

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PAYING TRIBUTE TO INSURE ME

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDI

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mr. TANCREDI. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to recognize the achievement of a financial and insurance company in my district. InsureMe of Englewood, Colorado was recognized as one of the "Best Small & Medium Companies to Work for in America" by the Society for Human Resource Management.

This award was given to InsureMe for their open communication between senior managers and company employees, generous salaries and benefits, and their dedication to high profits and low turnover. I would also like to add that the employees of InsureMe volunteer monthly to serve dinner to the homeless and some have even traveled to Ghana to build an orphanage. InsureMe's commitment to their community and successful business is clear.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to honor InsureMe of Englewood and their achievements here today, and wish them the best in the future.

HONORING DOCTOR PATRICK MAXWELL

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today to honor Dr. Patrick Maxwell for his service to others.

In 2005, Dr. Maxwell received the American Society of Plastic Surgeons' Presidential Award for excellence in his field. While Dr. Maxwell is regarded as one of the premier surgeons in his field, he's also known for his charity.

Patrick is co-founder of the Tennessee-Kentucky chapter of Operation Smile, past president of the Nashville Chapter of the American Cancer Society, Founding Member of the Aspen Center for Integrative Medicine, and he actively supports his alma mater, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

We appreciate Dr. Maxwell's dedication to giving back to our community and I hope you'll join me in thanking him today.

TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR MESFIN WOLDE MARIAM

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, in August 2006, I visited Professor Mesfin Wolde Mariam in

Kaliti prison in Ethiopia. Though it was sad to see him in that kind of situation, I was nevertheless thrilled to have had the opportunity to pay my respect to a man I have known for over a decade. Professor Mesfin is one of the most dedicated and true champions of human rights. He chose to dedicate his life to studying famine and food security, writing about and promoting human rights and bringing to light issues often ignored and forgotten by many.

I first met Mesfin in the early 1990s, shortly after he founded the Ethiopian Human Rights Council, EHRCO, the most effective human rights organization in Ethiopia. I was with several Members of Congress on an official visit to Ethiopia. We decided to go to EHRCO's office and hold our meeting with Professor Mesfin in order to show our support for EHRCO and to underscore the significance of their valuable work. It was a memorable meeting and the opportunity to learn of their monumental undertaking was very valuable.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time Mesfin is in prison. He has paid dearly over the decades for standing up for what he believes in and for exposing systematic abuses and sometimes neglect as the case may be over a period of several decades. What is amazing about this incredible human being is his sharpness and focus even in prison. This is a dedicated human being who chose to stay in his native Ethiopia to stand up for, and educate the helpless and the neglected, even though he had plenty of opportunity and offers to live comfortably elsewhere.

In April 2006, his three children wrote about their father stating: "Many months have passed since Mesfin Wolde Mariam, the father of all three of us, and grandfather of Semra, Kristos, Kokeb, Tinsae and Oscar has been incarcerated. We miss him terribly and would love to see him home. No less important is our utmost respect, concern and commitment for the principles he has so staunchly promoted for longer than anyone of us has been around."

I was thrilled to learn that the New York Academy of Sciences decided to recognize Professor Mesfin for "his leadership in advocating for the disadvantage and in promoting human rights, civil society, and a peaceful transition to democracy." Professor Mesfin deserves this recognition and I thank the New York Academy of Science for its leadership and efforts.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CITY YOUTH VIOLENCE RECOVERY ACT OF 2006

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with the distinguished gentleman

from Georgia, Mr. LEWIS, to introduce the City Youth Violence Recovery Act. I want to thank Congressman LEWIS for his work on this bill and for his lifelong work to unite every community into what he calls The Beloved Community.

As the media reports daily about the loss of life in the war in Iraq, we often ignore the war being fought at home in city streets across this country. After a decadelong decline of violent crime, it is again on the rise. In Hartford, for example, there have been 140 shooting victims since the beginning of 2006—this is an 18.6% increase over last year's city reports. And again, just over the weekend, gun violence claimed another young life. It was the city's 19th homicide this year. He was 19.

The challenges facing the city of Hartford are not unique. This violence, perpetrated both by and against young people, has devastated urban communities in cities both large and small. In a disturbing trend, our city children and teenagers are losing their lives, losing their friends, losing their family members, and losing their youth. They feel fear, helplessness, horror and the sense that life and safety are in danger. Tragically, many have grown numb to the violence around them.

Since community violence is caused by many things, there is no simple, single solution to eradicate it from our neighborhoods. We must address employment, housing, education, transportation, law enforcement, and other quality of life issues. Until we address these issues, we must do something to help the youth in our cities overcome the long-term emotional harm of witnessing this community violence.

In July, I was honored to have Mr. LEWIS come to Connecticut to talk with local leaders and children in the Hartford community. It was clear that the community's young people require more than physical security to keep them safe from harm. They need a network of support to treat the emotional, mental and developmental harms associated with community violence. Today, I am proud to be joined by Congressman LEWIS and 27 of my distinguished colleagues to introduce the City Youth Violence Recovery Act of 2006. This bill is a step in the right direction in healing the youth of Hartford and the youth in cities devastated by violence throughout the United States. Specifically, this bill would create a Department of Health and Human Services grant program to provide urban communities with funding for counseling, mental health services, post-traumatic stress type services, and violence prevention and conflict mediation for city youth.

We can no longer remain indifferent to the needs of our urban youth. As Members of Congress, as Americans, and as fathers and mothers, we cannot allow any more young lives to be lost in this war at home. Our cities' children deserve better; they deserve a future.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

HONORING BRENTWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL AND FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring two schools in Tennessee's 7th Congressional District that have been ranked among the Nation's best.

