

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IMPLEMENTING THE 9/11 COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF
HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1, the Implementing the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act. The safety of our families, our communities and our country is the top priority of Americans and today, finally, it is the top priority of Congress.

It is long past time to make the changes and investments necessary to improve our homeland security. The Commission submitted 41 recommendations in 2004. Since then, the Republican-controlled Congress has failed to take action. In fact, last year, the bipartisan 9/11 Commissioners gave Congress failing grades on implementing the Commission's recommendations.

H.R. 1 will both enhance our homeland security and reduce the threat overseas. Implementing these recommendations is supported by 9/11 families and 62 percent of Americans.

This bill includes several critical elements to improving American security. It will establish a grant program to improve interoperability and finally allow our first responders to communicate and share information with one another. It also ensures that taxpayer dollars are used wisely and requires that homeland security grants are awarded based on risk. H.R. 1 will provide for screening of 100 percent of containers bound for the U.S. and establishes an improved system of screening the cargo and baggage on aircraft.

Democrats have also included provisions to act proactively in improving stability around the world. This legislation will improve prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear technology. It will also take a critical step in reducing the appeal of extremism by encouraging educational opportunities in Arab and Muslim countries.

H.R. 1 will change Congress' failing grade to an "A" from the 9/11 Commission. This legislation is a comprehensive effort to enhance our security and to promote stability and understanding around the world. 9/11 Commissioner Lee Hamilton said that if H.R. 1 passes, America will be safer. I urge my colleagues to join me in making this so.

HONORING THE CITY OF ELYRIA DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY OF SERVICE

HON. BETTY SUTTON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Ms. SUTTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Elyria Dr. Martin Luther

King, Jr. Day of Service celebrated annually for the past 21 years. The city of Elyria, located in beautiful Lorain County, OH, has presented an award to the individual or group who best exemplified Dr. King's ideals of freedom, justice and opportunity.

Heman Ely founded Elyria, situated at the forks of the Black River, in 1817. The name Elyria came partially from Ely's own name and from his deep interest in the Austrian province of Illyria, which he visited in 1809 after its conquest by Napoleon. Elyria has enjoyed an illustrious history and has been home to a wide range of former residents.

In 1907, Elyria resident and businessperson Edgar Allen began raising money for a new local hospital in response to the tragic loss of his son in a streetcar accident. Allen was appalled at the lack of adequate services for special needs children so he sold his business and began raising money for a new local hospital. This fundraising culminated in the creation of Easter Seals organization in 1919. Other notable Elyria residents include current NFL quarterback Tim Rattay and the authors Sherwood Anderson and Robert Erwin Lee. With a wide-ranging history such as this, it is only natural for Elyria to celebrate the ideals of Dr. King.

All Americans know of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s stature as a national hero. From his celebrated "Letter from Birmingham Jail" to his organization of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Dr. King demonstrated that eloquent words followed with significant action could affect social change without resorting to violence. His "I Have a Dream" speech movingly spelled out his dream of racial equality and propelled the issue to the forefront of national consciousness.

In closing, I commend the City of Elyria and all the organizations that have spent countless hours organizing this celebration honoring Dr. King's birthday. These awards are given annually to recognize service and achievement of persons who live or work in the City of Elyria in areas consistent with the teachings and example of Dr. King. His dedication to racial, social and economic justice is a model that the world should emulate now more than ever and this is why I enthusiastically support this award.

TRIBUTE TO DR. WILLIAM
ANDERSON

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. William Anderson, for his lifetime commitment to social change and the civil rights movement.

Dr. Anderson was born on December 12, 1927 and is a native of Americus, GA. He graduated from Alabama State College, the

University of Osteopathic and Health Sciences and is certified in general surgery.

Throughout his career, as a doctor of osteopathic medicine, Dr. Anderson has contributed to the medical community, in Albany where he began his career as well as in Detroit, MI, and Kirksville, MO.

However, in the segregationist South of the 1950s and early 1960s, Dr. Anderson's medical career became intertwined with the civil rights movement. At that time, there were no black hospitals in Albany. In white hospitals, Dr. Anderson was denied privileges such as admitting patients and using equipment—making it virtually impossible to practice medicine. So, Dr. Anderson improvised, servicing his patients by setting up his practice in a private office.

In 1961, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who Dr. Anderson had met a few years before, brought his movement to Albany. Soon, Dr. Anderson assumed the role of President of the Albany Movement. Over the next few months, hundreds of protestors were jailed for staging sit-ins at local bus terminals, including Dr. King and Reverend Ralph Abernathy. History tells us that the Albany movement, amid the hostile environment of southwest Georgia, was a struggle whose efforts were consistently thwarted by a determined sector of the white population.

However, history also tells us that the Albany Movement in which Dr. Anderson played an integral role has become viewed as a milestone in the greater civil rights movement. A year after the Albany movement began, hundreds of voters were registered and the city commission removed all segregation statutes from the books.

Madam Speaker, none of this could have been achieved without the efforts of Dr. Anderson. He is an inspiration for young men and women, and I stand here today to commend him for his service to his community.

IN RECOGNITION OF NKEIRU
OKOYE

HON. CHAKA FATTAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. FATTAH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize renowned composer Nkeiru Okoye. On Monday, in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, Ms. Okoye's composition, "Voices Shouting Out" will be performed by the esteemed Philadelphia Orchestra. This concert is, in fact, the 25th performance of her masterpiece. She deserves recognition for her musical accomplishments and her many efforts to bring a symphony of harmony to a world filled with discord.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, on January 4, 2007, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote numbered 6, on adoption of Title I of the Resolution.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote numbered 6.

FAIR MINIMUM WAGE ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the name of fairness and justice. American families who rely on the Federal minimum wage are struggling to make ends meet. Over the last decade, our poorest-paid workers have faced rapidly rising costs in health care, energy, and college while the minimum wage has remained the same.

H.R. 2, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007, would increase the Federal minimum to \$7.25 an hour. At \$5.15 per hour, the current Federal minimum, a person working 40 hours per week makes \$10,712 per year, about \$5,000 below the poverty line for a family of three. I ask you, can you imagine taking care of your family much less yourself with that? In addition, millions of workers paid just a dollar or two more than the minimum also live in poverty. An increase to \$7.25 will have a spillover effect that could raise wages for many of those workers. Ladies and gentlemen, the time for an increase is long overdue.

Critics claim that increasing the minimum wage will have a negative effect on the economy, but after the last minimum wage increase in 1997, the economy enjoyed its strongest growth in more than three decades. This Congress was elected in a large part because our economy has not benefited the working poor as much as those at the high end of the pay scale. H.R. 2 is a first step and I encourage my colleagues to support the bill.

INTRODUCING THE SUNLIGHT
RULE**HON. RON PAUL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis famously said, "Sunlight is the best disinfectant." In order to shine sunlight on the practices of the House of Representatives, and thus restore public trust and integrity to this institution, I am introducing the sunlight rule, which amends House rules to ensure that members have adequate time to study a bill before being asked to vote on it. One of the chief causes of increasing public cynicism regarding Congress is the way major pieces of legislation are brought to the floor

without members having an opportunity to read the bills. For example, concerns have been raised that in the opening days of the 110th Congress, legislation dealing with important topics such as national security are being brought to the floor before members have had an opportunity to adequately study the legislation.

In past Congresses, it was all-too-common to see large Appropriations bills rushed to the floor of the House in late-night sessions at the end of the year. For example, the House voted on the Fiscal Year 2006 Defense Appropriations Conference Report at approximately 4 a.m.—just four hours after the report was filed. Yet, the report contained language dealing with avian flu, including controversial language regarding immunity liability for vaccine manufacturers, that was added in the House-Senate conference on the bill. Considering legislation on important issues in this manner is a dereliction of our duty as the people's elected representatives.

My proposed rule requires that no piece of legislation, including conference reports, can be brought before the House of Representatives unless it has been available to members and staff in both print and electronic version for at least ten days. My bill also requires that a manager's amendment that makes substantive changes to a bill be available in both printed and electronic forms at least 72 hours before voted on. While manager's amendments are usually reserved for technical changes, oftentimes manager's amendments contain substantive additions to, or subtractions from, bills. Members should be made aware of such changes before being asked to vote on a bill.

The sunlight rule provides the people the opportunity to be involved in enforcing the rule by allowing a citizen to move for censure of any House Member who votes for a bill brought to the floor in violation of this act. The sunlight rule can never be waived by the Committee on Rules or House leadership. If an attempt is made to bring a bill to the floor in violation of this rule, any member could raise a point of order requiring the bill to be immediately pulled from the House calendar until it can be brought to the floor in a manner consistent with this rule.

Madam Speaker, the practice of rushing bills to the floor before individual members have had a chance to study the bills is one of the major factors contributing to public distrust of Congress. Voting on bills before members have had time to study them makes a mockery of representative government and cheats the voters who sent us here to make informed decisions on public policy. Adopting the sunlight rule is one of, if not the, most important changes to the House rules this Congress could make to restore public trust in, and help preserve the integrity of, this institution. I hope my colleagues will support this change to the House rules.

STEM CELL RESEARCH
ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3, the

Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2007, introduced by my esteemed colleagues, Representatives DIANA DEGETTE and MICHAEL CASTLE. As a longtime champion of stem cell research and an original cosponsor of this legislation, I cannot stress enough how important this bill is to the future of medical research and to the health and well-being of Americans and people worldwide. Embryonic stem cell research holds unique promise for the treatment of illnesses such as Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, muscular dystrophy and many other degenerative conditions. We Members of Congress have the responsibility to ensure that this promise is realized.

The expansion of federally funded embryonic stem cell research is supported by a majority of Americans and by Members of Congress from across the political spectrum. Therefore, I was disheartened by President Bush's decision to use his first and only veto to strike down stem cell legislation passed last year. However, I have fresh hope that we will see the enactment of this legislation this year. I am confident that we will pass this bill overwhelmingly today and that the Senate will do its part to secure final passage. I am also optimistic that President Bush will respect the wishes of the American public and will refrain from vetoing this important legislation yet again.

Countless lives could be saved with the passage of this legislation, and I therefore urge each one of you to vote with foresight, with optimism and with respect for life in favor of the Stem Cell Research and Enhancement Act of 2007.

REINTRODUCTION OF THE SAFE
COMMISSION**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, few are willing to admit—much less discuss—the looming financial crisis facing our country, but there is less than 1 year until the first baby boomer is eligible to retire.

On Wednesday, January 10, the Washington Post included an op-ed by Robert Samuelson which paints a poignant picture of the generational conflict approaching on the horizon. He makes a compelling case for why it is critical that Congress take action now to address the financial emergency facing the Nation with the retirement of the baby boomers.

That is why on Tuesday, Senator GEORGE VOINOVICH and I will reintroduce identical legislation to establish a national bipartisan commission that will put everything—entitlement benefits and all other Federal programs as well as our tax policies—on the table and require Congress to vote up or down on its recommendations in their entirety, similar to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) first created by former Rep. Dick Armey in 1988. This commission would be called the SAFE Commission, to secure America's future economy.

I first introduced the idea of the SAFE Commission last summer. Since that time, the proposal has received strong support from across the political spectrum including the Heritage Foundation; the Concord Coalition; former

congressional members from both sides of the aisle; and former Congressional Budget Office directors. It has been favorably endorsed by newspapers across the country, including the Dallas Morning News, the Orlando Sentinel and syndicated columnist David Broder.

There is near universal agreement that the longer we wait to deal with this problem, the tougher the medicine will be to swallow. As a father of five and grandfather of 12, the challenge posed by the pending retirement of baby boomers strikes me as much more than a routine policy discussion. Without action, just what kind of future are we leaving to our children and grandchildren?

My youngest grandchild is just 10 months old. By the time she is 15 years old, 29 cents out of every dollar paid in income taxes will be required to cover the needs of Social Security and Medicare to pay for my retirement. That's not including payroll taxes of almost 15 percent.

By the time she completes her undergraduate degree, more than 45 cents out of every dollar of income taxes then will be needed to cover the shortfall of Social Security and Medicare, rising to 62 cents out of every dollar if she decides to get her doctorate 10 years later. Again, this is on top of payroll taxes.

Sadly, before she retires—and looks into the eyes of her own grandchildren—retired baby boomers will be consuming 88 percent of every income tax dollar. With the baby boomers consuming so much, there will be little money left to meet the needs and challenges of her generation. Not only is this unacceptable, it raises serious moral questions. Is it right for one generation to live very well knowing that its debts will be left to be paid for by their children and grandchildren?

Abraham Lincoln, one of our Nation's greatest presidents, once said, "You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today." Yet that is precisely what we have been doing—avoiding our responsibility to future generations of Americans by passing on a broken system in the form of unfunded Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid obligations.

I deeply believe there is a moral component to this issue that goes to the heart of who we are as Americans. By that I mean, I wonder if we have lost the national will to make tough decisions that may require sacrifice? Moreover, have we lost the political courage to reject the partisan and special interest demands and do what is best for our country?

If we remember the legacy we have inherited, the debt we owe to previous generations—our grandparents and our parents and the sacrifices they made to make our country what it is today—we all will be moved to do our duty. The SAFE Commission should be embraced by both sides of the aisle. I am open to suggestions about the legislation from members of both parties. This is a national issue; not a Republican issue or a Democrat issue.

Last spring I took a trip to Antietam National Battlefield. As I walked along "Bloody Lane," the site of one of the most vicious battles of the Civil War, I was struck by how many individuals made the ultimate sacrifice.

September 18, 1862, was the bloodiest single day in American history. There were more than 23,000 casualties, nine times as many Americans killed or wounded in World War II's D-Day on June 6, 1944. More soldiers were

killed and wounded at the Battle of Antietam than the deaths of all Americans in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Mexican War and Spanish-American War combined.

I also visited the site of George Washington's crossing of the Delaware River in anticipation of the Battle of Trenton. Washington was down to only 3,000 soldiers and the war was almost lost. Yet, with great courage—and sacrifice—Washington and his forces were successful in changing the direction of the American Revolution.

I often think of the tremendous sacrifice being made by the thousands of men and women serving today not only in Iraq and Afghanistan, but around the globe. Their families here at home are also making great sacrifices. These examples of sacrifice for country are what led me to ask just what are we passing on to those who are coming after us?

