

square miles and serves thousands of households in over forty municipalities in New Jersey. Five streams in the watershed form the Passaic River, which provides drinking water for over a million New Jersey residents!

In 2002 the Great Swamp Watershed Association produced "Doing Water Right," a video and instruction manual to demonstrate the benefits and application of "blue-water" technologies in support of proposed state storm water regulations. The Association's programs have received local, regional and national awards.

The Great Swamp Watershed Association has preserved local streams, protected environmentally sensitive land threatened by development, and promoted environmental education for all age groups. The Association also is responsible for land advocacy and water quality testing within the watershed. Most of this work is done by a dedicated and devoted group of volunteers from across the area.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the members of the Great Swamp Watershed Association on its 25th Anniversary.

INTRODUCTION OF "LET'S ALL PLAY DAY" RESOLUTION

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 28, 2006

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to introduce a resolution expressing the sense of Congress that there should be established a "Let's All Play Day."

I introduce this bill in support of the goals and ideals of Boundless Playgrounds. I would like to take this opportunity to share these goals and ideals with my colleagues in the House.

An estimated six million children in the United States have some type of chronic condition or disability that makes it hard or impossible for them to fully enjoy traditional playgrounds. Those who work with children with disabilities stress the importance of play in their development. Boundless Playgrounds differ from traditional playgrounds in the sense that these playgrounds, and the equipment within the playgrounds, are accessible to all children. They are barrier-free, inclusive and configured to support children's development. Perhaps most importantly, by encouraging children with and without disabilities to play together, these playgrounds provide a space to celebrate similarities and differences and develop essential life skills. I can think of no better way to combat stereotypes than to expose our children to others with disabilities at a young age.

Currently, there are more than 100 Boundless Playgrounds in twenty-one states, with more in development. In my own district, a Boundless Playground in Providence, Rhode Island provides many Rhode Island children and their family members the ability to interact and play together. I have been amazed and inspired by how the community has come together in support of this park—most notably the contributions of Hasbro, Inc. Such cooperation is a tremendous testament to Rhode Island's commitment to supporting children who struggle to overcome obstacles.

Mr. Speaker, we could all take a lesson from the forethought put into the design of Boundless Playgrounds. In the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act and other initiatives that have encouraged the inclusion of people with disabilities in their communities, I am proud to recognize Boundless Playgrounds for their dedication to all children and families. I hope my colleagues will join me in the effort to acknowledge these extraordinary playgrounds by cosponsoring this resolution.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 28, 2006

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I was recorded as having missed the vote on final passage of H.R. 6166, the Military Commissions Act. I was present during the vote and intended to support this measure; however, my vote was not recorded.

I would like the record to reflect that I would have voted "aye" on this measure.

THANKS TO SUBHASRI RAMANATHAN

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 28, 2006

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to give thanks to Sue Ramanathan, Democratic deputy staff director and chief counsel of the United States House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security.

Sue was one of the original staff members of the Select Committee on Homeland Security from the 108th Congress, and has been a dedicated public servant whose leadership on border security and immigration issues has helped us proficiently tackle those hard issues and whose counsel has been a vital element of our homeland security efforts.

Sue began her tenure on Capitol Hill as a legislative fellow for Senator JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN and as a member of the Washington, DC, staff of the American Bar Association before joining my colleague ZOE LOFGREN as her senior policy advisor and counsel. While working for Congresswoman LOFGREN, Sue earned an LL.M in international and comparative law from Georgetown University Law Center. It was on behalf of Congresswoman LOFGREN that Sue was able to contribute to the conversation surrounding our Nation's immigration policies, the same policies that she and her family were first subject to as immigrants to our great Nation. The Congresswoman joins me in commending Sue today, as demonstrated by her comments to follow.

She left the Hill for a brief period to work on a Presidential campaign, before returning in 2004 to join the Select Committee of Homeland Security under Ranking Member Jim Turner of Texas. At the beginning of this Congress, when I became ranking member, I named Sue chief counsel and deputy staff director. In addition to helping develop the legislative and oversight activities of the Demo-

cratic Committee staff, Sue also led our immigration and border security team efforts. In this capacity, Sue played a critical role in implementing the committee's legislative agenda.