Both Brentwood Middle School and Franklin Elementary School have earned recognition from the U.S. Department of Education as 2006 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools.

The schools qualified for this distinction by scoring in the top 10 percent in State assessments. While only six schools in Tennessee achieved this distinction, our community has been blessed with two.

Mr. Speaker, the students, parents, teachers, and administrators at Brentwood Middle and Franklin Elementary deserve our congratulations for their commitment to excellence. Our students are gaining skills that will make them lifelong learners, and that's a real credit to the community.

I would especially like to thank Brentwood Middle Principal Kay Kendrick and Franklin Elementary Principal Mark Tornow for their hard work and dedication.

COMMEMORATING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN'S INDEPENDENCE

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge Azerbaijan's 15th anniversary of its re-independence on October 18. In the current global political climate, Azerbaijan is unique among democracies as the world's first Muslim democratic republic.

Azerbaijan is one of the United States' most important friends and supporters. We share important political, economic and security interests.

Azerbaijan was the first among nations to offer the United States unconditional support in the war against terrorism, providing airspace and airport use for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Azerbaijan cooperates with the United States within international and regional institutions including U.N., Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe—OSCE, and NATO's Partnership for Peace program. Azerbaijan also works together with the United States within the framework of the Organization for Democracy and Development—GUAM which is comprised of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. The group was created as a political, economic and strategic alliance aimed at overcoming common risks and threats and strengthening the independence and sovereignty of its member states.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is a standout nation among the South Caucasus countries,

with a population of 8 million people and an ambitious economic policy. During the last decade Azerbaijan has been implementing structural reforms and adopting numerous laws and legislative changes, paving the way toward further integration within the global economy. The Nation has been moving toward a more diversified economy to achieve sustainable growth and to meet the social and development needs of its population. As reported by the International Monetary Fund, IMF, Azerbaijan's macroeconomic performance "has been impressive with strong growth, low inflation, and a stable exchange rate." Real GDP grew by an annual average of over 10 percent during the last 6 years and build up to 34.4 percent in the first 8 months of 2006, driven by investments in the energy sector, followed by growth in the construction and transportation sectors, and agriculture.

Since signing the "Contract of the Century" in 1994, Azerbaijan has developed its energy sources within the Caspian region to diversify western energy supplies. On July 13, 2006 the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan main oil export pipeline was inaugurated.

Diversification of the economy and ensuring the development of non-oil sectors is a priority for the government. This policy includes implementation of projects and programs that create favorable conditions for development of private entrepreneurship, attracting investment in non-oil sector, creating new jobs, evaluation of potential industries and markets and development of infrastructure in the regions.

A democratic, prosperous, and peaceful Azerbaijan will be a strong partner and ally for the United States. I look forward to working with the Azerbaijani Government and people to develop this relationship.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in the House of Representatives today in commemorating Azerbaijan's independence. I look forward to the bonds of friendship between the United States and Azerbaijan becoming even stronger in the future.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO GARY L. MAAS

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of retiring Littleton Police Chief Gary Maas. Chief Maas, a constituent of mine, was able to reorganize and improve the Littleton Police Department since the beginning of his term in 1996.

During his tenure, Chief Maas focused on developing a community outreach program to provide services to neighborhoods across divisional lines. Along with this success, Maas oversaw the initiation of community surveys in order to determine the priorities of the citizens. A caring and committed individual, Mr. Maas restored confidence and strength in the Littleton Police Department through his implementation of educational requirements on entry level positions and his work with the union to establish the Master Police Officer program.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to honor Mr. Gary Maas and his achievements here today, and wish him all the best in his retirement.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF MARINE LANCE CORPORAL TIMOTHY CREAGER

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to rise today in honor of Marine LCpl Timothy Creager.

Timothy is one of America's fallen heroes. He was one of our best and brightest, and he had the courage to put himself in harm's way for our country.

On July 1, 2004, Lance Corporal Creager was killed in action while on patrol near Fallujah, in the Al-Anbar Province in Iraq, surrounded by his fellow marines of 2nd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion. His sacrifice shows us how precious freedom is—that a man would give his life to preserve it for his family and fellow Americans.

We Tennesseans knew Tim as an outstanding student, Eagle Scout, and battalion commander in the Civil Air Patrol at Craigmont High School. In 2003, he gave up his scholarship to the Citadel after his sophomore year because he felt it was his duty to enlist in the Marines. Timothy chose this path because he believed in America.

On Veterans Day this November 11, 2006, the Bartlett community will hold a 5K race to honor Timothy. The community will also be dedicating an expanded Bartlett Veterans Memorial to honor Timothy and all those who have served our country.

Mr. Speaker, nothing can replace Timothy and no words can express our gratitude to his friends and family for raising the kind of young man who would give his all for America. We can only honor his life and always remember his courage.

Our thoughts are with his mom and dad, Kay and Mike. I want them to know their country is grateful and we won't forget what their son did for us all.

TRIBUTE TO GREGORY AND DR. NIKOLAOS STAVROU

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, we all remember the heady days when the Communist bloc collapsed on its own weight and the peoples of Eastern Europe came out of the dark days of totalitarianism and into the light of freedom. The collapse was so abrupt and so spontaneous that few people had the luxury of taking stock of the heroic efforts made by so many people over a period of 70 years that preceded the days of freedom; and there were heroes in every country of Eastern Europe throughout the dark days of communist terror.

From all countries of Eastern Europe none was so isolated and its people more oppressed than Albania. The Enver Hoxha regime was the last one to collapse, and just a few days after its demise, over one million Albanians crossed the borders of neighboring countries in search of food and freedom. This particular regime thrived in its splendid isolation and the knowledge that if no one was allowed to enter or leave the country, then no