

teachers when Ms. Porter took over. She took immediate steps, such as finding music students from the University of Minnesota to teach the band members. And she reached out to the community, and the community responded.

Mr. Speaker, the crescendo of support started with the Brooklyn Center Rotary Club, which saw the problem and marched forward. Under the leadership of "Mr. Brooklyn Center," Phil Cohen, past Rotary President Carrie Engh of Bremer Bank Brooklyn Center and current President Frank Slawson of American Express Financial Planners, the Rotary Club contributed \$10,000.

The Lions Club also made financial contributions and the Brooklyn Center Business Association held a golf tournament to help the band. And the Brooklyn Center Taxpayers Association pitched in, too. The people of Brooklyn Center have really come together to support the band.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Porter's inspired leadership and the band's hard work resulted in the Grammy Foundation personally delivering the \$15,000 Grammy Enterprise Award to the band at Brooklyn Center High School!

Chris Porter and Chanel Chatham received a well-deserved standing ovation. The tremendous outpouring of affection and support for the band made it all worthwhile!

The story of the Brooklyn Center High School Band even brought tears to the eyes of singer Kelly Clarkson, who was a guest of honor at the event. The story reminded Clarkson of her own high school band, and the story has warmed all of our hearts.

From the trombones to the tubas, the Brooklyn Center High Band is truly playing a joyful tune! There was a lot of hard work that went into this masterpiece.

Thank you, Chris Porter and the wonderful Brooklyn Center High School Band, for bringing so much great music into our lives and the lives of young people. You have all showed us that hard work, creativity, talent and the right instruments can make a beautiful song!

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 5631,  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AP-  
PROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. MARK UDALL**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 26, 2006*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation.

The Defense Appropriations bill for fiscal year 2007 funds our military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, among many other things. It is very similar to the Defense Authorization bill that I supported in the Armed Services Committee and on the House floor.

The bill provides \$447.6 billion in funding, including \$70 billion in emergency funds to support military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. This grand total represents about 55 percent of the entire Federal discretionary budget. Overall defense spending has risen 40 percent since September 11th and is more than currently being spent by the rest of the world combined.

Appropriating \$70 billion for the so-called bridge fund is realistic and necessary, be-

cause we must support our men and women in uniform, but I also believe the Administration must begin to take responsibility for the full cost of the war in Iraq and consider these costs through the regular appropriations process. There is no "emergency" here—we know that since this bridge fund would take us only halfway through fiscal year 2007, we should be expecting another request before the year is over. With total costs for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan crossing the half trillion dollar point after passage of this bill, the American people deserve greater candor from the Administration about both the predictable costs as well as the anticipated benefits of our undertakings in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Although I don't agree with the "emergency" designation, I'm pleased that the conferees saw fit to increase the bridge fund levels to include \$17.1 billion to replace and refurbish Army equipment. This is the amount General Schoemaker testified that the Army needed in fiscal year 2007 to fully fund its reset program. It's true that even with this funding, the Army will still need tens of billions of dollars over the coming years for equipment rehabilitation and recapitalization—but this is an important start. The bridge fund also includes funding for Marine Corps equipment and body armor as well as \$549 million to cover costs of the enhanced insurance and death gratuity benefits.

I am pleased that the conference report fully funds military pay, benefits, and the pay raise of 2.2 percent for the base force. It also includes language that I advocated for prohibiting funding for permanent U.S. bases in Iraq.

I remain concerned about rising costs of weapons systems that have yet to be fully funded, such as the Future Combat Systems and missile defense program, among others. A recent report from the Department of Defense identified 36 major weapons systems as having significant cost overruns. And yet Congressional Budget Office projections are that we'll need to increase defense budgets by 17 percent per year simply to sustain the current force structure and weapons programs. And this is happening at the same time that operations and maintenance and personnel costs—as well as training and recruiting costs—are rising.

So Mr. Speaker, this conference report is not perfect. It does not solve or attempt to solve some of these looming budget problems. But overall, it deserves to pass and I urge its approval.

CONGRATULATING VINCENT D.  
MURRAY ON RECEIVING THE  
HAROLD W. MCGRAW, JR. PRIZE  
IN EDUCATION

**HON. JOHN LEWIS**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 29, 2006*

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Vincent D. Murray, who will receive the prestigious Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education. Mr. Murray has been the principal of Henry W. Grady High School in Atlanta, Georgia since 1991.