In less than a year, the baby boom generation will begin trickling into retirement. A few years later, that trickle will become a flood that within five more years will become a tsunami that will begin to wreak havoc on our Social Security and Medicare systems. Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security consume 40 percent of the budget in 2006, but will consume 51 percent by 2016—and that is just the tip of the demographic iceberg.

As we tragically learned the lesson of Katrina in New Orleans, the best time to deal with a damaged flood wall is before the rains begin. Make no mistake; the levies that are our country's entitlement systems can only be plugged for so long. Without major repair and a long-term fix, we are facing a financial perfect storm like never before.

There is near unanimous agreement by all who have looked at this issue: Social Security and Medicare are amassing huge deficits and are ill-prepared for the coming flood of new baby boom retirees. When our retirement security programs like Social Security and Medicare were established, the ratio of workers supporting each retiree was more than 10 times the number supporting retirees today. In 1945, there were 42 workers for each retiree. Last year, the ratio dropped to three workers for each retiree and is expected to drop to just two workers for each retiree by 2030.

Perhaps even more troubling than the Social Security projections are those for Medicare. By 2010, the trust fund expenditures are projected to exceed annual income from all sources and the reserves will be depleted by 2018, 11 short years from now. According to the trustees, "Medicare's financial outlook has deteriorated dramatically over the past five years and is now much worse than Social Security's."

This coming crisis demands our immediate attention. While there is never a convenient time to make hard decisions, the longer we wait, the more dramatic the required remedy will be. According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), balancing the budget in 2040 necessitates one of two alternatives: cutting total federal spending by 60 percent or raising federal taxes by two and a half times today's level. Either of these options would devastate our economy. But if we can summon the resolve to begin these difficult conversations now—and make some hard choices on the front end—we can change our current course.

Basic economics underscore the dangers inherent in our current national trends. America

is living on borrowed dollars and borrowed time. U.S. spending is outpacing income growth and personal savings rates have dropped to negative 1.3 percent in the first quarter, meaning that U.S. consumers are spending more than 100 percent of their monthly after-tax income.

In spite of this, our economy has remained strong, in large part because other countries have been willing to buy our debt. But borrowing hundreds of billions of dollars from countries like China, Saudi Arabia, Japan, South Korea, and others puts not only our future economy, but also our national security, at risk. More than \$2.6 billion a day is needed to fund our savings shortfall, which has left us with nearly 40 percent of our domestic economy in foreign hands.

As our fiscal deficit balloons, our current account deficit is projected to hit historically unprecedented highs, and our country's net investment position abroad is eroding rapidly. While the Asian Central Banks and petrodollar countries like those in the Middle East have no doubt contributed to our country's growth (the housing boom and the ability of U.S. consumers to spend), the purchase of U.S. securities by foreigners has, at the same time, enabled us to live way beyond our means.

This makes our country—and our children and grandchildren—much more vulnerable in the future. Will a geopolitical dispute with a major oil exporter cause it to stop funding our deficit, resulting in a sharp drop in the dollar, a spike in interest rates and a market meltdown?

If foreigners lose faith in the U.S. and our ability to put our own fiscal house in order, their investment decisions could send shock waves through our financial markets and even result in a collapse of U.S. real estate prices. If we don't address this issue, higher interest rates and inflation are inevitable. It would be only a matter of when and how high. If we don't change our current unsustainable path, our future economic growth, standard of living, and even our national security may be at risk.

Our children and grandchildren deserve a future that will allow them to respond to the challenges of their generation. Who could have predicted, even 10 years ago, that today our Nation would be engaged in a global war on terror. Each generation faces its own international threats, and we have an obligation to ensure that future generations have the flexibility to respond to the challenges of their time.

If current policies are left unchanged, in as few as 33 years and in no more than 40 years, there would be no discretionary money left for defense spending. All federal revenue would have to go to only four sources: Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and interest on past debt.

In addition to international considerations there are domestic factors. Getting our financial house in order will allow us to prioritize spending in areas such as cutting edge medical research for cancer, Alzheimer's and autism, and for education, particularly in mathematics and science, which are critically important to America's remaining the world's leader in innovation and technology.

It is with the hope of building consensus on this very difficult issue that I am offering legislation to set up a bipartisan commission charged with evaluating the scope of our fiscal problem and recommending tangible solutions.

One of the most critical responsibilities of this panel will be explaining the crisis we face and listening to the American people about how to get the country back on sound financial footing. It will also develop a strategic plan for the future. It will look beyond the Beltway for solutions, holding at least 12 town meetings—one in each of the Nation's Federal Reserve districts—over the span of 12 months in order to hear directly from the American people.

The SAFE Commission will be truly bipartisan—comprised of 16 voting members, four appointed by the Senate Majority Leader, three by the Senate Minority Leader, four by the Speaker of the House, and three by the House Minority Leader. Four of the 14 congressional appointments must be sitting members of Congress. Additionally, the director of the Office of Management and Budget as well as the secretary of the Treasury will serve as voting ex-officio members. The Congressional Budget Office and the Comptroller General of the United States will be appointed as non-voting ex-officio members of the commission to lend their expertise. The president will appoint bipartisan co-chairs from among the 14 voting members appointed by Congress.

I have heard criticism that such weighty decisions on the Nation's financial future are the responsibility of Congress. I couldn't agree more. The SAFE Commission has two provisions to protect congressional prerogatives. First, of the 14 members appointed to the commission, four must be sitting members of Congress. Second, if Congress takes on the task and enacts significant legislation aimed at addressing this looming crisis, the SAFE Commission would terminate and cease to exist.

The group will comprehensively review entitlement benefits, patterns in savings and insurance for retirement, tax policies and the long-term implications of increasing foreign ownership of the U.S. Treasury. But given the enormity of the challenge, the commission needs to be able to look at every component of our fiscal policy to fairly assess where we stand and how we can best move toward a sound fiscal future. Everything must be on the table. As a fiscal conservative, I believe that the economy grows when people keep more of their hard-earned money, and my voting record reflects this belief.

The SAFE Commission is tasked with addressing tax issues as well as spending policies because current law puts us on a track to sharply higher taxes as well as spending. If the current tax cuts are sunset, then beginning in 2011, taxes as a percent of GDP will jump and then rise each and every year to nearly 20 percent of GDP in 2016, less than 10 years from now. After that they will keep on growing to record levels, hitting over 23 percent in 2046. This happens because rising incomes push Americans into both higher brackets and into the alternative minimum tax (AMT). Yet even extending the tax cuts will shave only one percentage point off these rising numbers.

Americans need to understand all the numbers to avoid the grim default of a rising burden of taxes and spending that will damage our economy. I believe that having revenues as part of the discussion, as one of the areas of reform for the SAFE Commission, will help us paint the full picture and help us confront the tax increases that the country faces in the coming years under current law.

In looking at revenues, I believe reform of the tax code must help simplify the system

and stimulate increased economic growth and thereby tax revenue. The late William Simon, who served as Treasury secretary under presidents Nixon and Ford, believed "the United States should have a tax system, which looks like someone designed it on purpose."

The IRS estimates Americans spend 6.6 billion hours per year filling out tax forms including 1.6 billion hours on the 1040 form alone and nearly \$200 billion on tax compliance. That amounts to 20 cents of compliance cost for every dollar collected by the tax system.

Shouldn't we have a system that people understand? One that encourages faster growth in business formation, jobs, family income and tax revenue? A simplified tax code also could help increase the personal savings rate, which went negative for the first time since the Great Depression earlier this year.

The SAFE Commission legislation provides an opportunity to simultaneously address the likely tax increases that middle class Americans are projected to face and the explosion in entitlement programs. It does this by focusing on reform. The legislation provides an opportunity to reform the tax code in ways that generate more rapid growth. We know from the recent revenue figures that tax policies that spur growth also bring in needed revenue. And the legislation also tasks the commission with exploring entitlement reforms that protect safety net programs while reining in total costs.

After spending 12 months conducting town meetings around the country to determine the scope of the problem and consider solutions, the commission will present to Congress a report describing the long-term fiscal problems, public suggestions and views expressed during the town meetings and policy options available to ensure federal programs and entitlements are available for future generations.

With a bipartisan three-fourths majority vote, the commission will send to Congress a legislative package to implement the commission recommendations no later than 60 days after the interim report. The administration and Congress will have 90 additional days to develop actuarially equivalent proposals to achieve the same cost savings. Essentially, no later than 16 months from the organization of the commission, Congress would be required to vote—up or down—on each proposal.

For example, if the commission's report is delivered on January 1, 2008, then the commission's legislative package would be due by March 1, 2008, and any alternative developed by Congress or the Administration would have to be presented by June 1, 2008.

All proposals must include a 50-year CBO score in addition to disclosing any impact on future federal liabilities. If more than one proposal receives a majority, the one garnering the greatest number of votes would prevail.

I have put in the legislation procedures for expedited consideration of the commission's legislation to ensure that the Congress acts. I do not want this to simply be another blue-ribbon commission whose findings end up on a bookshelf somewhere only to collect dust and never be acted upon.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to enact this legislation. I also welcome a forthright national dialogue. Only by working together in a truly bipartisan manner will we be able to secure America's future economy. I believe most Americans will welcome it as well, especially considering we all want what is best for our children and grandchildren.

I will close with the cautionary words of George Washington's 1796 farewell address: "We should avoid ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden of which we ourselves ought to bear."

REMEMBERING CALVIN WILLIAM VERITY, JR.

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, former Secretary of Commerce Calvin William Verity Jr., 89, of Beaufort, South Carolina, died Wednesday, January 3, 2007, at the Beaufort Memorial Hospital. He was born January 26, 1917, in Middletown, Ohio, the son of Calvin William Verity, Sr. and Elizabeth (O'Brien) Verity.

Secretary Verity was a graduate of the Phillips Exeter Academy and Yale University. He served as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy from 1942–1946. Mr. Verity worked for Armco Steel from 1946 until his retirement in 1982 as CEO and Chairman of the Board. He was named Secretary of Commerce by President Ronald Reagan in 1987 and served two years in that position. During the 1970s and 80s he served as Chairman of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and as Chairman of the U.S.-Soviet Trade and Economic Council. He was also the Chairman of the Presidents Task force on Private Sector Initiatives under President Reagan.

Secretary Verity is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Peggy "Happy" Verity Power and J.P. Power of Edwards, Colorado; two sons and daughters-in-law, Jonathan George Verity and Victoria Verity of Beaufort, South Carolina, and William Wymond Verity and Paula Verity of Beaufort, South Carolina; seven grandchildren, William Verity Power (Kate), Jonathan Warfield Power (Jody), Jonathan Edward Verity, Victoria Heye Verity Nellen (Bill), Elizabeth Wymond Verity, George Murray Verity, and Hannah Bakewell Verity; four great grandchildren, James Matthew Power, John Gray Power, Thomas George Power, and Brooks Verity Power; and two sisters, Betsy Verity Blakey of Columbus, Ohio and Jean Verity Woodhull of Dayton, Ohio.

On January 5, Sandra Walsh of the Beaufort Gazette penned the below tribute to Mr. Verity:

FORMER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE DIES IN BEAUFORT

Serving as President Ronald Reagan's Secretary of Commerce, Calvin William Verity Jr., shared the stage with political giants.

But in Beaufort, where Verity shared his Spanish Point home with his beloved wife, he is remembered by friends as a 'giant of a man.'

Verity died Wednesday, Jan. 3, 2007, in Beaufort Memorial Hospital. He was 89.

Verity, who suffered from asthma, had been hospitalized for four days and died from complications of pneumonia, his oldest son John Verity said Thursday.

"I think the key to his success over the years was his ability to work with people," John Verity said.

"His leadership was based on building consensus and creating an environment where people would work together."

Verity was sworn in as President Ronald Reagan's Secretary of Commerce Oct. 19,

1987, after secretary Malcolm Baldrige was killed in a rodeo accident. He served until the end of Reagan's term in January 1989.

As U.S. Secretary of Commerce, Verity established the Malcolm Baldrige Award, which "in the 1990s helped businesses improve the quality of their work," John Verity said.

He then retired and moved to Beaufort's Spanish Point neighborhood in the early '90s with his wife, Peggy, who died in 1999.

"He was a giant of a man," Verity's next door neighbor and friend of 21 years, Guy McSweeney, said Thursday. "He was one of the most remarkable men I have ever known; everyone that knew him loved him."

Between 1970 and the 1980s, Verity served as chairman of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and as chairman of the U.S.-Soviet Trade and Economic Council.

Reagan also appointed him as the chairman of the President's Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives.

Verity worked for Armco Steel from 1946 until he retired in 1982 as chairman of the board of the company now known as AK Steel Corp. He is the grandson of George M. Verity, who founded the firm.

Verity was a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy from 1942 to 1946.

McSweeney said Verity maintained a lifelong interest in the Navy.

About 10 years ago, McSweeney said he and Verity rode aboard what was originally a Soviet training ship, the Druzhba, from the Bahamas to Maryland alongside 200 U.S. Navy and Russian cadets.

"He was always coming up with something fun to do," McSweeney said. "From duck hunting or riding on a jet to California, he was always into something."

Neighbor Polly Swenson recalled a time when former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor visited Verity at his Spanish Point home and caught a speckled bass from his dock.

Swenson said even in his later years, when Verity used a motorized scooter, he would sit on a bluff behind his home nearly every day and look out to the water.

"He would always say, 'Isn't this the most beautiful place on Earth?'" Swenson said. "Beaufort was very much a part of him."

Verity and his wife played active roles in Beaufort's community and were responsible for raising money for several organizations, including a Verity scholarship fund through the Technical College of the Lowcountry and an education fund for the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Lowcountry.

"He just loved people," longtime friend Helen Harvey said. "He loved to help people; he did so much for so many people through his connections."

St. Helena Island resident and freelance editor Cheryl Lopanik helped Verity organize information for his biography, "59 Years with the Right Woman," a recollection of Verity's life with a focus on his wife, self-published in 2003.

"He was devastated in losing her, but he wanted to put this book together because he knew it would have made her happy," Lopanik said. "He had wonderful stories and memories that were very exact . . . He had a very good perspective on his life."

