil rights" is a win/win game; the more civil rights are won by others, the stronger the army defending my rights becomes. My rights are not diluted when my neighbor enjoys protection from the law—he or she becomes my ally in defending the rights we all share.

For some, comparisons between the African-American civil rights movement and the movement for gay and lesbian rights seem to diminish the long black historical struggle with all its suffering, sacrifices and endless toil. However, people of color ought to be flattered that our movement has provided so much inspiration for others, that it has been so widely imitated, and that our tactics, methods, heroines and heroes, even our songs, have been appropriated by or served as models for others.

No parallel between movements for rights is exact. African-Americans are the only Americans who were enslaved for more than two centuries, and people of color carry the badge of who we are on our faces. But we are far from the only people suffering discrimination—sadly, so do many others. They deserve the law's protections and civil rights, too.

Sexual disposition parallels race—I was born black and had no choice. I couldn't change and wouldn't change if I could. Like race, our sexuality isn't a preference—it is immutable, unchangeable, and the Constitution protects us all against prejudices and discrimination based on immutable differences.

Those whose bigotry is Bible-based selectively ignore Biblical injunctions in Exodus to execute people who work on the Sabbath and in Leviticus to crack down on those who get haircuts or who wear clothes with more than one kind of thread.

Recently, they've even ignored the sanctity of marriage—just ask Michael Schiavo.

Many gays and lesbians worked side by side with me in the '60s civil rights movement. Am I to now tell them "thanks" for risking life and limb helping me win my rights—but they are excluded because of a condition of their birth? That they cannot share now in the victories they helped to win? That having accepted and embraced them as partners in a common struggle, I can now turn my back on them and deny them the rights they helped me win, that I enjoy because of them?

Not a chance.

In 1965, those of us who worked in the civil rights movement were buoyed by a radio address given by Lyndon Johnson.

His words speak to us today. He said then:

It is difficult to fight for freedom. But I also know how difficult it can be to bend long years of habit and custom to grant it. There is no room for injustice anywhere in the American mansion. But there is always room for understanding those who see the old ways crumbling. And to them today I say simply this: It must come. It is right that it should come. And when it has, you will find that a burden has been lifted from your shoulders too. It is not just a question of guilt, although there is that. It is that men cannot live with a lie and not be stained by it.

One lesson of the civil rights movement of yesterday—and the on-going civil rights movement of today—is that sometimes the simplest of ordinary acts—taking a seat on a bus or a lunch counter, registering to vote, applying for a marriage license—can have extraordinary ramifications. It can change our world, change the way we act and think.

Thank you again for this honor.

The old ways are crumbling.

It must come.

Let us leave here determined to fight on until it does.

HONORING RICK GEHA

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 6, 2005

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Rick Geha who is being honored by The Ohlone College Foundation in Fremont, California, as 2005 Citizen of the Year.

Since 1987, the Ohlone College Foundation has awarded a Citizen of the Year Award at its Annual Benefit Luncheon to honor individuals or organizations that have made an exceptional contribution and commitment to the advancement of the community.

Rick Geha is being honored for his "Commitment to Excellence." As a businessman, he is a leader among Bay Area realtors and a mentor in the real estate business.

As a community activist, he is a strong advocate for children and education. He has served on the Ohlone College Foundation Board since 1993 and has held the position of Board Chair for the past eight years. He has served two terms on the Kidango Board of Directors. Kidango, formerly Tri-cities Children's Center, provides a variety of child development programs in 46 locations in three Bay Area Counties. The Fremont Education Foundation honored Rich Geha as the Community Honoree for its 2005 Excellence in Education award.

Rick Geha gives tirelessly to the community through his philanthropy, community service, business expertise, and dedication to making