Mr. Murray has been chosen for the prestigious 19th annual award for his leadership in transforming his inner-city public school into a higher achieving institution in which graduation

and college-going rates consistently have risen above the district and state averages.

Sixty-six percent of Grady High students are African American and 44 percent qualify for free or reduced price lunch. When Murray joined Grady High, more than a third of all freshmen were held back and repeated their freshmen year. The student body's passing rate on the Georgia graduation test was below the statewide average.

Mr. Murray has been consistent in his efforts and focused on innovative reform. The result is that today, four out of every five graduates go directly on to college or university, including Ivy League institutions. Average scores on the graduation test, SAT and Advanced Placement exams exceed district, state and national averages. Graduation rates have risen 38 percentage points for African-American students (to 84 percent), 26 points for economically disadvantaged students (to 86 percent) and 25 points for white students (to 97 percent). As a result of Murray's success in transforming Grady High, the U.S. Department of Education recognized him in 2000 with the Department's Title I Distinguished School Award. In 2006, the governor of Georgia named him a High Performance Principal, a top honor in the state.

Mr. Murray has a bachelor of arts degree in history and English from Morehouse College, a master of arts degree in early childhood education from the University of Georgia, and a doctorate in psychology/learning disabilities from Boston University. He has pursued post-doctoral studies at Clark-Atlanta University and Georgia State University.

I salute Mr. Vincent D. Murray for his outstanding contributions to education. He has dedicated himself to improving education in this country and his accomplishments continue to make a difference.

URGING THE CENTERS FOR MEDI-  
CARE AND MEDICAID TO RECON-  
SIDER IVIG REIMBURSEMENT

**HON. CHARLIE NORWOOD**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 29, 2006*

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring your attention to a very important issue relating to medical reimbursement by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement Act and Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) created new reimbursement mechanisms for IVIG therapies. CMS's implementation of the MMA has resulted in reduced access to life-saving therapies for Medicare beneficiaries. CMS potentially closed the door to medical treatment when they issued the CY 2007 proposed rules for the physician fee schedule and the hospital outpatient prospective payment system, which, if implemented, would effectively limit IVIG treatment by not properly reimbursing providers.

IVIG is a vital medical service. It is a plasma-derived therapy tailored to the individual's diseases and treatment options to achieve optimal results. Nearly 10,000 Medicare beneficiaries are afflicted with primary immune deficiency (PID) which only responds to IVIG therapy. For many Americans there is no substitute for IVIG treatment.

More to the point, this treatment allows individuals to carry on normal daily-life activities. PID requires IVIG therapy every 3 to 4 weeks for the duration of an individual's life, but without such treatment the individual not only imposes additional medical costs on an already overburdened system, they cease to be active members of our society. Such an outcome is simply not acceptable. IVIG therapy is cost-effective and beneficial for the patient. As far as I am concerned, that should be enough to get CMS to rethink implementing any reimbursement change that has the potential to harm access and reduce medical outcomes.

In May of this year, thirty-five members of Congress, including myself, sent a letter to Secretary Leavitt of the Department of Health and Human Services expressing our concern over this matter and encouraged Secretary Leavitt to consider a payment adjustment, combined with product specific reimbursement. We also made clear that we would be open to any other mechanism he may have deemed suitable in order to resolve this patient access dilemma. Secretary Leavitt's response was, quite simply, inadequate. He failed to address our specific concerns or pose alternative remedies that would allow patients continued access to IVIG treatment.

I urge CMS to reconsider its actions in this case to ensure patient access to a necessary and legitimate medical treatment.

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF  
THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
ST. SAVA SERBIAN SINGING  
FEDERATION

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 29, 2006*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker. I rise today in honor and tribute to the 75th Anniversary of the St. Sava Serbian Singing Federation, and the local St. Sava Cathedral choir in Parma, Ohio.

Vjajko Lugonja founded the Serbian Singing Federation in 1931. His legend continues to thrive in the voices of the singers today. On a local and national level, the Singing Federation's member choirs contribute their Serbian cultural heritage through song and music. In Ohio alone, there are six member choirs. The group also boasts the largest collection of Serbian music, contained in its library, featuring the work of 96 Serbian composers.

The Serbian Singing Federation also supports local high school seniors trying to afford college tuition through its Paul Bielich Scholarships, given to multiple students for general studies, as well as the Petar and Minnie Sekulovich Scholarship awarded to a young member of the choir who wishes to study music in college.