Verity was born Jan. 26, 1917, in Middletown, Ohio, a son of Elizabeth O'Brien and Calvin William Verity Sr.

He was a graduate of the Phillips Exeter Academy and Yale University.

Verity was a member of the boards of directors of Mead Corp., Chase Manhattan Bank, Eli Lilly, Taft Broadcasting, the First National Bank in Middletown and The Chairman of the Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C.

Survivors include a daughter, Peggy "Happy" Verity Power of Edwards, Colo.;

two sons, Jonathan George Verity and William Wymond Verity of Beaufort; two sisters, Betsy Verity Blakey of Columbus, Ohio, and Jean Verity Woodhull of Dayton, Ohio; seven grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Services will be at 11 a.m. Saturday at The First Presbyterian Church, Beaufort. The family will receive friends after services at 120 Spanish Point Drive, Beaufort.

Burial will be at the Woodside Cemetery in Middletown.

Memorials may be made to the Bill and Peggy Verity Career Education Fund for the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Lowcountry, 17B Marshellen Drive, Beaufort, SC 29902.

IN MEMORY OF OFFICER DWAYNE FREETO

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share the collective grief of the people of North Texas in the death of Fort Worth Officer Dwayne Freeto, who died in a car crash while stopping to assist a young woman with a flat tire.

The young woman, Adriana Delgadillo, refers to Officer Dwayne Freeto as "a guardian angel." As a dedicated servant of the community as well as a loving father and husband, Mr. Freeto was not going to leave Miss Delgadillo until he knew she was safe. His amiable character and devotion to others are few among many qualities that contributed to his heroic nature. The grief from his loss is not only shared by his family and fellow police brethren but also by the greater Tarrant County area.

Mr. Dwayne Freeto was a wonderful father to his two daughters, Jordin and Jenna, and treasured spending time with them. He also loved his wife, Karen Freeto, dearly, and despite the unusual hours he was assigned to patrol, he always ate meals with his wife and daughters before work. Officer Dwayne Freeto's personality and selflessness made him a trusted friend, devoted husband and father, and a grateful son.

As a patrol officer, Mr. Freeto's courage and loyalty brought hope of a safer community—my community. He will be remembered as a husband and father, a hero, and a friend. I extend my deepest sympathies to his family and friends; he was a true gift to this world.

RECOGNIZES CENTENARIAN WINONAH GREENE OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Winonah Greene of Hernando County, Florida. Winonah has done something that all of us strive to do, but that very few of us will ever accomplish, celebrate her 100th birthday.

Born January 13, 1906 in Petersburg, Virginia, Winonah graduated from high school with honors and received a four-year scholar-

ship to college. Her fondest childhood memories are of the times she spent in school and church and her involvement in many community programs and services.

Hired as a schoolteacher, Winonah taught at different schools in Virginia and Pennsylvania for twenty years. She then began working as a government clerk at the Veterans Administration's offices in Pennsylvania, where she worked for another twenty years. An active member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority for 80 years, she has been a member of the Omega Omega Chapter since 1946, which recently celebrated its 80th year.

During her years as a teacher, Winonah proudly took part in the civil rights movement and attended an event where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Was a speaker. She spoke of this personal experience as a part of America's history in her classroom teachings.

Winonah married Ervie Greene in 1942 and was blessed with one daughter. Following her husband's death in 1983, Winonah lived alone in Pennsylvania until she moved to Hernando County in January of 2006 to be closer to her family.

Winonah now spends time with her two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She says the advantage of being close to so many businesses and the friendliness of the community is what she likes best about Hernando County. Winonah says the proudest moment in her life was a surprise celebration of her 100th birthday!

Her advice to young people today is, "Work hard, stay in school, select a dream and work towards its success. You can do it if you try!" Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Winonah Greene for reaching her 100th birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as her.

MOURNING THE PASSING OF PRESIDENT GERALD RUDOLPH FORD

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 15, a resolution to honor the late President Gerald Ford who passed away on December 26, 2006. A man of great honor and integrity who led this country through one of the most difficult times in our history, he will be remembered as a fair, respected leader who was able to rise above partisanship to serve the citizens of this nation.

President Ford, born in Omaha, Nebraska and raised in Grand Rapids, Michigan, embodied the spirit of the Midwest. He was hardworking, modest, unassuming, and throughout his life held an unabashed pride in the University of Michigan where he starred on the football team. During World War II, President Ford earned the title of lieutenant commander and several honors while serving this country in the U.S. Navy.

Mr. Ford began his political career when he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as the Representative from Grand Rapids, Michigan. He held that seat from 1949 until 1973, and of the 25 years he served in the House, he was minority leader for 8.

In 1973, when Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned, President Richard Nixon nominated then Congressman Ford to assume the vice presidency. President Ford's nomination was quickly approved by both the House and the Senate. However, his time as Vice President was brief and the attention of the country was focused on the looming Watergate scandal. On August 9, 1974, President Nixon stepped down and President Ford assumed the position of Commander-in-Chief.

As our nation's president, Ford was faced with the critical task of regaining the trust of a country that had lost confidence in its top leadership. In order to begin to restore transparency and integrity to the office of the President, he traveled around the country listening and talking to the people of this country. President Ford felt the way in which he could help the country to begin to move beyond the wounds of Watergate was to grant a full and unconditional pardon to President Nixon. President Gerald Ford put the needs of our nation before his own vulnerability to political fallout, and that is the mark of a great leader.

On behalf of the families of Minnesota's Fourth Congressional District, we extend our prayers and sincerest condolences to Mrs. Betty Ford, her children and all of the family and friends of President Ford. President Gerald Ford was a loving husband and father and a devoted public servant. He will be remembered and honored in the highest regard.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in paying tribute to the life of President Gerald Ford.

**HONORING THE CITY OF AKRON
DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.
DAY OF SERVICE**

HON. BETTY SUTTON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Ms. SUTTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the City of Akron and the 22nd Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Lecture which will be held at the Akron-Summit County Main Library. The lecture is co-sponsored by the Akron-Summit County Public Library and the Eta Tau Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Inc.

Ozell Sutton will deliver the annual lecture. Civil rights and human rights are Sutton's passions. He served as an escort for the Little Rock Nine when they entered Central High School in Arizona in 1957. He marched with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Washington in 1963 and in Selma, Alabama, in 1965. He was in Memphis when King was killed in 1968. Mr. Sutton has been cited four times by Ebony magazine as one of the "100 Most Influential African-American Leaders."

All Americans know of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s stature as a national hero and we all look up to Dr. King's ideals of freedom, justice and opportunity. From his celebrated "Letter from Birmingham Jail" to his organization of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Dr. King demonstrated that eloquent words followed with significant action could affect social change without resorting to violence. His "I Have a Dream" speech movingly spelled out his dream of racial equality and propelled the issue to the forefront of national consciousness.

The City of Akron, which has a very rich history, is the seat of Summit County in the State of Ohio. The city is located between Cleveland to the north and Canton to the south. It was founded in 1825 near the Ohio & Erie Canal and became a manufacturing center owing to its location at a staircase of locks. The locks were needed due to the higher elevation of the area, which gave rise to the name Summit County as well as Akron, which is a rough translation of "summit" into Greek.

The city is home to the University of Akron, the Akron Aeros "AA" affiliate of the Cleveland Indians, and the Firestone Country Club, at which the PGA Tour's Bridgestone Invitational is annually played. Akron is often referred to as "The Rubber City," being the home of both Goodyear and Firestone. The city is also home to the All-American Soap Box Derby which has been held at Akron's Derby Downs race track since 1935.

In closing, I once again pay tribute to the City of Akron and the 22nd Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Lecture.

**TRIBUTE TO AMBASSADOR
ANDREW YOUNG**

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Ambassador Andrew Young, a man who has given his life to the Civil Rights movement and other important social causes. Truly, he is a man who consistently puts the interests of others above himself.

Ambassador Young, who was born in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1932 to a dentist father and schoolteacher mother, grew up in the segregated South. After beginning his college education at Dillard University in New Orleans, he transferred to Howard University in Washington, DC.

In 1951 Ambassador Young graduated from Howard with a degree in pre-medicine. Instead of medical school, however, he heeded a call to the ministry and began his studies in theology at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut.

Graduating in 1955, Ambassador Young became the pastor at several small churches in the South, including one in Thomasville, Ga., in my own district. He also served as pastor at a church in Marion, Alabama. As part of his work there, while encouraging young people to vote, he first came in contact with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The relationship would last for the rest of Ambassador Young's life, carrying over into civil rights activities all over the South, including the Albany Movement in 1961-62. At that time, the small town of 56,000 people had gained a reputation as not just resistant to social activists, but impenetrable to change. White leadership in the town refused to have conversations with local leaders seeking to implement the decision of *Boynton v. Virginia*, which mandated the integration of bus and rail terminals.

Albany, as it turned out, was also one of the first places Ambassador Young made a difference. In late 1961, Dr. King, Reverend Ralph Abernathy and some 2,000 other demonstrators had already been jailed for their in-

tegration efforts. Nevertheless, Ambassador Young saw fit to go to Albany to help recruit and train people for citizen education workshops, with the aim of keeping the fire burning in Albany. The environment was dangerous, tenuous, and hostile, but Ambassador Young found a way to inspire and contribute.

Forty-five years later, we not only honor him, but also reflect on how the courage exhibited by him then led to the great accomplishments he is known for today: Georgia's first African American Congressman since Reconstruction, U.N. Ambassador, Mayor of Atlanta, among others. Ambassador Young has led a full and meaningful life, exhibiting a sense of public service and commitment to community the whole time.

Today, we thank and honor Ambassador Young for his contributions and the example he set for others.

IN SUPPORT OF MEANINGFUL, AFFORDABLE AND STRAIGHT-FORWARD PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

HON. CHAKA FATTAH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. FATTAH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of prescription drug coverage for our nation's seniors. While I believe that the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 was flawed in many ways, I am glad that we have recognized the need for prescription drug coverage for Medicare recipients. Too many families have been unable to afford life sustaining medications, and it is encouraging that the Congress has seen fit to begin to address this grave problem.

While there have been many legitimate concerns about the implementation of the MMA, I am encouraged that in this Congress, we will have the opportunity to improve on that original legislation. It is extremely important that seniors receive affordable prescription coverage. In addition to problems of affordability, we have heard many seniors report that the enrollment process is needlessly difficult to navigate. Along with the problems negotiating the paperwork, many seniors are faced with penalties for failing to meet specified deadlines. We must work to ensure that this process is as "user friendly" as possible, and that all eligible seniors are receiving the coverage they need.

Madam Speaker, I call for the enrollment process to be streamlined so that it is easier for beneficiaries to enroll without the confusion seniors experienced in 2006. The Bush Administration should do a better job informing seniors in clear terms about which plans are available to which enrollees.

I urge my colleagues to eliminate the current penalty for not signing up for a Part D plan the first time a person is eligible. Due to the confusion during the 2006 sign up process, some seniors were not able to enroll in a Part D plan and now will face this penalty.

Pharmaceutical companies such as GlaxoSmithKline dedicate extensive resources to discovering lifesaving cures for devastating illnesses. I look forward to work with them, patient advocacy organizations, healthcare professionals and my fellow Members of Congress to ensure that every senior has access

to the medications they need to stay healthy. It is my hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will work with me to make changes to Part D that improve and strengthen it for our seniors and help forge a prescription drug benefit that is meaningful, affordable and straightforward. The new leadership in Congress cares a great deal about our seniors, and it is time that we fulfill our promise to ensure that Part D serves seniors in the best way possible.

IRAQ ESCALATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, President Bush—after using false information to sell a war to the American people and Congress, after invading Iraq without a plan to win the peace, after time and time again maintaining a failed “stay the course” policy—is now trying to sell an escalation of the war in Iraq as “a new way forward.” I am not buying it.

As the sister of a Vietnam veteran, I still remember vividly our escalation of that failed war and the thousands of additional lives that it cost. I remember vividly the worry I had for my brother and the feeling that our troops would be better served if they were returned home rather than fighting in another country's civil war. Those are the same feelings I have today about our troops who are serving bravely in today's failed war, the Iraq War.

I have long stated my desire for the President to begin a withdrawal of our troops from Iraq. I am a member of the Out of Iraq Caucus, and I have strongly supported my colleague JOHN MURTHA's plan to redeploy our troops from Iraq. The American people made it crystal clear at the ballot box in November that staying the course in Iraq is not an option. Yet, President Bush has once again turned his back on calls to end the war, he has turned his back on the will of the electorate, and he is going in the opposite direction with a plan for escalation.

I applaud the Democratic leadership in the House and Senate and its plan for a phased redeployment of American troops beginning in months and for more intense diplomatic outreach. This plan is more sensible and would prove ultimately more successful than digging ourselves deeper in the quicksand that Iraq has become.

Furthermore, I will support any proposal that comes before Congress that would block funding for the implementation of escalation. I will support the effort by Senator KENNEDY and my colleague ED MARKEY to require the authorization of Congress before the President escalates this war.

As the daughter of a soldier and the sister of a soldier, I will always support our troops. It has become clear to just about everyone but the President that the best way now to support the troops is not to send more into the Iraqi Civil War—the best way to support them is to bring them home.

A TRIBUTE TO THE BROOKLYN ALUMNAE CHAPTER OF DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam, Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Brooklyn Alumnae Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority as they host the New York Metropolitan Area Founders Day Celebration on January 13, 2007. The Brooklyn Alumnae Chapter has been outstanding in its service of the Brooklyn community for over 50 years and I am privileged to have such a dedicated group of individuals in my district.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority was founded on January 13, 1913 by 22 collegiate women at Howard University. These students wanted to use their collective strength to promote academic excellence and to provide assistance to persons in need. The first public act performed by the Delta Founders was in 1913 at the Women's Suffrage March in Washington D.C.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization whose goal is to provide assistance and support through established programs in local communities throughout the world. A sisterhood of more than 200,000 predominately Black college educated women, the Sorority currently has over 900 chapters located in the United States, England, Japan (Tokyo and Okinawa), Germany, the Virgin Islands, Bermuda, the Bahamas and the Republic of Korea. The major programs of the sorority are based upon the organization's Five Point Thrust of: Economic Development, Educational Development, International Awareness and Involvement, Physical and Mental Health and Political Awareness and Involvement.

