

Nikos and his wife Carol, who is his partner in business as well as in their personal lives, have two children, Alexis and Ariana.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Nikos Mouyiaris, a true American hero and a remarkable member of the Hellenic-American community.

#### REMEMBERING BILLY EARL HIBBS

##### HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2006*

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, today it is my privilege to honor the life of a dear friend, Billy Earl Hibbs, who passed away earlier this year at the age of 67. Billy was a native Texan, born on September 25, 1938 in Quitman. He graduated from Quitman High School and married his high school sweetheart, Eugenia Stroud, in 1957. Eugenia and Billy had one child, Billy Earl Hibbs, Jr.

Starting with a small, three-person insurance agency, Billy grew his business into Heartland Security Insurance Group, one of the largest insurance holding companies in the Southwest. Heartland is one of the largest providers of claims services to the Federal Government, including all branches of the military as well as non-military personnel injured in Afghanistan and Iraq. Despite its size, Heartland maintains its Texas roots with its headquarters in Tyler and continues to serve almost half the school districts in Texas.

The Texas Legislature recognized Billy's accomplishments in 1981 for his success in handling the John Tyler High School fire loss. In 1990, he led the passage of a bond measure to provide upgrades to the city of Tyler's infrastructure. A patron of the arts, Billy served as president of the East Texas Symphony Association and worked to relocate performances to the Cowan Center at U.T. Tyler. Billy also served as president of the Tyler Civic Theatre where he oversaw construction of the Braithwaite Theater and the opening of the Rogers Children's Theatre. As president of the Tyler Rotary Club he became a Paul Harris Fellow. Billy was a member of the Henry Bell Masonic Lodge, and a founding board member of the Better Business Bureau of Central East Texas. He served as a board member for Leadership Tyler, the Tyler Independent School District Foundation, and the Tyler Chamber of Commerce and was a member of the Order of the Rose. He was a member of the Pairs and Parents Sunday School class, an usher, and a past trustee of Marvin United Methodist Church. Billy also remained active in the Independent Insurance Agents at local, State, and national levels throughout his life.

In 2004, Billy was inducted into the Junior Achievement "Business Hall of Fame," and made a member of the honor business fraternity, Beta Gamma Sigma, at the University of Texas at Tyler. In 2005, Hibbs-Hallmark & Company was honored with the Better Business Bureau's "Torch Award" for demonstrating a commendable ethical record over the years, and recently, the Tyler Rotary Club honored Hibbs by distinguishing all present and future donors of \$1,000 as "Billy Hibbs Fellows."

Billy is survived by his loving wife of 48 years, Eugenia "Jeannie" Hibbs, his son Billy

E. Hibbs, Jr., and daughter-in-law Tisa Weiss Hibbs, two grandchildren, Stratton Weiss Hibbs and London Elizabeth Hibbs, and two sisters, Dorna Shields and Betty Cassels of Quitman, as well as other relatives.

Billy was always generous with his time and leadership and he shared his many blessings with his community and his country. Mr. Speaker, Billy Hibbs was a valuable member of the community whose years of service will provide a legacy for many years to come.

#### EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING HIRING OF MEMBERS OF ARMED FORCES

SPEECH OF

##### HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 5, 2006*

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman DUNCAN HUNTER for his leadership in introducing this legislation. I am a strong supporter of H. Res. 1070, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that members of Congress should actively engage in hiring wounded military veterans.

Earlier this year the House Veterans Affairs Committee, of which I am a member, held a hearing for private sector representatives to discuss their initiatives aimed at hiring veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. Although companies such as Home Depot, Exxon Mobile Corporation and R&L Carriers have initiated plans to increase the number of veterans, and specifically disabled veterans, other companies and the public sector can also improve their veterans hiring practices.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, younger veterans have a significantly higher unemployment rate than those of the general population in the same age range. Mr. Speaker, I find this situation unacceptable and I believe most Americans would agree that our country should do more to assist these veterans in transitioning from active duty to the civilian workforce.

For that reason, I helped establish a "Veterans Opportunity Conference" in my Congressional district of El Paso, TX, earlier this year. This conference brought together members of the community, Federal and State agencies, and businesses to assist veterans seeking to start a business, learn about State and Federal programs, and inquire about employment opportunities. Having had a great response from our veteran community, I now plan on making this a yearly event and encourage all of my colleagues in Congress to do the same in their respective districts.

Furthermore, as a U.S. Army veteran, a strong advocate of hiring qualified veterans, and a member of Congress, I practice what I preach. I am proud to have five former servicemembers in my El Paso and Washington, DC, offices.

