

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 DECADES 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 PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GREECE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, 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,