The theme of this special event is “Keeping our History: Past, Present and Future.” This is particularly appropriate as we celebrate the life and achievements of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. this coming week.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to recognize the impressive achievements of Bernadette Walker, President of the Brooklyn Alumnae Chapter as well as the co-chairs of Founders Day, Valerie White and Natalia S. Young, for their commitment to the Brooklyn community.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this wonderful group of Americans and the great things they stand for.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CURES CAN BE FOUND ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Cures Can Be Found Act. This legislation promotes medical research by providing a tax credit for investments and donations to promote adult and umbilical cord blood stem cell research, and provides a \$2,000 tax credit to new parents for the donation of umbilical cord blood that can be used to extract stem cells.

Madam Speaker, stem cell research has the potential to revolutionize medicine. Stem cells could hold the keys to curing many diseases afflicting millions of Americans, such as diabetes and Alzheimer's. Umbilical cord blood stem cells have already been used to treat 67 diseases, including sickle cell disease, leukemia, and osteoporosis. Umbilical cord blood stem cells have also proven useful in treating spinal cord injuries and certain neurological disorders. Adult stem cells have shown promise in treating a wide variety of diseases ranging from brain, breast, testicular, and other types of cancers to multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's, heart damage, and rheumatoid arthritis. Just this week, the Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times ran major stories on the progress made in obtaining stem cells from amniotic fluid, which is easily obtainable from a pregnant woman during routine pre-natal tests.

By providing tax incentives for adult and umbilical cord blood stem cell research, the Cures Can Be Found Act will ensure greater resources are devoted to this valuable research. The tax credit for donations of umbilical cord blood will ensure that medical science has a continuous supply of stem cells. Thus, this bill will help scientists discover new cures using stem cells and, hopefully, make routine the use of stem cells to treat formally incurable diseases.

By encouraging private medical research, the Cures Can Be Found Act enhances a tradition of private medical research that is responsible for many medical breakthroughs. For example, Jonas Salk, discoverer of the polio vaccine, did not receive one dollar from the federal government for his efforts. I urge my colleagues to help the American people support the efforts of future Jonas Salks by cosponsoring the Cures Can Be Found Act.

FAIR MINIMUM WAGE ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my pleasure that the House has passed H.R. 2, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007. Nearly nine out of ten Americans believe that it is time to increase the minimum wage, and I could not agree more.

An increase in the minimum wage is long overdue. The minimum wage has not been increased in almost 10 years. This is the longest Americans have had to wait for an increase in the minimum wage since the original law was enacted in 1938.

While Americans have been waiting for an increase in the minimum wage, the cost of most necessities has risen. The fact is, the real value of the current minimum wage is the lowest it has been in over 50 years. Meanwhile, the costs of health care, gasoline and a college education are rising, and families in my District are finding it harder and harder to make ends meet.

An increase in the minimum wage will have a particularly beneficial impact on women, especially single mothers. The majority of minimum wage earners are women and common

sense tells us that a single mother cannot effectively provide for her children on \$10,000 a year. Because many of these mothers are forced to work extra hours or a second job to afford food and rent, their children end up spending most of their time without a parent at home to raise them.

If America is indeed the Land of Opportunity, we must reward those who pay their dues. A parent working full-time at the current minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour is likely living below the federal poverty level, and is often unable to afford what their children deserve: rent in a safe neighborhood, decent child care, and enough food on the table.

The minimum wage issue is ultimately a question about our fundamental values as Americans. Do we value hard work? Do we believe that people who work full-time should be able to support themselves? To support their families? Isn't it our job to support those who want a hand up, and not a hand out?

I believe the answer to these questions is yes, and I believe that most Americans agree with me.

I am pleased that the House of Representatives, under the leadership of Speaker NANCY PELOSI, brought this bill to the Floor during the first 100 hours of the 110th Congress. The priorities of working Americans are truly the priorities of this House of Representatives.

I am hopeful that the United States Senate will also make a minimum wage hike a priority and pass this bill as soon as possible. I am encouraged by the President's recently expressed willingness to cooperate with Democrats on this issue. The President's signature cannot come soon enough; the bill's initial 70 cent increase does not take place until 60 days after H.R. 2 becomes law. Mr. Speaker, nearly 13 million hard-working Americans have waited long enough.

SUPPORT FOR THE SAFE COMMISSION

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I am planning to reintroduced legislation in the House of Representatives aimed at addressing the looming financial crisis facing the Nation, the Securing America's Future Economy, SAFE, Commission Act. The bill would establish a national bipartisan commission that will put everything—entitlement spending as well as all other Federal programs and our Nation's tax policies—on the table and require Congress to vote up or down on its recommendations in their entirety, similar to the process set in 1988 to close military bases. Mandating congressional action on the panel's recommendations is what differentiates this commission from previous ones.

Support for the bill is coming from both sides of the aisle. I submit for the record an analysis by the Heritage Foundation and a letter of support from the Concord Coalition.

This legislation will be good for the future of America.

THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION,
Washington, DC, July 14, 2006.

THE WOLF SAFE COMMISSION ACT: A CHANCE TO GET THE BUDGET BACK ON TRACK (By Stuart Butler)

The recent Mid-Session Review by the Office of Management and Budget underscores the facts that sensible tax reform stimulates the economy and that faster growth swells revenue to the government as a byproduct of new jobs and extra income for Americans. The review also confirms the overall, disturbing long-term budget picture indicated in the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) long-term forecast. Under current law, both taxes and spending will rise rapidly during future decades towards European levels, with an ever-growing government taking a larger and larger proportion of the nation's income and threatening America's future economic growth. Decisive action is needed.

But faced with this threat, Washington is paralyzed. Rather than seriously tackling the tsunami of entitlement spending that will hit the budget after the baby boomers begin to retire, Congress actually made the situation far worse by enacting the huge Medicare prescription drug benefit. And while the Bush tax reforms have significantly helped in the short term, even if made permanent they would shave only about one percentage point from the future growth in taxes. Absent any additional reforms, the CBO forecasts that, with the Bush tax cuts extended, federal taxes will top 20 percent of GDP by about 2025 and approach 23 percent of GDP by 2045. The historical average, and today's level, is just over 18 percent of GDP.

With Congress polarized and paralyzed, some Members of Congress, along with President Bush, are exploring the idea of a bipartisan commission as a way to break away from the path of rapidly rising spending and taxes. President Bush pressed for an entitlements commission in his State of the Union address. Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH) has sponsored legislation (S. 3521) that includes a commission to review the long-term solvency of Social Security and Medicare. Meanwhile, Representative Frank Wolf (R-VA) has crafted a commission bill ("The SAFE Commission Act," H.R. 5552) specifically intended to win bipartisan support for bold action to secure the country's fiscal and economic future. Senator George Voinovich (R-OH) has introduced that bill in the Senate (S. 3491).

Commissions can help break a political logjam. They can also become vehicles for action that achieves a short-term political fix and yet does little in the long term or even makes things worse. So the political dynamics and mandate of a commission are critical. Fortunately, the Wolf commission bill recognizes these facts of political life and offers real hope for sensible action. A reason for this is that in its instructions to the commission, the bill wisely combines reform with fiscal changes in a manner that could achieve a breakthrough.

The core of the fiscal problem is the sharp projected rise in future entitlement spending, especially spending on programs for middle-class retirees. Contrary to many people's perception, taxes are not falling—as noted, taxes are projected to rise steadily to record levels under current law, in real terms and as a percentage of GDP. Still, in today's political deadlock many lawmakers maintain that tax revenue must be part of the equation if they are to have the political "cover" to accept curbs on popular entitlements.

But for good reasons, conservatives strongly resist the idea of raising taxes. For one thing, taxes are not the problem—spending is. Moreover, raising tax rates or instituting

new taxes would threaten economic growth, compounding the economic harm associated with government spending. Further, raising taxes likely would reduce the pressure on Congress to curb spending or, worse still, encourage lawmakers to increase their spending promises.

The Wolf bill seeks a solution to this political equation. It creates a bipartisan commission intended to address the unsustainable imbalance between federal commitments and revenues while increasing national savings and making the budget process give greater emphasis to long-term fiscal issues. While the commission could consider a range of approaches, the bill places emphasis on two: reforms that would limit the growth of entitlements while strengthening the safety net and tax reforms that would make the tax system more economically efficient and improve economic growth. The commission would hold public hearings around the country to discuss the long-term fiscal problem, and its recommendations would receive fast-track consideration by Congress.

By combining a slowdown in entitlement spending with reforms to strengthen assistance to the needy, a commission proposal could win support of liberals and others who worry that surging middle-class retiree spending in the future will crowd out safety net spending. And by placing an emphasis on pro-growth tax reform, a commission proposal could also lead to some additional revenues not by raising taxes but thanks instead to faster economic growth—just as the Bush tax reforms produced the recent sharp increase in federal revenues. Combining these features in a commission proposal could lead to a package that conservatives, liberals, and moderates all believe would advance their agendas—a necessary result for an economically sound agreement to succeed in a polarized Congress.

Some might argue that appointing a commission to address the long-term fiscal situation is an abrogation of responsibility by Congress. In an obvious sense, it is. But the Wolf bill also shows that lawmakers recognize that America's budgeting system is broken and in the current environment cannot lead to a responsible long-term federal budget. Representative Wolf's commission proposal seeks to alter those destructive dynamics in order to secure a sound economy for future generations.

THE CONCORDE COALITION,
Arlington, VA, June 28, 2006.

Hon. FRANK WOLF,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. WOLF: On behalf of The Concord Coalition, I am writing to express our deep appreciation for your leadership in sponsoring the Securing America's Future Economy, SAFE, Act, which would establish a bipartisan commission to recommend legislation addressing our Nation's unsustainable long-term fiscal outlook.

We strongly agree with you that the need for serious action is not just an economic imperative but a moral one as well. We also share your view that partisan divisions in Washington have become so wide that a commission may now be the only way forward on this issue. By establishing a fiscal policy commission with a broad mandate, meaningful public engagement, and the ability to consider all policy options, your legislation represents a very constructive step toward bringing about consensus solutions.

The demographic and fiscal challenges facing the budget in the years ahead are well known. Analysts of diverse ideological perspectives and nonpartisan officials at the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and the Government Accountability Office (GAO)

have all warned that current fiscal policy is unsustainable over the long-term.

What is needed now is a clear commitment to address these issues in a straightforward, generationally equitable and bipartisan manner. Achieving consensus around the hard choices that must eventually be made will require open minds and bipartisan cooperation. Your legislation would establish a process to do just that.

Recently, The Concord Coalition organized a forum with experts from across the political spectrum to discuss the possibility of establishing a bipartisan commission to deal with our longterm fiscal outlook. Three conclusions from the forum stand out:

The commission must have meaningful participation and input from a broad range of views. Bipartisan support is essential to enacting and maintaining policies that will put the budget on a fiscally sustainable course.

The commission should have a broad mandate with no limitations on what policy options the commission can consider or preconditions on what must be included—or not included—in a proposal. Everything must be on the table, including revenues as well as entitlements and other spending.

The commission should engage the public in a dialogue about the long-term fiscal challenges and the tradeoffs that will be necessary to bring about a more secure and sustainable economic future.

The Concord Coalition commends your proposal because it recognizes each of these conclusions. The SAFE Act would establish a bipartisan commission of experts and legislators appointed by the President and Congressional leaders of both parties. The Commission would be directed to hold hearings across the country and incorporate the input from the public in its report. This is a very welcome provision. The public should be treated as if it were, in effect, a member of the commission. Doing so will enhance the commission's credibility and help build acceptance for its recommendations. Our experience hosting meetings around the nation on this issue has demonstrated that when the American people are armed with the facts and given the opportunity for honest dialogue, they are willing to set priorities and make the hard choices that often are not made in Washington.

Most importantly, the Commission would be allowed to consider all policy options to address the imbalance between long-term spending commitments and projected revenues, including reforms of entitlement programs and tax laws. In our view, this is an essential prerequisite for attracting well-respected individuals to serve on the commission and for finding solutions that are both substantive and politically viable.

We particularly commend you for your willingness to consider constructive suggestions for changes to achieve broader bipartisan support and increase the prospect that the commission will produce a balanced proposal that can be enacted into law. In that regard, we would suggest a few changes that we believe would strengthen the bill and help ensure the commission receives the bipartisan support essential to its success.

We believe the commission would have greater credibility if the appointees were more evenly divided between parties, potentially with some commission members appointed jointly or as a result of bipartisan consultation. Further, we would suggest that the commission have bipartisan co-chairs. We would also encourage you to consider a more expansive legislative process, which would allow for greater debate of policy tradeoffs by allowing the consideration of budget neutral amendments. Those who oppose the priorities and tradeoffs rec-

ommended by the commission should be challenged to say what they would do instead and given the opportunity to put forward alternative policies to address the problem.

A commission isn't a silver bullet that will solve our fiscal problems by itself. It will still take action by Members of Congress and the administration to adopt the tough choices. But a commission with credibility and bipartisan support could provide the leadership necessary to ensure that these issues receive the attention and serious consideration they deserve.

You deserve great credit for your willingness to undertake the difficult but absolutely essential task of focusing attention on the tough choices our nation faces. The Concord Coalition stands ready to assist in any way that we can.

Sincerely,

ROBERT L. BIXBY,
Executive Director.

DEFEATING THE TERRORISTS ABROAD—NOT AT HOME

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, yesterday afternoon as I was reading *The Examiner*, a Washington daily, I came across an editorial that summed up my view of our current conflict in Iraq and the overall global war on terrorism. I applaud *The Examiner's* editorial staff for declaring what is largely an unpopular view among the mainstream media.

The editorial follows.

[Jan. 11, 2007]

DO WE DEFEAT THE TERRORISTS IN IRAQ NOW OR FIGHT THEM HERE TOMORROW?

WASHINGTON.—President Bush could not have been more frank or honest with the American people than he was last night. That said, the central issue remains today what it has been since the first plane crashed into the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001: Are we as a nation willing to do whatever is required to win the war on terrorism?