Mr. Speaker, our veterans deserve our utmost commitment to helping them succeed after their military service, and I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in voting for H. Res. 1070.

#### SAN JOAQUIN RESTORATION SETTLEMENT ACT

##### HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2006*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, today, I submit to the House bipartisan legislation, the "San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement Act," which implements an historic water settlement to resolve an 18-year lawsuit to restore a salmon fishery on the San Joaquin River.

The settlement legislation achieves two equal goals: it restores the San Joaquin River and secures water management objectives to mitigate water losses to farmers in the restoration process. These two elements are crucial to the success the Act, and they are to be implemented in tandem.

The main reason I became involved in this issue last year was to ensure a stable water supply for Valley farmers. With that premise, the provisions in this measure were designed to make certain that water supply levels will remain manageable for farmers as the river is restored. It was also important to me that impacts to third parties, if any, be minimal and voluntary and the negotiators worked hard to create such language.

The landmark bill introduced today gives the people of our Valley a say in how the river is restored, as opposed to waiting for an uncertain outcome from the Federal court. This solution is science-based and included involvement from individuals throughout the Valley, the State and Federal agencies.

The significance of this bill cannot be understated. Over the past year and a half, countless hours have been spent in developing this measure, and I commend all those involved in this balanced resolution. I especially want to express my appreciation to the Friant Water Users Authority, Natural Resources Defense Council, Department of Interior, Department of Justice, the Department of Commerce and numerous third parties who were involved in the development of this bill.

I also thank Senator FEINSTEIN, who has introduced an identical bill in the Senate, for her steadfast commitment to this measure along with the members of the Valley delegation.

I'm dedicated to the passage of this measure in Congress and will work toward that end until it is signed into law.

#### ON THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON DEMOCRACY AND CONGRESS IN TAIPEI, TAIWAN

##### HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2006*

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, this weekend, on December 8 and 9 in Taiwan, there will be an important gathering of legislators from Pacific Rim nations to discuss the role of congresses or legislatures in the growing number of democracies developing across Asia.

The meeting has been convened by the Pacific Congressional Caucus, an arm of the Democratic Pacific Union, DPU, a regional organization of Pacific Rim democracies.

Legislative leaders from 20 nations, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, the Philippines, and the host Taiwan are expected to participate. It is unfortunate that, because of our legislative schedule, no member of this House or of the other body are able to attend.

However, Mr. Speaker, I did want to take note of this important meeting that will focus on the role of Congress in the various democratic governing models, such as the parliamentary system and the presidential system. Another important set of discussions will focus on the issue of legislative elections in various democracies, how they are conducted, and how they are financed.

I congratulate Taiwan's political leaders who were instrumental in creating the DPU and the Pacific Congressional Caucus. Taiwan's Vice President Annette Lu was the prime mover in bringing the DPU into existence and the Speaker of Taiwan's Legislative Yuan, Wang Jin-Pyng, was instrumental in establishing the Pacific Congressional Caucus and in organizing such meetings as the one this weekend.

This effort in Taiwan has been truly bipartisan, with Vice President Lu a member of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party, and Speaker Wang a key leader of the Nationalist Party, known as the KMT.

Because Taiwan is one of Asia's most dynamic democracies, it is fitting that Taiwan has been instrumental in forming the DPU and the Caucus and in organizing this symposium. I congratulate Taiwan and wish all the participants a rewarding series of meetings.

RECOGNIZING ALABAMA STATE  
REPRESENTATIVE F.P. "SKIPPY"  
WHITE FOR OVER THREE DEC-  
ADES OF PUBLIC SERVICE

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2006*

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise today to recognize Alabama State Representative F.P. "Skippy" White for his dedicated, faithful public service to the citizens of Baldwin and Escambia Counties.

Representative White has been a tremendous advocate for all of south Alabama for over three decades. He began his public service career as a councilman for the city of Polard, AL, and served for 7 years. In 1982, he was elected to the Alabama House of Representatives and served in that capacity for 24 years.

During his career in the Alabama State Legislature, Representative White worked tirelessly on behalf of south Alabama. He was distinguished as an outstanding legislator and served on the House Rules Committee.

