

those who buy their products or use their services—rather than by outside investors. This business structure provides valuable benefits to the co-op's member/owners.

North Dakota alone has over 250 farmer cooperatives and over 300 cooperatives total (including utilities and credit union cooperatives). These cooperatives contribute over \$1.6 billion to the state's economy, and personal income attributed to cooperatives is over 15 percent of North Dakota's total.

North Dakota's cooperatives directly employ over 9,000 people full-time and an additional 3,000 people part-time. Add in secondary jobs associated with these cooperative businesses, and over 50,000 jobs in North Dakota result from cooperatives.

The effects of cooperatives are not just felt in North Dakota, of course. Nationwide, cooperatives operating in every state in the nation pump more than \$200 billion into the economy and serve an estimated 130 million Americans. These cooperatives operate in virtually every industry, including agriculture, energy, financial services, food retailing and distribution, housing, healthcare, and telecommunications. They range in size from small storefronts to large Fortune 500 companies, employing more than 500,000 Americans with an aggregate payroll in excess of \$15 billion.

Cooperatives dedicate substantial resources to serving their communities beyond their core business functions. This includes charitable giving that assists the underserved and community development activities that generate jobs and income.

The theme for Cooperative Month 2006 is "Cooperatives, Owned by Our Members, Committed to Our Communities." I urge my colleagues to join with cooperatives in their districts next month in celebrating the role of cooperatives in our economy and their value to their communities.

#### TRIBUTE TO HELEN DEHNKE

#### HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 29, 2006*

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, I am committed to ensuring that all children, regardless of socioeconomic background, receive an education that gives them the skills to achieve. Head Start, as developed in 1965, aims to address the educational, emotional, psychological, health, social, and nutritional needs of preschool-aged children from lower income families. Knowing how critical and beneficial this program is for so many families and their kids in western Wisconsin, I have consistently supported it.

Our local Head Start centers and leaders in western Wisconsin have served these students extremely well. One of the key components of the Head Start program is the quality of teaching it offers to its students. Without these teachers, the program could not succeed. Helen Dehnke of Mondovi, Wisconsin, embodies the devotion of many Head Start teachers. Helen has devoted 36 years of her life to Western Dairyland Head Start children and families.

Helen began her career as a Head Start parent volunteer in 1969 when her twins were

in the program. The following year, her hard work earned her the position of teaching assistant in collaboration with Mondovi Day Care, Western Dairyland Head Start, and the Mondovi School District. Understanding how important teacher quality is, Helen participated in professional development sessions and she earned her Child Development Credential in order to serve her students to the best of her abilities.

Helen's hard work has not gone without recognition. Both her students and their families are extremely grateful for her 36 years of dedication, as am I. Helen is a loving and nurturing teacher, who has learned to know her student's exact needs. She has dedicated her life to ensure that young children are able to learn in a healthy, supportive environment.

I congratulate Helen on her retirement and thank her for her life's dedication to Wisconsin children and families. It is because of her work, and the work of her colleagues, that 13,000 Wisconsin preschool-aged children are enrolled in Head Start. As a result, these children will gain an excellent education and acquire the skills necessary to succeed in life. I wish Helen all the luck and well-being in the future, and it is my hope that her work will inspire others to continue to advance teacher qualifications and skills and strengthen the cognitive development and literacy of Head Start students.

#### TRIBUTE TO DR. HERBERT H. RICHARDSON

#### HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 29, 2006*

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Dr. Herbert H. Richardson for his service to The Texas A&M University System.

Dr. Richardson joined The Texas A&M University System in October 1984 as Vice Chancellor for Engineering in the System, Dean of the College of Engineering and Distinguished Professor of Engineering at Texas A&M University and brought together the University and the System's three engineering research and service agencies—the Texas Engineering Experiment Station, the Texas Engineering Extension Service and the Texas Transportation Institute—to form an integrated Engineering Program.

Dr. Richardson encouraged interdisciplinary research programs and played a key role in the awarding of Texas A&M University's first National Science Foundation Engineering Research Center, the Offshore Technology Research Center.

From 1991 to 1993, Dr. Richardson served as Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System, leading the development of a comprehensive long-range vision for the System, as well as implementing a major administrative restructuring.

During his 22 years with The Texas A&M University System, Dr. Richardson has shown innovative leadership in building strong academic and research programs and in so doing helped the College of Engineering and the Texas Transportation Institute earn and maintain their outstanding national and international reputations for excellence.

I offer congratulations on his retirement and wish him and his family many years of future happiness

#### FREE TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE U.S. AND TAIWAN

#### HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 29, 2006*

Mr. KING of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 236, a resolution expressing Congressional support for a free trade agreement between the United States and Taiwan. As a cosponsor of this resolution, I join with over 65 of my colleagues in urging the Administration to begin these negotiations.

For more than 50 years, the U.S. and Taiwan have shared a close economic and security relationship resulting in more than 140 bilateral agreements. In 2005, trade between these countries totaled \$56.9 billion as Taiwan became the 8th leading trading partner of the U.S. while the U.S. was Taiwan's 3rd leading trading partner. The Bush Administration has shown its commitment to expanding free trade in the region by signing FTAs with Singapore and launching negotiations with Korea and Malaysia recently. Now it is time to start discussions with Taiwan on a FTA that will further strengthen this relationship.

A 2002 report issued by the U.S. International Trade Commission found various sectors of the U.S. economy would increase significantly if the U.S. entered in to a FTA with Taiwan. While both the U.S. and Taiwan would benefit greatly from the elimination of trade and investment barriers, New York State stands to gain as well. Some of the largest U.S. companies whose headquarters are based in New York have invested in Taiwan. And over 300 Taiwanese companies specializing in computers, finance, and jewelry have invested in New York. In 2005 New York State exported over \$1 billion worth of products to Taiwan. The reduction of these tariffs will certainly increase exports to Taiwan and create more jobs in New York. Finally, this FTA will allow New York companies to use Taiwan as a gateway for selling its products to China and the entire Asia-Pacific region.

A FTA between the U.S. and Taiwan has already been endorsed by 23 state legislatures. This important agreement will expand and greatly enhance the already close relationship between the U.S. and Taiwan.

Mr. Speaker, given these facts, I believe now is the time to begin negotiations on a free trade agreement between the United States and Taiwan.

#### TRIBUTE TO STEVE IRWIN

#### HON. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 29, 2006*

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following poem for the RECORD.

THOSE AREN'T CROCODILE TEARS

(By Albert Carey Caswell)

Those aren't Crocodile Tears!