Iraq is today the central front in that war, and the president is doing all within his power to defeat the terrorists there now so that we don't have to fight them here in the future.

The president believes the war in Iraq can be won by increasing American troop strength for a period as the Iraqis themselves assume greater responsibilities for securing their country and by increasing U.S. economic aid to rebuild infrastructure and provide jobs.

Calling this troop movement a "surge" was unfortunate because it conveyed the idea of something that isn't going to happen—putting more U.S. soldiers on the ground than we have had heretofore. In fact, as *The Examiner's* Bill Sammon reported yesterday, even with the "surge" announced last night, we will still be a few thousand short of the high water mark of 160,000 U.S. troops a year ago.

More important than the raw numbers is how those troops are deployed.

The president acknowledged last night that mistakes were made in the days leading up to the U.S. action in Iraq and the first phases of building the post-Saddam Hussein Iraq. Working with increased Iraqi military and police forces, our strengthened forces

will now be able to rectify the biggest of those mistakes: failing to eradicate the insurgents completely and not disarming private militias like that of Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army. Special attention is to be devoted to Baghdad and Anbar province, with Iraqi army units in the lead.

There will be more U.S. casualties in coming months. But the only way to affirm the sacrifice of American blood and material resources in Iraq is persevering and winning. Iraq is not Vietnam unless congressional Democrats heed extremists like Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-MA, and withdraw funding for the American war effort in Iraq as they did in 1974, which led directly to the fall of Saigon in 1975.

The killing fields followed throughout Southeast Asia as the victors took revenge upon those who looked to America for protection and freedom. The killing fields will come again if America fails now because Iraq will dissolve into chaos and then a jihadist totalitarianism.

Many Rubicons are being crossed on Iraq. There will be no crossing back if we heed the ignoble call to retreat.

IN MEMORY OF DARRENT WILLIAMS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember Darrent Williams, the Denver Bronco professional football player from Fort Worth, Texas, who passed away at 24 years of age on January 1, 2007.

Darrent Williams will forever be remembered as a talented and compassionate young man who not only loved his family and friends but also proved to be dedicated to his teammates and his adopted city of Denver.

Raised as an only child by his mother Rosalind Williams, Darrent grew up in Fort Worth where he attended O.D. Wyatt High School located in my congressional district. Excelling at three different sports, Mr. Williams received scholarship opportunities from multiple universities. Wanting to stay close to his home in north Texas, Mr. Williams decided to play football at Oklahoma State University. While at Oklahoma State, he was one of only four college players since 1996 to record double-figure interceptions while scoring at least five touchdowns. He was also a Jim Thorpe Award semifinalist, and in 2003 tied at 13th in the Nation with six interceptions. Due to his incredible performance at Oklahoma State, in 2005 Mr. Williams became the Denver Broncos' second-round draft pick and would soon be a starter.

Mr. Williams became known as the "Denver Bronco Kid," a nickname that would spread across the Nation as others recognized his energy, enthusiasm, and talent. As a young professional football player, he not only excelled at the game but also brought strength and cooperation to the team. He was a special person with unbelievable character, and he will continue to be admired by many across the country.

Throughout his life, Darrent Williams portrayed qualities that warmed the hearts of those around him. It was these traits that won

the hearts of many. I extend my sympathies to his family and friends, and may this young man be an inspiration to us all.

RECOGNIZING CENTENARIAN VERA
WENTWORTH OF HERNANDO
COUNTY, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Vera Wentworth of Hernando County, FL. Vera has done something that all of us strive to do, but that very few of us will ever accomplish, celebrate her 100th birthday. Born December 19, 1906 in Hartland, ME, Vera received her degree in the 1920s from a college in Farmington, ME. One of the early teachers who worked in a one-room schoolhouse, Vera kept a pot-belly stove filled with wood to keep the children warm. As a testament to the hardiness of Maine residents, Vera taught at different schools throughout Maine for 49 years. Her fondest childhood memory was the day her father bought her a new car while she was in college.

Married to Neal Felker in the early 1920s, Vera was blessed with three children, two boys and one girl. While her husband sadly passed away in the late 1940s, Vera remarried Harold Wentworth in 1954. She also raised Harold's 2-year old son, and she now has a combination of seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Vera gets the most pleasure these days from being with her family. Although she lived alone surviving cold winters in Maine till she was 97 years old, she moved to Hernando County in 2002 to be closer to her daughter and her son-in-law. Vera's daughter says the proudest moments in her mother's life was the ability to teach for 49 years, and that she would have taught longer if they didn't require her to retire.

Vera's advice to young people today is, "go to church, respect your parents and get an education." Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Vera Wentworth for reaching her 100th birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as her.

HONORING THE CITY OF BAR-
BERTON DR. MARTIN LUTHER
KING, JR. DAY OF SERVICE

HON. BETTY SUTTON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Ms. SUTTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Barberton Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. The City of Barberton located in beautiful Summit County, Ohio has played host to this meaningful event. Dr. King's ideals of freedom, justice and opportunity need to be celebrated now more than ever.

Barberton originally started out as a collective of small farms owned by various individuals. In January of 1890, the Barberton Land Development Company purchased 600 acres

of land that would eventually become Barberton. Over the next 2 years, William A. Johnson plotted and surveyed the land leaving an indelible mark on the city. In this short time, the population of Barberton grew at such leaps and bounds that a reporter from the Beacon Journal remarked that the city had grown by "magic." This moniker stuck and to this day, the city is nicknamed "Magic City." The population boom of Barberton exemplifies Dr. King's dream of opportunity.

All Americans know of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s stature as a national hero. From his celebrated "Letter from Birmingham Jail" to his organization of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Dr. King demonstrated that eloquent words followed with significant action could affect social change without resorting to violence. His "I Have a Dream" speech movingly spelled out his dream of racial equality and propelled the issue to the forefront of national consciousness.

In closing, I commend the City of Barberton and all the organizations that have spent countless hours organizing this celebration honoring Dr. King's birthday. Dr. King's dedication to racial, social and economic justice is a model that the world should emulate now more than ever.

STEM CELL RESEARCH
ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVAN PEARCE

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, let me be clear: I fully support stem cell research and its potential to solve many of the world's most complex medical mysteries.

Many scientists have concluded that certain types of stem cells, called pluripotent stem cells, may one day be used to develop treatments for debilitating diseases.

Some of these types include cells derived from adult stem cells, umbilical cord blood, amniotic fluid and finally, human embryos.

Federal funding of embryonic stem cell research began in 2001 when President Bush announced a policy that allowed researchers to destroy and conduct research on stem cell lines that had come from human embryos already destroyed prior to August 9, 2001.

This policy did not encourage or offer incentives from the government to destroy human life for research.

Yet the newly elected Democratic majority chose to bring a bill to the House floor today that forces taxpayers to encourage and fund the destruction of human life for embryonic stem cell research.

This legislation also has no protections to ensure human embryos can not be cloned by researchers who receive this funding and access to destroyed human embryos.

It is disheartening that the Democratic leadership wants to force all taxpayers to fund the destruction of human embryos for research, regardless of any moral and ethical concerns they may hold.

Stem cell research is currently legal in the United States. In fact, nothing in any past federal legislation or policy would ban privately funded embryonic stem cell research.

Yet private investors are reluctant to fund embryonic stem cell research that destroys human life and many have chosen to look for alternatives that offer better results.

In this world, we are measured by our treatment of the most delicate and weak among us. And in the world of science, there are lines that must be drawn when the destruction of innocent human life is at stake.

CHRISTIANS CONTINUE TO SUFFER
IN INDIA

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, just before the new Congress convened, many of us celebrated Christmas with families and friends. I hope that every one of my colleagues, old and new, had a very happy Christmas and holiday season. But Christmas is another anniversary also for the Christians of India. Since Christmas 1998, 8 years now, India has been focusing its persecution in large measure on Christians.

In September, the convent and school of Loreto were violently attacked by the violent Hindu organization the Bharatiya Janata Yuva, a youth arm of the BJP, which is the political arm of the RSS, a Fascist organization that published a book on how to get minorities, including Christians, falsely implicated in criminal cases. A BJP spokesman demanded a high-level inquiry into the school, according to the Tribune newspaper of Chandigarh, saying it engaged in "irrational behavior." As I noted at the time of the attack, apparently, being a Catholic is irrational behavior and "unscientific activity" in the world of Hindu militants.

Over 300,000 Christians in Nagaland have been murdered in India. Nuns have been raped, priests have been murdered, Christian schools and prayer halls have been attacked. Laws have been passed requiring the permission of the Hindu regime before one may be baptized. Christians have faced jail time, as well as threats and physical violence, just for sharing their faith.

Missionary Graham Staines was sleeping in his jeep with his two young sons when they were surrounded by a mob chanting "Victory to Hanuman," a Hindu god. The mob then burned Staines and his sons to death. Missionary Joseph Cooper of Pennsylvania was beaten so severely that he had to spend a week in an Indian hospital. Then the Indian government threw him out of the country. Police gunfire broke up a Christian religious festival on the theme "Jesus is the answer." Is this the secularism that India is so proud of?

It would be bad enough if Christians were the only ones suffering. But they are not. Sikhs, Muslims, Dalits, and others have also felt the lash of Indian repression. The time has come for freedom in the subcontinent. The time has come for the persecution to end.

Madam Speaker, there is a way to help bring freedom and secularism to the people of south Asia. We should end all U.S. aid and trade with India until everyone within its jurisdiction enjoys full human rights there. And now that we have a new Congress, we should go on record in support of freedom everywhere in South Asia. There is no better time

than now. If we can help to stop the persecution we have a duty to do so.

I would like to place an article from the website of the Bible League into the RECORD at this time, Madame Speaker. It has further details about the persecution of Christians.

"HE HEARD OUR FEARS AND PRAYERS"

Nearly two years after the establishment of anti-conversion laws, Indian Christians are celebrating the effects of their repeal. Only time will tell the long-term blessings of this legal change, but several resulting miracles have already taken place. In the first month alone, a group of 50 Indian church planters reports having baptized over 1,200 new Christians!

Christians throughout India were stunned when the pro-Hindu government was overturned in the Spring 2004 national election, and several state governments annulled local anti-conversion laws.

Said one local Bible League-trained Christian, "I praise God for enabling us to spread the Gospel in our country. He heard our fears and prayers regarding the election. God gave us an extra bonus when He made our state government remove the anti-conversion law which was in force until now. Hallelujah!"

UNDETERRED BY FEAR

Indian Christians have faced many hardships in sharing the Gospel. Bible League-trained Christians in India report that they or fellow believers have faced threats, physical attacks, and jail time for sharing their faith.

Baptisms, in particular, became a significant challenge for local churches. Under the anti-conversion laws, anyone who chose to become baptized was legally obligated to seek permission from the government, as well as provide them with the name of the person performing the baptism. Fearing repercussions, many new Christians did not make this outward profession of faith until after the laws were repealed.

Still, thousands of Indians were undeterred in their faith. A local Bible League-trained Christian, while under the anti-conversion law, wrote, "We continue to encourage Christians through the Word of God. We remind them of the promises (Matthew 28:20) and the testimonies of the great martyrs. We are encouraged to fulfill the Great Commission of Christ, regardless of what happens to us. We are prepared for imprisonment, punishment, and even death for the sake of Christ."

RELYING ON GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Continue to pray for the Church in India. The repeal of state anti-conversion laws has been a tremendous miracle—but challenges still remain. One state continues to uphold anti-conversion laws, and persecution persists throughout the country.

Yet God has been faithful to His children in India, and they are recognizing Him as their Savior by the thousands. Praise God for increasing opportunities to share His Word with the lost.

THE GREAT COMMISSION—MATTHEW 28:19-20

19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

HONORING SERGEANT MAJOR WAYNE R. BELL FOR HIS 30 YEARS OF SERVICE TO OUR NATION

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, Sergeant Major Bell was born in Washington, DC, on 17 January 1957. He enlisted in the Marine Corps on 28 February 1977 in Boston, MA. Upon completion of recruit training at MCRD Parris Island, SC, he was assigned to AA V School at 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion Camp Lejeune, NC. Upon completion of school he reported to Company D for duty as an AAV crewman.

In February 1978, Sergeant Major Bell was ordered to Company D, 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, 1st Marine Brigade, Kaneohe Bay, HI for three years. In November 1978 he was meritoriously promoted to Corporal and deployed with Battalion Landing Team 2/3 on West PAC 79 as a crew chief. In October 1980, he was promoted to Sergeant.

In April 1981, Sergeant Major Bell was transferred to School's Battalion, Assault Amphibian School, Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, CA where he served as a crew chief and classroom instructor. During this tour of duty he helped implement a new course of instruction for the LVTP7A1 family of vehicles. In March 1984, he was promoted to Staff Sergeant and attended the Staff Noncommissioned Officers Academy in Quantico, VA.

In June 1984, Sergeant Major Bell was transferred to the 3d Marine Division for duty with 1st Track Vehicle Battalion, Okinawa, Japan. He served with both Companies A and B and deployed to Thailand, Korea and the Philippines.

In May 1985, Sergeant Major Bell returned to CONUS and was assigned to the 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, CA, for duty with 3d Assault Amphibian Battalion. He served in a variety of billets from section leader to Company Gunnery Sergeant. Promoted to Gunnery Sergeant in January 1990, he was transferred to Marine Corps Security Forces Battalion, Diego Garcia and assumed the duties as Guard Chief and Training Staff Noncommissioned Officer in Charge. In March 1993, he was assigned to Company A, 3d Assault Amphibian Battalion and deployed with 13th MEU (SOC), Battalion Landing Team 1/9, West PAC 93-94, as the AAV Detachment Platoon Sergeant.

Selected to First Sergeant in April 1994, Sergeant Major Bell's assignments as a First Sergeant included: Company C and H&S Company, 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division (April 1994–March 1996); United States Naval Academy Company, Marine Barracks 8th and I, Washington D.C. (April 1996–May 1997) where he was subsequently selected for promotion to Sergeant Major. He was assigned to the Assault Amphibian School Battalion, Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, CA, as the Battalion Sergeant Major from June 1997–March 1999. In April 1999, he was reassigned as the Squadron Sergeant Major for HMM 268, MAG 39, 3d MAW, MCAS Camp Pendleton, CA, where he

deployed with the 11th MEU as the Air Combat Element Sergeant Major.