Mr. Speaker, the faithful service of outstanding Americans like Skippy White has aided in an immeasurable way to the well being of our community. I would like to offer my congratulations for his many personal and professional achievements. I know his wife, Clara; his children, Todd, Hugh, and Sarah Anne; and his family and many friends join with me in praising his accomplishments and

extending thanks for his many efforts on behalf of south Alabama.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO WALTER  
CASEY

**HON. JON C. PORTER**

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2006*

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Walter Casey for his numerous contributions to his community.

Walter moved to Las Vegas, NV in 1951 under the advice of his doctor. He started out working for a maintenance company and eventually started a water conditioning and purification company called Walt Casey Water Conditioning and later Walt Casey's Culligan in the 1950s. Walt Casey's Culligan is now known as the largest water conditioning company in the state.

Walter also dedicated his life to enriching the lives of others in the community. He was a founding board member of the Boys & Girls Club of Las Vegas and served as the vice chairman of the Colorado River Commission. According to his son, Walter's optimism helped him to devote his time and effort to developing promising ideas into large successes.

November 30, 2006, just 2 days after Walter and his wife, Peggy, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary, Walter passed away from a heart attack. He was 88 years old.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I recognize Mr. Walter Casey for his outstanding efforts to improve the state of Nevada. He will be greatly missed by the entire community.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CHIAN  
FEDERATION AND ADAMANTIOS  
(DIMIS) TH. VASSILAKIS PERMA-  
NENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
GREECE TO THE UNITED NA-  
TIONS, RECIPIENT OF THE 29TH  
ANNUAL HOMERIC AWARD

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2006*

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the Chian Federation, which is presenting its 29th annual Homeric Award to Adamantios (Dimis) Th. Vassilakis, Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations. Their gala event has been organized under the leadership of the Chian Federation's President, George Almiroudis, and the Event Chair, who is also First Vice President of the Chian Federation, Alexandros Doulis.

The Chian Federation was founded in 1974. Since then it has educated and empowered the Hellenic American community to exercise their rights and fulfill their obligations as American citizens. The Chian Federation has a strong record of advocating human rights and striving to promote democratic ideals. In addition to its political objectives, the organization sponsors a dance group; cultural events; a Web site; a magazine; business card exchanges; food, clothing and toy drives; a Senior Citizens' breakfast; and lectures on topics ranging from archaeology to health care.

The Federation's accomplishments extend beyond the borders of the United States. On Chios, the Chian Federation has financially aided nursing homes, environmental groups for reforestation of the island, the Korais Library and the Office of the Repatriated Chians Organization, in addition to making substantial donations to the educational and health systems of Chios.

The Chian Federation established the Homeric Award in 1977, with the idea of recognizing individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the Hellenic community. Ambassador Vassilakis earned this honor through his outstanding service to Greece as a diplomat, and as a friend to the Hellenic community in New York.

Ambassador Vassilakis was born on the island of Chios on June 13, 1942, where he grew up and received his basic education, graduating from the Commercial High School of Chios. He then attended the Free University of Brussels, Belgium earning a Licence in Political and Diplomatic Sciences.

Mr. Vassilakis entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1972 as Embassy Attaché, and was appointed Third Secretary of Embassy at the Greek Embassy in Tirana, Albania in 1975. In 1977, he moved to the Foreign Ministry's First Department of Political Affairs, he was Head of Section for the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe. He served as a member of various Greek delegations visiting Eastern European countries and was a participant in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Common Market political experts meetings.

In 1985, Mr. Vassilakis was made Consul General of Greece in San Francisco, California, where he was promoted to First Counsellor of Embassy. In 1989, he was appointed Head of Section for Bilateral Greek-United States, Iranian, Turkish and Arab Countries in the Foreign Ministry's Department of Bilateral Economic Relations. In 1990, Mr. Vassilakis entered the Department of European Community Affairs. In 1991, he was named Deputy Permanent Representative in the Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations, and in 1994, he became Chargé d'Affaires. In 1998, he was promoted to Minister Plenipotentiary (1st class). From 1999, Mr. Vassilakis served as Director General for European Affairs and Director of the Centre for Analysis and Planning in Greece's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2002, he was appointed to his present position.

Ambassador Vassilakis is married to Fay Malouf-Vassilakis and they have two children, Theodore and Athena.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Chian Federation and its honoree, the Honorable Adamantios (Dimis) Th. Vassilakis.

TRIBUTE TO JERRIS LEONARD, A  
GREAT AMERICAN

**HON. RALPH M. HALL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 6, 2006*

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to pay tribute to a great American, outstanding public servant, and an esteemed colleague and good friend, the Honorable Jerris Leonard, whose sudden passing on July 27, 2006,