

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