In April 2002 Sergeant Major Bell was reassigned to the 11th Marine Regiment where he deployed to Kuwait and Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. In July 2003, he was assigned as the Sergeant Major of 1st Marine Division and deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II from Feb 2004–Mar 2005. He was assigned to his current billet as Marine Corps Installations West Sergeant Major on 24 February 2006.

Sergeant Major Bell's personal decorations include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal w/2 Gold Stars, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal w/2 Gold Stars, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and the Combat Action Ribbon.

Sergeant Major Bell is married to the former Ms. Crystal Nadine Bynoe of Boston, MA. They have three sons, Sherman (31), Shannon (29), and Wayne Jr. (22), and five grandchildren Temarah (9), Julius (8), Micah (4), Jayden (2), Nia (1).

On behalf of the people of the United States whom Master Sergeant Bell spent a career serving, I thank him for his service and commitment to the defense of our Nation.

**STEM CELL RESEARCH
ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2007**

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it's unethical to end one life in pursuit of helping others.

I am for stem-cell research. I am for scientifically sound, ethical, adult stem-cell research.

The failure of embryonic stem-cell experiments has dried up private research dollars. Consequently, proponents have no alternative but to pressure Congress for funding.

Today, the House of Representatives passed legislation that requires taxpayers to fund science that ends innocent human lives for the questionable potential of improving the lives of others.

This legislation would divert resources from truly promising treatments in favor of controversial research whose benefits remain speculative.

To conduct scientific research of this type, thousands of embryos, persons at the beginning of life, must be killed. The debate is about the inherent value of human life at its earliest stage. Supporters of embryonic stem-cell research will not take a position on when life begins. They know that if they do, they cannot sustain their argument.

Moral arguments aside, it is a fact that other forms of stem-cell research are resulting in treatments for people who suffer from debilitating diseases. Adult stem cells, which are extracted from umbilical-cord blood, placenta,

bone marrow, nasal mucosa, hair follicles and fact cells, are today successfully used in treating real people who suffer from at least 72 specific diseases. Successes include, among the 72 diseases, Parkinson's Disease, Crohn's Disease, diabetes, spinal-cord injury, strokes, arthritis and numerous cancers, including breast, brain and leukemia.

Conversely, proponents cannot name a single person with improved health due to embryonic stem-cell research. Embryonic stem cells may never produce a safe and effective treatment for any disease. The political hype declaring them a cure-all today cannot be sustained by the facts. If successful, however, the necessary next step must be to clone the cells. It is logistically impossible to provide enough embryonic stem cells without human cloning.

Another falsehood is the excuse that the embryos would otherwise be thrown away. None of the embryos were created for research. Every embryo was created for the sole purpose of giving parenthood to those who yearn for it. Over 90 percent of frozen embryos are now stored by their parents, who hope to have more children or to provide for embryo adoption to other couples. At least 500,000 couples are on waiting lists to adopt children. For each available embryo, 45 couples wait in line to adopt that child.

So far, more than 80 formerly frozen embryos have been adopted by families. Now these "snowflake babies" are giggle, screaming, playful children. It is a glorious miracle for couples who imagined they would never experience parenthood, much less pregnancy and childbirth. These "snowflakes," some of whom were frozen for 9 years, are as worthy of our protection as every child. They are not medical waste.

Proponents of this research say they cannot look a paraplegic in the eye and say, "We can't experiment on frozen embryos." I ask them, can you hold the "snowflake babies" in your arms and look their moms and dads in the eye and tell them, "I wish we had experimented on your children before they learn to walk, to talk, to love, to laugh and play?"

The American medical community has many times refused the results of critical research because the findings were achieved unethically. International standards for Permissible Medical Experiments are clear. The subject must be a volunteer, there must be no alternative, results of animal experimentation must have been proven successful, they subject must be able to voluntarily end the experiment, there must be no possibility of injury, disability, or death, and the promise must outweigh the risk.

Embryonic stem-cell research violates each of these principles. Principles for Permissible Medical Experiments may be found in the military tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10, October, 1946, Nuremberg.

TRIBUTE TO DAVID GONZALEZ

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor David Gonzalez on his retirement from the Rural Development Agency of the

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) on January 3rd, 2007.

David Gonzalez began his career with the USDA Rural Development Agency, which was previously known as Farmers Home Administration, on May 26, 1971 as a student trainee in San Diego, Texas. He received a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from Texas A&M University at Kingsville in 1972 and returned back to work with the Farmers Home Administration in San Benito, Texas, as an assistant county supervisor. Five years later, he was promoted to county supervisor for Willacy County and then transferred to Edinburg in Hidalgo County.

Mr. Gonzalez's commitment to his service with the agency was recognized with his next promotion to assistant district director in Rio Grande City in 1980 and then to area director for the Rio Grande Valley in 1991. He served with distinction and honor for 16 years in the Rio Grande Valley, and helped to provide crucial funding to the communities in the area. Mr. Gonzalez has given back so much to the community in the Rio Grande Valley in his tenure with the Rural Development Agency. After working tirelessly for nearly two decades, he will enjoy his retirement with his wife, Edna, and his five grandchildren, Daniel David, Jorge Alberto, Zenon David, Dayna Dalinda, and Dennis David.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize the dedication of David Gonzalez to the Rio Grande Valley community.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE ASIAN ELEPHANT CONSERVATION RE-AUTHORIZATION ACT

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, since coming to Congress in 1984, I have consistently supported efforts to protect and conserve many wildlife species. I am an enthusiastic defender of the Endangered Species Act and have voted in favor of the African Elephant Conservation Act of 1988, the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994, the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 2000, the Great Ape Conservation Act of 2000 and the Marine Turtle Conservation Act of 2004.

In fact, several of these laws were reauthorized or initially enacted during my 6-year tenure as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans. During this period, I conducted numerous oversight hearings on these conservation programs and I became intimately aware of the plight of Asian elephants. Frankly, I was startled to learn that in the early 1990s there were less than 40,000 Asian elephants living throughout the world in the wild. These wild populations were located in 13 south and southeastern Asian countries. In addition, there were only 14 populations of 1,000 or more individual elephants in a contiguous area which greatly reduced the long-term viability of this species.

In response to this international wildlife crisis, I introduced the Asian Elephant Conservation Act of 1997. After hearings, markups and

floor debate, I was honored that President Bill Clinton signed this important legislation into law on November 7, 1997. The fundamental goal of Public Law 105-96 was to create the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund.

During the past decade, the Secretary of the Interior has carefully reviewed nearly 300 conservation grant proposals to assist beleaguered Asian elephants. I am pleased to report that 171 grants have been awarded to various governmental and non-governmental entities. These grants have received \$7.8 million in Federal funds and in excess of \$10 million in private matching money.

The types of approved projects funded include emergency elephant conservation support for those countries adversely affected by the tsunami disaster in Indonesia; erecting fences in Sri Lanka; establishing an elephant conservation working group in Thailand; promoting eco-tourism of elephants; increase the capacity of wildlife rangers in India; assess the habitat needs of elephants in Malaysia and implement a program for monitoring the illegal killing of elephants. Among the recipients of these grants were the Conservation International, Sri Lanka Wildlife Conservation Society, Wildlife Conservation Society, Wild Fund for Nature and Wildlife Trust of India.

Madam Speaker, these conservation funds have had a profound impact on protecting these irreplaceable species and in the long run I am convinced they will help to ensure that they will not disappear in the future. By allowing a small amount of Federal funds, our Government has been able to finance worthwhile projects to stop the extinction of Asian elephants.

The legislation I am proposing today, the Asian Elephant Conservation Reauthorization Act, will extend this vital law at existing authorization levels until September 30, 2012. This will allow the Secretary of the Interior to approve additional meritorious projects in the future.

Ten years ago, during the initial hearing on my bill, H.R. 1787, a representative of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service testified that: "the Asian Elephant Conservation Act would . . . send a strong message to the world that the people of the United States care deeply about Asian elephants and that the U.S. Government is committed to helping preserve this keystone species."

There is no question that we need to reauthorize this important law and I urge my colleagues to work with me to make this a reality. As President Theodore Roosevelt once noted, "the nation behaves well if it treats its natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation, increased and not impaired in value." The road to extinction is a one-way street and we must work to ensure that the Asian elephant does not make that journey.

HONORING ARMY PFC EMILY S. PETTIGREW

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the service and commitment of Emily S. Pettigrew, an honorable soldier who

has shown dedication and professionalism in her efforts to free and secure Iraq.

Army PFC Emily S. Pettigrew has been awarded the Army Commendation Medal for her continuing support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This Medal of Honor is awarded to those in the Army who have distinguished themselves through exemplary service and meritorious achievement. Important objectives of the mission include, but are not limited to, peacekeeping, security, support, force protection and acquiescence throughout the strenuous transition process of the Iraqi Government.

Emily Pettigrew is the daughter of Richard and Dottie Pettigrew, residents of Country Hill, Keller, Texas, in the heart of my congressional district. As a soldier in Iraq, Army PFC Emily S. Pettigrew serves as a member of the Fires Brigade, 4th Infantry Division stationed at Camp Liberty. While in Iraq, the 4th Infantry Division from Fort Hood advances operating bases and performs duties at numerous camps. Combat missions assigned to the Fires Brigade have been completed successfully on account of the soldiers' devotion, altruism, and commitment to our country.

It is with great honor that I stand here today to recognize Army PFC Emily S. Pettigrew as a truly generous and outstanding individual, not only in the eyes of her family and friends in Keller, Texas, but also in the heart of this nation. I am proud to represent her and her family.

RECOGNIZING CENTENARIAN JOSEPH MENNELLA OF HERNANDO COUNTY, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Joseph Mennella of Hernando County, Florida. Joseph has done something that all of us strive to do, but that very few of us will ever accomplish, celebrate his 100th birthday.

Born September 2, 1906 in the "Little Italy" section of New York City, New York, Joseph lived and worked there for many years before moving to Florida in 1991. Joseph has fond memories of attending school as a child, although he readily admits that not everyone else agrees with him on that issue.

When he was young, Joseph was very ill and taken to the hospital. While recuperating, he was cared for by an Italian immigrant nurse named Mother Cabrini. Mother Cabrini later was canonized as the well-known St. Cabrini of today. In 1918, Joseph and his mother came down with the Spanish influenza, which killed 53 million people throughout the world, including approximately five thousand in New York. Joseph gives credit for his long life to those tough experiences as a child growing up in New York City.

Completing his formal education at the sixth grade level, Joseph went to work as a plaster contractor, and eventually opened a wheels and rims business that he ran for more than fifty years. Given his background, Joseph's advice to young people is to, "get an education." Following his marriage to Josephine in 1929, the happy couple was blessed with two healthy sons and two grandchildren.

In 1991, at the age of eighty-five, Joseph moved to Hernando County and built his own home that he still lives in today. He says he loves Hernando County because of the warm weather and sunshine. His goal now is to live to be 110, and says that "if he doesn't make it, then sue me."

Asked about the proudest moment in his life, Joseph recounts that reaching 100 years old and having the St. Petersburg Times do a front-page story on him was his best experience. Joseph enjoys reading the newspaper, and says that he would not change a thing if he had the chance to do his life over.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Joseph Mennella for reaching his 100th birthday. I hope we all have the good fortune to live as long as him.

IN MEMORY OF REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, Dr. King brought the civil rights movement to every living room in this country. He marched for freedom in the face of unspeakable racial prejudice, yet preached a message of non-violence, civility and tolerance. It took Dr. King's forceful movement and powerful words to bring about real and lasting change to this country.

This will be the first Martin Luther King, Jr. Day since the passing of Dr. King's wife, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, a legendary civil rights advocate who's memory we honored at a community wide march last year in Miami. During a time of national grief and unrest following Dr. King's assassination, she became a symbol of her husband's struggle for peace and unity. On this day, we also honor this wonderful matriarchal figure, a role model who helped lead the struggle for equality.

Minority communities face obstacles every day—poverty, unemployment, lack of healthcare, and access to housing. It is a tragic waste that 1 in 5 children live in poverty, including more than one-third of African American children.

Dr. King paved the way for so many people, including me, to assume roles of influence in this country. And for all this work, he created a more just society and made this country an even better place to live. On this day, let us work even harder toward fulfilling Dr. King's legacy of public service.

IN RECOGNITION OF DOLORES "DEE" BENSON

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of Dee Benson, whose fierce dedication to family, friends, faith and community serves as a model for all who have been blessed by her presence.

Born in Altoona, Pennsylvania to Edward and Maggie Heintel, Dee demonstrated her

strength and determination from an early age. When she was only a year old, Dee wandered on to a scorching floor grate that severely burned her feet; pneumonia set in during her bed rest. With the support of friends, family and many faiths, Dee recovered and went about dedicating her life to the forces that helped her preserve it.

In 1945, fate introduced Dee to Private Bud Benson, and a year and a half courtship culminated in their 1947 marriage. Dee and Bud moved to Cleveland, Ohio to put down roots and start a family, giving birth to Robert, Patrick, Jacqueline, Mary, Elizabeth, Denise and Christine. Dee never wavered from her family, in fact she redoubled her efforts in the most trying times. During Bud's battle with health problems, she never left his side; when her granddaughter needed open-heart surgery, Dee kept vigil by her side.

Dee's generosity of spirit extended to her friends and the larger community as well. Dee has never passed up an opportunity to help a friend or even a complete stranger. All the while, Dee has sustained herself with the abiding commitment to faith that delivered her from her early challenges. When her sons served in Vietnam, prayer supported her; when she herself battled health problems later in life, faith carried her through. She even helped found Saint Anthony of Padua Parish.

Moreover, Dee has committed herself to civic engagement and community empowerment, embodying the ethic that "all politics is local." Dee has served as precinct committee-woman and has held numerous leadership positions in Democratic institutions throughout Northeast Ohio.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring Dee Benson, whose generosity, kindness and vitality have and will continue to inspire all who cross paths with her.