In celebration of its 75th Anniversary, the Serbian Singing Federation is hosting a concert this Saturday, September 30, which will feature not only its 40-member ensemble, but also guest choirs, including the Kosovo Men's Choir of Cleveland and the Hamilton Ontario Choir.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honoring the last 75 years of diversity the St. Sava Serbian Singing Federation has brought to Northeastern Ohio. They are an in-

dispensable characteristic of Cleveland, and the Serbian community is one of the many groups that piece together this colorful city. By artistically perpetuating their culture through music, the choir offers a beautiful gift to all people.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 10TH AN-  
NIVERSARY OF FOX NEWS CHAN-  
NEL

**HON. PETE SESSIONS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 29, 2006*

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 10th anniversary of Fox News Channel, which in celebration will present live audience shows from various locations across the country, including a live broadcast on September 22, 2006 from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

Fox News Channel brings fair and balanced reporting to a national audience, and I am proud that they chose to broadcast live from one of Texas' and the Nation's premier institutions of higher learning, Southern Methodist University.

I would like to take this opportunity to express special recognition to Fox News Channel on the occasion of its 10th anniversary.

CONGRATULATING THE  
HONORABLE W. WILSON GOODE

**HON. CHAKA FATTAH**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 29, 2006*

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Honorable W. Wilson Goode, 2006 recipient of the Purpose Prize, a new and exciting award by Civic Ventures that honors and promotes social entrepreneurs who are age 60 or older. Over 1200 people competed for five \$100,000 gifts, creating publicity and support for programs developed to address society's biggest challenges.

Wilson Goode, former Mayor of Philadelphia, left government in 1992 after earning a Doctorate in Ministry, and moved into the non-profit world. At age 62, he committed himself to helping the seven million children in America who have one or both parents in jail, on parole, or under state or federal supervision. Research shows that without intervention, 70 percent of these children are likely to follow their parents to jail. As Director of Amachi, Wilson Goode has championed a proven method of intervention, mentoring with a faith-based recruitment strategy. He has rallied pastors, particularly in the African-American community, to engage their members. Today, more than 240 programs in 48 states are connected with Amachi, and have helped more than 30,000 children.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to commend Civic Ventures, along with Purpose Prize, the Atlantic Philanthropies, and the John Templeton Foundation, for their vision and generosity in creating this important stimulus for expanding citizen initiative for public good. The Purpose Prize joins Experience Corps as an important innovation by Civic Ventures, a

nonprofit organization dedicated to generating ideas and programs to help society achieve the greatest return on the experience of older adults. I believe these programs will help transform society's view of aging, and lead to better investments in America's greatest untapped resource, which are experienced and engaged older adults.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in extending my heartfelt congratulations and appreciation to Wilson Goode, and wish him continued success.

IN MEMORY OF MONROE  
SWEETLAND

**HON. EARL BLUMENAUER**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 29, 2006*

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and honor the life of Monroe Sweetland, along with my colleagues TOM LANTOS, ANNA ESHOO, and many other of Monroe's California friends.

The most important Oregonian most people have never heard of passed away earlier this month. Even though I knew Monroe would soon be leaving us, and even had quite a lucid farewell conversation with him shortly before, it's still hard to believe that he is gone.

Here's a man whose lifespan of active political life stretched from the Hoover administration to George Bush the second. Monroe engaged in every single important political debate of our times from economics to foreign-policy to civil rights: He was in Indonesia, during the year of living dangerously; was one of the most powerful men in Oregon during the Truman administration as a Democratic national committeeman for a Democratic administration when every elected leader was Republican; and, he had tremendous influence on appointments and policy decisions from judicial appointments and personnel decisions to policy direction. He was a journalist, an educator, and a politician but most of all a passionate advocate for making the world a better place.

From the time I first met Monroe Sweetland as a college student directing Oregon's campaign to lower the voting age, he was a steady presence in my political life and development. He always provided me good, sound advice, gentle but firm encouragement and tremendous support.

He knew everyone who had made a difference in his party for three quarters of a century. Monroe earned the respect and affection of principled opponents, including Senator Mark Hatfield who defeated Monroe when they ran against each other for Oregon Secretary of State in 1956. It was great to hear and feel the respect these two Oregon giants had for one another, and one hopes that someday that can come back into fashion.

As recently as 1998, Monroe ran for the State Senate mounting a close campaign against Verne Duncan, a longtime incumbent. To the end, Monroe conducted his campaign, as his entire career, with civility and affection, being able to point out differences with precision and civility that made people feel good about politics.

Most of all, Monroe was tireless and effective. He was gentle and kind but resolute in