Mr. Speaker, this was no small task.

One particular debate that I will not soon forget pertained to the House's consideration of comprehensive border security legislation this past year. Committee staff spent countless sleepless nights and early mornings working on behalf of the American people to mitigate the risk posed by this Nation's porous borders. Sue coordinated the committee's floor time on H.R. 4437, the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005. In particular, she worked closely with my colleague SILVESTRE REYES on the Democratic motion to recommit. Mr. REYES had this to say about Sue, "as a member of Congress representing a district on the U.S.-Mexico border, my staff and I had the pleasure of working with Sue Ramanathan on several pieces of homeland security legislation in recent years. In every instance, I was impressed by her knowledge, professionalism, and dedication. Though we are sorry to see her leave the staff of the Homeland Security Committee, we are fortunate that she will continue to work on the many homeland security issues facing our country in her new position. We wish her all the best."

In addition, she was one of the committee's key staffers on the committee's first two authorization bills, as well as on legislation to correct and restructure the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Sue's expertise and dedication will be deeply missed in the House. I am comforted, however, by the fact that Sue's insight and expertise will not be lost to the Members of this House. Unlike so many others who turn in their congressional ID cards for large paychecks in the private sector, Sue has maintained her commitment to public service. Thankfully, she will remain a public servant, dedicating this new chapter in her career in the Homeland Security and Justice Division at the U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO, and helping to ensure Congress's critical check and balance on the executive branch of Government. Mr. Speaker, I wish Sue, the committee's favorite Cherry Hill native and Rutgers graduate, the best in her new venture. I look forward to seeing great things from Sue and her new family at GAO as they, undoubtedly, work to ensure that America gets homeland security right once and for all.

15TH ANNIVERSARY OF AZERBAIJAN'S INDEPENDENCE

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 28, 2006

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, on October 18, 2006 Azerbaijan will celebrate the 15th Anniversary of its re-independence. As members of Congress recognize this important occasion, I think it is essential to point out the remarkable strength, determination and ingenuity of Azerbaijanis who have taken difficult steps to transform their country over the last 15 years.

One of the most significant developments contributing to Azerbaijan's transformation is

its ever-evolving relationship with the United States. While U.S.-Azerbaijani relations date back to Azerbaijan's independence from the former Soviet Union in 1991, our relations were elevated to the level of strategic partnership after September 11, 2001. Given the myriad of global challenges facing the United States, Azerbaijan, which is geostrategically located, has become an invaluable ally of America and a partner in the war against terrorism.

The US-Azerbaijani relationship is mutually beneficial and multifaceted, particularly as it relates to defense and security cooperation. Azerbaijan was the first Muslim majority nation to send troops to Iraq, and Azerbaijani soldiers currently serve shoulder-to-shoulder with American forces in Kosovo and Afghanistan. Azerbaijan is also working with the U.S. multilaterally, within the framework of the Organization for Democracy and Development—GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova) to fight against terrorism, prevent trans-national and cross-border crimes, and to secure borders, thus contributing to international counter-terrorism and non-proliferation efforts.

One of Azerbaijan's main foreign policy priorities, which I fully support, is its integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic political, security and economic institutions, a journey that began with the signing of the NATO's Partnership for Peace Framework document in 1994. Now Azerbaijan is completing the implementation process of NATO's Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) and actively participates in Partnership Action Plan against Terrorism (PAP-T). The country enjoys full membership in OSCE and Council of Europe. Azerbaijan also closely cooperates with the European Union (EU) and is looking to successfully move forward on the EU-Azerbaijan Action Plan and its New Neighborhood initiatives.

Azerbaijan is aggressively moving to diversify its economy to achieve sustainable growth and meet the social and development needs of its population. A key partner in developing and transporting Caspian Sea resources to the West, Azerbaijan encourages western and especially American investments and involvement in the region.

Since 1991, Azerbaijan has taken steps to change its legal and legislative structure to foster a democratic society based on rule of law, respect for political and civil rights. While Azerbaijan has made progress, I stand with the Bush administration in urging President Ilham Aliyev's government to take additional steps to expand political pluralism, strengthen democratic institutions and continue to reform its electoral system. As a friend of Azerbaijan, I believe that further democratic progress would only serve to strengthen this partnership and the ties that have been forged over the past 15 years.