HONORING THE LIFE OF TROOPER CALVIN W. JENKS

HON. LINCOLN DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. LINCOLN DAVIS. Madam Speaker, earlier this week Tennessee lost one of its bright, honorable young men in a senseless tragedy. I rise today to honor the name and spirit of Tennessee Highway Patrol Trooper Calvin W. Jenks. Mr. Jenks of Culleoka, Tennessee was taken from his family, friends, and the countless Tennesseans he swore to protect during a traffic stop in West Tennessee. I don't want to dwell on the tragic event; instead I want to honor the life of a man who loved serving the public.

Trooper Jenks, a native of Lansing, Michigan, moved to the Culleoka Community in Maury County, south of Nashville, in 1989. A 2000 graduate of Culleoka High School, he excelled in baseball as a four year starter for the Culleoka Warriors baseball team.

A member of the Tennessee Highway Patrol for two years, his duties began in the 7th District of the Tennessee Highway Patrol, headquartered in Lawrenceburg. In July 2006 he transferred to the 4th District in Memphis.

Many friends and family members say Jenks, a newlywed, was a man of values and

with the skills to guide him through the ranks of the Tennessee Highway Patrol. As a testament to this young man's character over 1,110 people attended his funeral service.

Through this senseless tragedy, I hope the people of Tennessee will reflect on how much we actually owe the law enforcement officers who risk everything for the sake of protecting us. I will continue praying for their safety and that of their loved ones.

At this difficult time I doubt many words will comfort his wife, mother, father, brothers, sister and extended family during this time of profound loss. They should know that the State of Tennessee is deeply saddened by their loss and will forever appreciate Trooper Jenks's service. As Horatio said in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, "Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."

**MOURNING THE PASSING OF
PRESIDENT GERALD RUDOLPH
FORD**

SPEECH OF

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Madam Speaker, last week, Congress received the body of the late President Gerald Rudolph Ford, our 38th President, to lie in State in the Rotunda. He was the second President for whom I felt such an endearment that it felt as if I'd lost a friend.

I first met President Ford along with President Carter several years ago when I called on both men to support legislation I had introduced to give those who had been incarcerated, paid their debt to society, and had become productive citizens a restoration of their voting rights. In speaking with him, I found him to be very sensitive and understanding of that important issue. He said that it was the decent thing to do and signed a letter (along with President Carter and myself) asking President George W. Bush to submit a proclamation to all States to ensure these citizens' voting rights.

Two years later, I had the opportunity to meet with him and his beloved wife, Betty, at Rancho Mirage along with Governor Schwarzenegger and others to discuss federal legislation for California. We continued our discussion on voting rights, and I became further impressed with his modesty despite the fact that he had served at the highest level in this country.

Gerald R. Ford was a man of character and integrity, with many accomplishments to his credit. He was a Boy Scout, and the only President who has ever attained the rank of Eagle Scout. He was a football star for the University of Michigan where he majored in political science and economics while leading his team to two national titles. He studied at Yale Law School and opened his own law practice in Grand Rapids, Michigan before joining the Navy where he served as an officer during World War II and earned several medals.

In 1948, Gerald R. Ford was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives where he served until 1973. He was the Republican Mi-

nority Leader from 1965–1973. During his years in the House, Ford was, as the *New York Times* described, "a negotiator and a reconciler." On October 12, 1973, Ford was appointed Vice President of the United States after Spiro Agnew resigned. He became President after the resignation of Richard Nixon on August 9, 1974. President Gerald R. Ford is the only person to ever serve as both Vice President and President without being elected to either office.

As President, one of Ford's first actions was to pardon President Nixon, allowing the nation to heal and move on. Although this action was highly criticized at the time and may have cost him the election in 1976, it helped to restore Americans' faith in the office of the President. President Ford successfully addressed high inflation and unemployment while ending American involvement in Vietnam and pursuing international human rights through the Helsinki Accords, helping end the Cold War.

President Ford's legacy extends far beyond his accomplishments, however. More than anything else, President Gerald R. Ford will be remembered for his character, integrity, and humility. Gerald R. Ford was a very decent and humble human being. As Americans, we mourn more than the loss of a former President—we mourn the loss of a truly great American.

**IMPLEMENTING THE 9/11 COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATIONS ACT
OF 2007**

SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1 which will carry out the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.

In 2002, Congress passed and funded a distinguished bipartisan panel to investigate and report on the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on our country. In spite of the urgency and critical nature of the panel's report and recommendations, the Bush administration and the Republican-led Congress failed to implement key recommendations that would improve the defense of our Nation such as enhancing homeland security and developing strategies to prevent the spread of Islamic terrorism and the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists.

Putting into action only a few of the Commission's carefully thought out recommendations did only half the job. And we all know that protecting America is a full-time job requiring full-time vigilance and full-time protection. This is especially true in today's post-9/11 world.

For the past 4 years, I have had the privilege of serving on the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee. As a member of that subcommittee, I heard testimony and attended briefings from officials at the Department of Homeland Security that brought to light the shortcomings of this Department and its failure to meet its mandate to secure our borders and protect our country. The then Chairman of the committee even withheld funding due to the Department's unresponsiveness and apparent lack of urgency about its mission.

Mr. Speaker, protecting our country must be our government's number one priority. If that mission lacks urgency by the very agency created to protect us, we will continue to remain dangerously vulnerable to those who would harm us.

I believe that putting into action all of the Commission's recommendations is urgently needed to help protect our country against a terrorist attack. And under our new Democratic leadership, which will be vigilant in its oversight and in holding the administration accountable, I am confident Democrats will push this agency beyond its bureaucratic lethargy to take the steps necessary to secure our homeland and protect our fellow Americans.

While I endorse the entire package of recommendations in the bill under consideration, I am particularly pleased to note that it includes several of the issues I addressed in hearings before the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee. These issues are critically important to our Nation and the communities I represent in Los Angeles.

First among them is interoperable communications. Our country lost many heroic first responders on that fateful September morning because they were unable to receive the message to evacuate the Twin Towers. Incredibly, 5 years after 9/11, this serious problem of interoperable communications continues to plague our emergency responders. This is particularly true for first responders in districts like mine, where various communities are covered by multiple jurisdictions of police, sheriff, and fire departments.

I am very pleased that included in this bill is the 9/11 Commission's recommendation to create a grant program for interoperable communications with a dedicated stream of funding. This will greatly enhance the ability of our first responders to close this critically serious communications gap.

Another issue of great concern to my constituents is currently being addressed at Los Angeles world airports. It is the installation of in-line detection systems for checked baggage on commercial airliners. The Commission's recommendations in this bill call for accelerating the installation of in-line explosive detection systems at all major airports.

The cargo hold of airplanes, filled with baggage, has often been called the "soft underbelly" of our aviation transportation system. By placing state of the art detection systems in our Nation's airport, we will harden that vulnerable soft spot and protect the flying public. And by consolidating the handling of baggage and screening equipment we will accelerate the movement of goods, passengers, and cargo.

In committee I have also consistently raised my concerns about the security of cargo containers entering ports such as the Ports of Los Angeles-Long Beach. I am very pleased that this bill goes beyond the Commission's recommendations by requiring, within 5 years, 100 percent scanning of U.S.-bound shipping containers.

We are very fortunate there has not been a port-centered attack on our Nation. As we saw during the 2002 labor dispute that closed the Ports of LA-Long Beach and cost the national economy \$1 billion per day, any long term disruption of our national maritime trade would have a devastating effect on our Nation's economy as well as the rest of the world.

While some critics may complain about the cost involved in scanning these cargo containers, we cannot afford to be penny wise and pound foolish when it comes to our security. We must make the necessary investments. The added cost of security in our post 9/11 era is the price we must pay to protect American lives and our Nation. If we do not make this investment, the cost could be much higher not just in dollars but in lives.

And finally, among other critical needs addressed by the 9/11 Commission, is the need to significantly increase the number of state homeland security grants and award them on the basis of risk. While it is true we must make every effort to protect all parts of our country, given our limited funds, we must prioritize our security weaknesses and allocate these scarce funds first to the areas most at risk of an attack.

It was therefore welcomed news that late last week the Department of Homeland Security has announced it will commit more than 55 percent of urban area grant funds to the six urban areas facing the highest threat of terrorist attacks.

Mr. Speaker, as the former Homeland Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman HAL ROGERS often stated, "those who seek to harm us have to get it right only occasionally, while those of us working to protect America have to get it right 100 percent of the time. Fully implementing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission is a critical step toward "getting it right" and moving our Nation forward to our 100 percent goal of protecting our United States of America.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this important legislation.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MIRIAM AYLLON

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, today I rise, along with Congresswoman ZOE LOFGREN, to honor the life and contributions of Mrs. Miriam Ayllon, who recently passed away. Miriam is survived by her son, Huascar Castro, and her loving husband, Marvin Castro. She will be sorely missed by her friends and by the people she helped. Today, I honor her energy, her determination, and her lifelong service to many communities here in the United States and in Bolivia.

Miriam Ayllon was born in La Paz, Bolivia, on June 14, 1959. At the age of 13, she began volunteering at a nursing home across the street from her school reading to elderly patients. Miriam grew up wanting to make a difference in the lives of the poor and the underserved.

Miriam moved to the United States in 1977 to live with relatives. She attended both Foothill and De Anza Colleges in California. Later, she moved to Houston, where she studied economics at the University of Houston. Soon after graduation, she moved to New York where she met her husband, Marvin Castro. In New York, she helped start an English as a Second Language school.

In 1988, Ms. Ayllon and her husband relocated to San Jose, California, where they later

had their son, Huascar. In San Jose, she joined the Mexican American Community Service Agency (MACSA), where she helped senior citizens find affordable housing and worked to build a youth center. Later, she worked at the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (SCVTA). At SCVTA, she helped coordinate transportation for the poor, especially those in East San Jose. She also managed to earn a Masters of Science degree in Transportation Management from San Jose State University.

Ms. Ayllon also served her community through personal volunteerism and community projects. Miriam's community advocacy included empowering others to advocate for themselves. She co-founded the Latina Coalition of Silicon Valley and served on its board, as well as the School Site Council of Noble Elementary School, and the Board of MACSA.

Though the United States was her home, Miriam never forgot her Bolivian roots. In 2001, she founded an orphanage for homeless girls in Cochabamba, Bolivia, called Casa de la Alegria ("House of Joy"). The girls are provided with room, board, health care, clothing, and education until they graduate from high school.

Ms. Ayllon had the vision to address broader issues, yet she remained grounded enough to respond to the needs of those immediately around her. When an SCVTA co-worker's home burned down, Miriam immediately dedicated her time and effort to raising money and collecting necessary supplies for the family that had lost so much.

Miriam always made time for family and friends. Despite her important work in so many different professional and community arenas, her most important role was being a mother to her 15-year-old son. She loved to go dancing with friends and set up family dinners on Sundays.

Miriam was a gentle and loving soul, committed to justice for all. Her involvement in so many projects, which focused on access for the underserved, was a reflection of that commitment. Miriam's compassion was equaled only by her strength. She left a lasting impression on anyone she came across and was a strong champion of women's leadership development.

Miriam Ayllon died at the young age of 47 in a tragic accident while vacationing in Bolivia. When she passed away, the San Francisco Bay area lost one of its most dynamic leaders. Miriam was an advocate for women and the underserved from San Jose to South America. She will truly be missed by all those who had the opportunity to benefit from her generous service and those of us who were inspired by her commitment to community.

STEM CELL RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to enter into the RECORD my support for the H.R. 3, Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2007. This bill will enable continuing scientific research on embryonic stem cells that will pro-

vide enhanced treatments and potential cures for the millions of Americans afflicted with chronic and debilitating diseases.

The benefits that stem cell research promises can dramatically enhance the quality of life for people suffering from spinal cord injuries, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, stroke, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, among many others. It will allow these Americans and their families the opportunity to enjoy healthier and more fulfilling lives.

Stem cell research has the support of over 100 million people suffering from these diseases, medical professionals, and the American people. With over 200 health organizations, research universities, advocacy groups and scientific societies supporting stem cell research, it is the responsibility of the United States government to listen and actively ensure progress in the field of medicine in saving people's lives.

In the Republican controlled 109th Congress, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2005 was passed in the House, later to be vetoed by President Bush. This administration cannot continue to impede the efforts of sound scientific research based on ideological beliefs. In an age of tremendous technological and scientific advances, we must allow the medical community to engage in research that will benefit all Americans.

This legislation provides strict ethical guidelines for the usage of embryonic stem cells to further medical research. The stem cells will be donated from in vitro fertilization clinics that have an excess of stem cells from individuals no longer needing fertility treatment. Individuals that sought fertility treatment were consulted before the donation of stem cells, and it was determined that these stem cells would never be used in future treatment and would thus be discarded. In addition, individuals donating stem cells did so with written informed consent and were not paid any monetary compensation or given any other incentives to do so.

These individuals have offered their support in enhancing further research through their donations, and we ought to follow by ensuring that their contribution to stem cell research help those who suffer.

The medical and science community see the potential of this research to treat people with damage to the spinal cord, heart, brain and skeletal muscles. Those who suffer from genetic diseases, those whose life depends on organ transplants, and those who are ravaged by the affects of degenerative diseases will benefit from the research performed on embryonic stem cells.

It is our responsibility to support legislation that will provide the resources to improve the lives of Americans who suffer everyday. I commend my colleagues for readdressing this issue, and urge you to support this bill.

INTRODUCTION OF THE COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF ACT OF 2007

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the College Student Relief Act of 2007, a bill that will deliver much needed relief for students and families.

The College Student Relief Act of 2007 cuts interest rates in half phased in over 5 years starting July 1, 2007.

This proposal will provide debt relief for over five million students and families by cutting interest rates in half for undergraduate borrowers of subsidized loans.

In keeping with our promise to be fiscally responsible, this bill provides offsets in full compliance with our newly passed PAYGO rules.

Madam speaker, as you know college affordability is one of the most important issues facing students and families. With the significant increases in tuition over the last five years our nation's students and families will finally get some much needed help with their student loans.

Millions of college students and parents of college students are struggling to come up with the financial resources to pay for college.

