A graduate of Hobart and Buffalo State Colleges, Paul began his career in public service as a Buffalo Public School teacher. After teaching elementary school for several years, Paul was elected Clerk of the Erie County Legislature, and later accepted appointment as a Deputy County Clerk in the administrations of the late Genevieve Starociak and current County Clerk David J. Swarts.

In early 1988, following the November 1987 election of then-Assemblyman Dennis T. Gorski as Erie County Executive, Paul became a candidate for the open seat in the 143rd Assembly District. Paul handily won election in 1988, was re-elected later that year, and never again faced a serious challenge for re-election.

We know why he never faced a serious challenge—because Paul was and is an outstanding public servant, a capable and effective Member of ''the people's house,'' who steadfastly defended Western New York while in service in Albany.

Over the years, Paul earned several important committee posts, including the chairmanship of the Assembly's committees on Election Law, where under Paul's leadership a state constitutional amendment was adopted to implement the 1993 federal ''Motor Voter'' law. Paul also chaired the Assembly's committee on Tourism, Arts and Sports Development, where he emerged as a statewide leader and an advocate for cultural tourism, particularly as it impacted Western New York, and his advocacy in increasing opportunities for cultural institutions to gain access to State capital funds as a means of expanding economic development in local communities.

The apex of Paul's Assembly career coincided with his ascension into the Assembly's formal leadership structure, culminating in his January 2001 appointment by Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver as Majority Leader. As Majority Leader, Paul assumed responsibility for directing the day-to-day operations of the legislative session in the Assembly chamber, serving as floor leader, setting the daily agenda, and overseeing debate and voting on all legislation coming before the house. As someone who served under Paul as a rank-and-file member for 4 of my 6 years, I was witness to the tremendous skill and dignity he displayed in that role. Simply put, Paul performed remarkably in that role.

Speaking on a personal level, when I came to the State Assembly as a freshman member in 1999, Paul was someone I sought out immediately as a person with a tremendous amount of institutional knowledge—as someone with 10 years of seniority, Paul clearly had knowledge of the institution of the State Legislature that I did not myself possess. Paul was a tremendous help to me as I gained an understanding of the inner workings of Albany, and I have always credited his help and guidance as of critical importance.

In 2004, when New York's 27th District seat in Congress suddenly came open, Paul and I were both potential candidates. As days wore on, Paul and I met, and he soon offered me his unconditional support. Paul co-chaired my successful election campaign in 2004, and has been an ally and a friend as I have sought to effectively represent Western New York in Congress.

Paul has a great many accomplishments about which to be proud, but knowing him as I do, Paul takes no greater pride in any of his personal accomplishments than that which concerns his family. Paul and his Sylvia are parents of three outstanding adult children, Kristie, Jennifer, and Andrew. Paul and Sylvia also rightly take tremendous pride in their three grandchildren, Jacob and Bradley Kantor and Sydney Tokasz. To his immense credit, Paul's decision to retire from public service at such a relatively young age was undertaken out of his sincere desire to spend more time with his family.

Paul Tokasz is a tremendous example of a dedicated, effective public servant, and I was and remain proud to call him a governmental colleague. More to the point, I am prouder still to call Paul Tokasz my friend. In closing, Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in wishing Paul, Sylvia and their entire family good luck and Godspeed in all of their future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SERVICE OF JANET FITZGERALD

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of Janet Fitzgerald as the Denton Parks and Recreation Director. Ms. Fitzgerald will be retiring from 15 years of service to the city of Denton in the 26th District of Texas.

Ms. Fitzgerald joined the city of Denton as a park planner in 1991. After demonstrating years of leadership and dedication to the city of Denton, Ms. Fitzgerald became the parks and recreation director in 2003. Under her visionary direction, Denton's parks have received national recognitions and awards, including Excellence in Aquatics, the Gold Medal for Excellence in Parks and Recreation Management, and the Texas Gold Medal, the highest award from the Texas Recreation and Parks Society.

Ms. Fitzgerald has the enriched lives of Denton community citizens through comprehensive recreation initiatives and a wide variety of local programs. Denton Mayor Perry McNeill noted that the city will miss her presence in the city of Denton.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Janet Fitzgerald for her service and leadership in the Denton community. Retiring to spend more time with her daughter and volunteer at her church, I wish Ms. Fitzgerald the best of luck in her future endeavors. Her contributions and commitment to the city of Denton should inspire us all.

TRIBUTE TO THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF MOUNT OLIVE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and ask the House of Representatives to join me in honoring Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church as they celebrate 100 years of worship. The church is holding a banquet on December 9 to kickoff a yearlong celebration of the centennial anniversary.

In 1902 several members of Flint, Michigan's African-American community gathered with the Reverend William Lyons at the home of Mrs. Sarah Howard and held worship services. They aspired to organize an official church and in 1907 their dream was realized. A church home was established on Ward Street, now Twelfth Street, and Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church was born.

Over the years the church moved twice until it found a permanent home at 424 Kennelworth Street in 1950. Under the guidance of Reverend Robert T. Turpin the church grew. Reverend Turpin led the congregation for 33 years and made many improvements to the property including the construction of Turpin Fellowship Hall.

Reverend Roy I. Greer became the pastor in 1972. Reverend Greer has directed the sanctuary renovations, installed a new baptistery, refurbished the offices and classrooms. In 1999 the Family Life Center was constructed. The basketball court, kitchen, and classrooms are the cornerstone of the community outreach spearheaded by Reverend Greer. The recreation center has provided a place for young people to gather in a safe, loving environment.

As the first African-American Baptist Church in the Flint area, Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church has fostered many persons that went on to become ordained ministers of the Word of God. It has stood as a beacon of light for every social justice movement over the past 100 years and continues to provide solace and help for the most vulnerable in our community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church as they celebrate 100 years of consecrated service to Our Lord, Jesus Christ. May they continue to act in the Name of the Lord for another 100 years.

IN HONOR OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SAN LEANDRO PUBLIC LIBRARY

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 5, 2006

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 100th anniversary of the San Leandro, CA, Public Library. San Leandro's first free public library was established in January 1906 and was located at the old City Hall on Davis Street.

On January 31, 1906, the Library Board of Trustees appointed Mary Brown as San Leandro's first official librarian. Her starting salary was $12.50 a month and she served as librarian from 1906 to 1938.

In 1907, plans were made to construct a library building. Library Trustee Talcott P. Cary donated the 35-acre plot and wealthy steel magnate Andrew Carnegie donated $10,000 towards its construction. William H. Weeks, an architect famous for designing Carnegie libraries, was selected. The library's dedication ceremony was held on May 14, 1909.

The old Carnegie library was demolished to make way for a new 1½-story library building. The architect was Francis Joseph McCarthy. The new library, dedicated on January 15, 1961, was over 44,660 square feet and had a