Once again, I want to congratulate the people and government of Azerbaijan on this historic milestone and look forward to working with President Aliyev and my counterparts in Baku to strengthen the relationship between our two nations.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF PANCREATIC CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD RUSSELL PLATTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 25, 2006

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I strongly support House Resolution 745. This resolution will help to increase awareness about a horrible disease: pancreatic cancer.

Few Americans may understand that pancreatic cancer is a horrific killer. This year alone, over 33,000 people will be diagnosed with this disease. Because there are no early detection tools for this cancer, 99 percent of those diagnosed will lose their lives.

Many Americans are not aware that pancreatic cancer has the highest mortality rate of all cancers; most patients only survive three to six months after diagnosis. This is why it is a moral imperative for Congress to work to increase awareness of this deadly cancer.

Currently, the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (known as "PanCAN") is the only national advocacy organization available for pancreatic cancer patients and their families and friends. I became aware of PanCAN through a constituent of mine, Bob Hammen, who lost his wife to this terrible disease. PanCAN provides patient support and professional education about this disease, while coordinating advocacy programs to focus national attention on finding a cure for pancreatic cancer.

PanCAN regards each November as Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month. With the passage of H. Res. 745, Congress will be supporting PanCAN's efforts to raise awareness about pancreatic cancer so that scientific advancements can lead to some early detection programs and effective treatments.

Mr. Speaker, because all of our fellow citizens have family, friends and neighbors who are regrettably vulnerable to this dreaded disease, I urge support from my distinguished colleagues for this resolution here today.

ESTER MARTINEZ NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES PRESERVATION ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. RICK RENZI

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 27, 2006

Mr. RENZI. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman McKEON and Ranking Member MILLER for the opportunity to speak on this important piece of legislation. I also want to thank my colleague, Congresswoman HEATHER WILSON, for her leadership on this important issue.

This bill amends the Native American Programs Act to allow the Administration for Native Americans under the Dept. of Health and Human Services to award grants to strengthen Native American language immersion programs.

This measure is vital to preserving the diminishing Native languages in tribes across the nation, including many in my district. As an original cosponsor on this measure, I am

thankful for the bipartisan effort to preserve the languages of those people who hold the original history of our country.

In my own district, the Navajo people have a very successful language immersion program. In 2001, the Navajo Language Immersion School at the Window Rock Unified School District was established by Dr. Deborah Dennison. At the first grade level, students are instructed in the Navajo Language 90% of the time, and the remaining 10% of their lessons are in English. With each year, these Navajo students are immersed in English more and more until there is an equal balance of language instruction.

The students in this successful program cover academic content areas in both Navajo and English and the results have been astounding. These students perform better on the standardized tests than students in "regular" classrooms. Moreover, since it was established, the Navajo Language Immersion School has consistently met No Child Left Behind's designation of "Annual Yearly Progress" and they have also met "Arizona Learns" standards. I hope this kind of excellence in learning and education can be duplicated throughout Indian Country.

While some may worry that this program would decrease the importance of the English language in the United States, we must remember the contributions that Native Americans who speak their Native language have made to our country. During World Wars I and II, Native American languages, including the Navajo language, played a vital role in protecting our nation. Navajo people and other Native Americans were employed as "Code Talkers" during the wars, and implemented a code that our enemies could not break. Thus it was through their language that we overcame our enemies.

U.S. English, an organization dedicated to promoting English as the official language of the United States, has stated that, ". . . official English legislation proposed by U.S. ENGLISH does not prevent the use of Native American languages . . . In education, U.S. ENGLISH supports the right of tribal governments and autonomous Native American communities to make their native languages the primary language of instruction in their schools."

Therefore, it is paramount that we pass this legislation. As it helps us protect not only an essential part of Native American history but also helps us safeguard a larger part of United States character and culture for future generations to learn their Native language.

A wise friend once shared with me that "To take away a people's language is to begin to conquer them." Let us join together to support and preserve the first American's Native languages.

TRIBUTE TO JAMES BRUCE

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 28, 2006

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to the attention of this House the end of an era in the Kentucky General Assembly. In January, 2007, the longest serving member of the Kentucky General Assembly, Representative