And many would-be students—as many as 200,000 per year—are choosing to delay or forgo attending college altogether because they can't afford it.

This debt problem affects all of us. Public service professions like teaching are suffering, because graduates cannot manage their college debt on public service salaries. Nearly a quarter of recent college graduates have too much debt to manage on a starting teacher's salary.

This poses a serious threat not just to students and families, but to our Nation's economy and to the future of our workforce.

Today, we are finally taking our Nation's students and families in a New Direction by making college affordability a top priority.

Once fully phased in, these cuts will save the typical borrower with \$13,800 in needbased federal loan debt roughly \$4,400 over the life of their loan.

In my home State of California, this bill will save the typical borrower \$4,830 over the life of their loan.

This will be an important first step towards making college more affordable and accessible for millions of low-income and middle class students.

As Chairman of the Education and Labor Committee, one of our top priorities will be to continue to lower college costs for all qualified students.

I look forward to seeing this bill pass through the House with overwhelming support and bringing help to our students and families.

WISE WORDS ON THE ECONOMY
FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE
NEW YORK FED

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, Tim Geithner, President of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, combined economic and political wisdom in a recent speech to the Council on Foreign Relations in which, according to the report of the speech in the Financial Times, he told that influential audience “that the ‘political challenge’ of sustaining support for integrating global economic integration ‘may be the most important economic challenge of our time.’”

Mr. Geithner came to his current position with significant experience in the Treasury De-

partment during the Clinton Administration, which makes him very well-positioned to understand how economic and political forces interact, and even more important, how they should interact if we are to achieve what is our national goal economically—significant growth that is widely shared.

I very much appreciate Mr. Geithner's thoughtful words, and I hope that people concerned about economic growth will accept the validity of his point so that we can all act together accordingly.

[From the Financial Times]

WAGES GAP ‘UNDERMINES SUPPORT FOR FREE TRADE’

(By Krishna Guha in Washington)

The widening gap between the rich and middle-class Americans is undermining political support for free trade in the US, the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, warned yesterday.

Tim Geithner told the Council on Foreign Relations that the “political challenge” of sustaining support for further global economic integration “may be the most important economic challenge of our time.”

The New York Fed chief also warned that the inflow of surplus savings from abroad could be distorting US asset prices and keeping risk premiums artificially low across financial markets.

His comments were made amid growing concern in US political and business circles over the risk of a populist backlash against free trade caused by rising inequality and a protracted period of stagnation in median wages—the wages earned by the average US worker.

While recent data show real wage growth has at last picked up, many economists fear this could be short-lived.

Mr. Geithner said maintaining support for open markets would be made more difficult “because of what has happened to the distribution of income and economic insecurity”.

He cited as big political problems the “long-term increase in income inequality”, the “slow pace of growth in real wages for the middle quintiles of the population”, increased volatility in income and the greater exposure of families to risks involved in financing retirement and healthcare.

Echoing views expressed by Larry Summers, his former boss as Treasury secretary in the Clinton administration, Mr. Geithner said it was “not enough to explain that globalisation is inevitable” and protectionist policies were self-defeating.

Better education and an improved safety net were a “necessary part of the solution to this challenge”. But, he warned, “these reforms will have a long fuse and they may not yield the hoped-for increase in support”.

Mr. Geithner cautioned that the low level of risk premiums across asset markets was “unusual” and might not prove lasting.

He said there were many sound reasons why risk premiums might be low, including better monetary policy, strong underlying productivity growth and better risk-sharing across more globally integrated financial markets.

But he warned that the inflow of surplus savings from abroad—including “very substantial official accumulation of dollar reserves” by countries seeking to maintain fixed exchange rates—could be distorting asset prices, sending the wrong signals to savers and investors.

Mr. Geithner said these forces were “surely transitory” but could “mask or dampen the effect on risk premiums in financial markets that we might otherwise expect”, given the huge US trade deficit and its long-term fiscal challenges.

IN HONOR OF SCOTT HASKINS

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise to commend Scott Haskins on successfully swimming the English Channel. It is considered one of the most challenging swims in the world. This has been accomplished by fewer than 850 swimmers. Scott, a California native, became the first in the Haskins family to swim the English Channel.

Scott Haskins was born on July 3, 1964. His father Sam Haskins, my first cousin, and mother Judy Chapman Haskins live in the San Francisco Bay area. Scott has a sister Eliza and brother John, and is married to wife Elizabeth “Timmie” Friend.

Scott learned to swim at the age of 4 in a swimming pool and began swimming in the ocean at the age of 5. Scott swam butterfly and freestyle events competitively from age 11 to 20. He first began swimming open water events in 1990—mostly one and two mile swims in the San Francisco Bay Area. Scott swam his first long distance open water swim in 1994.

In 1995, Scott achieved the level of All American Long Distance Swimmer with the U.S. Masters Swimming in 1995 and 1996. On August 3, 1996, Scott swam around the island of Manhattan, a distance of 28.5 miles.

In 2006, Scott trained for 6 months at the Dolphin Club in San Francisco, California. His training included daily swimming as well as a 6-hour swim, an 8-hour swim, and a 10-hour swim in preparation to swim the English Channel.

On August 16th, with brother John on board the boat *Galivant*, Scott began to swim across the English Channel toward France. Scott finished with an official time of 10 hours and 25 minutes. Scott's time is in the top 18 percent of the fastest Channel swims.

To celebrate his great accomplishment, Scott with his family at his side, went to a tavern in Dover, England that is frequented by swimmers and a place where many have “signed in” on the walls and ceiling after completing their Channel swims. Scott also “signed in” on the ceiling next to the other Channel swimmers from San Francisco's Dolphin Club.

Madam Speaker, I take this opportunity to congratulate Scott Haskins on successfully swimming the English Channel and to recognize him for this outstanding achievement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. WAYNE T. GILCREST

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. GILCREST. Madam Speaker, please let the record show that had I been present for rollcall vote No. 20, I would have voted “aye.”

INTRODUCTION OF "SEARCH ACT OF 2007"

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce the "Servitude and Emancipation Archival Research Clearing House, SEARCH, Act of 2007," a companion to Senator MARY LANDRIEU's bill of the same name, which would establish a national database of historic records of servitude and emancipation in the United States to assist African Americans in researching their genealogy.

Madam Speaker, for most Americans, researching their genealogical history involves searching through municipal birth, death, and marriage records—most of which have been properly archived as public historical documents. However, African Americans in the United States face a unique challenge when conducting genealogical research.

Due to slavery and discrimination, African Americans were denied many of the benefits of citizenship that produce traceable documentation such as voter registration, property ownership, business ownership, and school attendance. As a result, instead of looking up wills, land deeds, birth and death certificates, and other traditional genealogical research documents, African Americans must often try to identify the names of former slave owners, hoping that the owners kept records of pertinent information, such as births and deaths. Unfortunately, current records of emancipation and slavery are frequently inaccessible, poorly catalogued, and inadequately preserved from decay.

Although some States and localities have undertaken efforts to collect these documents with varying degrees of success, there is no national effort to preserve these important pieces of public and personal history or to make them readily and easily accessible to all Americans. While entities such as Howard University and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture Library have extensive African American archives, the SEARCH Act would create a centralized database of these historic records. This database would be administered by the Archivist of the United States as part of the National Archives.

The SEARCH Act would also authorize \$5 million for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to establish the national database, as well as \$5 million in grants for States and academic institutions to preserve local records of servitude and emancipation.

I believe that this legislation will be a vital step in resurrecting the rich history of African Americans and the vital role that they played in building America. This legislation is not only a means by which African Americans can trace their lineage, but also a means by which our Nation can preserve historically comprehensive and accurate information for generations yet unborn.

Author Maya Angelou once said that "No man can know where he is going unless he knows exactly where he has been and exactly how he arrived at his present place." Let there be no mistake, Madam Speaker, the SEARCH Act will provide African Americans an opportunity to forge a crucial nexus between the

past and the present. Just as important, it will give our Nation an opportunity to continue to correct the unintended consequences of the past.

This Monday marks the anniversary of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, and the day that we as a nation celebrate his legacy. In honor of Dr. King and the contributions he has made, and on behalf of the many African Americans throughout the United States, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the SEARCH Act.

Join me in ending the horrible legacies of slavery and discrimination by giving African Americans a real chance to understand who they are and from whence they came.

IN MEMORY OF JUDGE JOHN HAROLD WHITTINGTON

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Judge John Harold Whittington of Dallas County, who passed away over the holidays in Irving, Texas due to natural causes.

Mr. John Whittington lived a respectable, accomplished life, and continues to be a political inspiration to many Republican officeholders. When he was elected County Judge in November 1975, he was one of the first Republicans elected to countywide office in Dallas County since Reconstruction. As a Judge, Mr. Whittington was not only dedicated to following the law, but also ensured fairness in that each person's position was heard; those who worked for Judge Whittington had the utmost respect for him. He also had a dry sense of humor that seemed to reduce any tension in the courtroom. Mr. John Whittington was an inspiration as well as a political mentor for many young Republican officeholders.

Born in Bloomington, Indiana, Mr. John Whittington moved with his family to Dallas, Texas as a young child. Growing up, he served as an altar boy at Christ the King Catholic Church and was active in sports at North Dallas High School. He received his Bachelor's degree from Southern Methodist University and his law degree from the University of Texas at Austin. He later enlisted in the Navy, where he served as a gunnery officer and was a boxing champion. Mr. Whittington then served in the Navy Reserve, retiring as a captain. After moving back to Dallas, he was continuously active in the community by working for the Veterans Administration's legal department, the City Council, as mayor (pro tem), and for the Dallas County Commissioners Court, after which he served as County Judge. Having a full career, Judge Whittington leaves an exceptional legacy.

John Harold Whittington is survived by his wife, Margaret Whittington, son, Mark Whittington, three daughters, Lynne Whittington, Jeanne Ann Whittington, and Maria Malcolm, and four grandchildren, Stephen Whittington, Patrick Whittington, Liza Jane Malcolm, and Evan Malcolm. In addition to his role as a devoted and respected Judge, he will forever be remembered as a loving husband and father, loyal colleague and friend, and a dignified citizen of this country. I

extend my sincerest sympathies to his family and friends. Mr. John Whittington will be deeply missed and his service to our community will always be greatly appreciated.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I regret that I was unavoidably absent yesterday afternoon, January 11, on very urgent business, having joined President Bush in his visit to Ft. Benning, which, as you know is located in my district. Had I been present for the three votes which occurred yesterday afternoon, I would have voted "aye" on H. Res. 15, rollcall vote No. 21; I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 3, rollcall vote No. 20; I would have voted "no" on H.R. 3, rollcall vote No. 19.

IRAQ AND EMBASSY

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today regarding the President's folly in Iraq.

Folly is not the right word. Better words would be disaster, catastrophe, tragedy. The folly is the new embassy the United States is building in Baghdad.

The embassy complex—21 buildings on 104 acres, is the size of Vatican City and will be the largest in the world. It will employ over 5500 people.

Currently, there are 1,000 people who work in the U.S. Embassy in Iraq.

However, only 33 are Arabic speakers and Only six speak the language fluently.

The Iraq Study Group said that "our efforts in Iraq, military and civilian, are handicapped by Americans' lack of knowledge of language and cultural understanding."

"In a conflict that demands effective and efficient communication with Iraqis, we are often at a disadvantage."

The U.S. government should give "the highest possible priority to professional language proficiency and cultural training" for officials headed to Iraq.

Who do we send?

Over twenty thousand new military personnel.

The embassy's 104 acres is six times larger than the United Nations compound in New York and two-thirds the acreage of Washington's National Mall.

The embassy will cost over 1 billion, One billion, dollars.

It will be self-sufficient, designed to function in the midst of Baghdad power outages, water shortages and continuing turmoil.

It will have its own water wells, electricity plant and wastewater treatment facility, "systems to allow 100 percent independence from city utilities."

It includes two major diplomatic office buildings, homes for the ambassador and his deputy, and six apartment buildings for staff.

The compound will also offer a swimming pool, gym, commissary, food court and American Club, all housed in a recreation building.

Security, overseen by U.S. Marines, will be extraordinary: setbacks and perimeter no-go areas that will be especially deep, structures reinforced to 2.5-times the standard, and five high-security entrances, plus an emergency entrance-exit.

The extraordinary security designed into this embassy shows how insecure our personnel are considered to be by the government.

The President's Iraq policy has made us less safe and must be changed.

Get our troops out now.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF MR. BENJAMIN MORGAN RADCLIFF, SR.

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, Mobile County and, indeed, the entire state of Alabama, recently lost a dear friend, and I rise today to honor him and pay tribute to his memory.

Mr. Benjamin Morgan Radcliff, Sr. was an outstanding American, a devoted family man, and a dedicated community leader throughout his life.

He was a veteran of the United States Army and spent much of his own life making sure generations to follow would be safe. He represented loyalty and dedication in his everyday life, and I salute him, at this difficult time for his family and friends, for his upstanding morals and his outstanding character.

Mr. Radcliff was a native and lifelong resident of Mobile. He spent his entire life working to make Mobile and south Alabama a better place to live and work.

As founder and chairman of the board of Ben M. Radcliff Contractor Inc., a multi-million dollar company he built from the ground up, Mr. Radcliff literally helped to build Mobile from a small, sleepy southern city to a major port of commerce in the heart of the central Gulf Coast. His outgoing nature coupled with his hard work, strong work ethic, and determination are just some of the reasons why he accomplished so much during his life.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in remembering a dedicated community leader and friend to many throughout south Alabama.

"Mr. Ben," as he was affectionately known around town, loved life and lived it to the fullest. It is safe to say that when spring turkey season rolls around this year, there will be a giant void in the piney woods and gently rolling hills of south Alabama. Suffice it to say, his passing marks a tremendous loss for all of us.

"Mr. Ben," will be deeply missed by many but most especially his beloved wife, Jean Faulk Radcliff; his three daughters, Carolyn Akers, Elizabeth Latham, and Julia Menge; his son, Benjamin Morgan Radcliff, Jr.; 12 grandchildren; and the countless friends that he leaves behind.

Our thoughts and prayers are with them all during this difficult time.

TRIBUTE TO SHERIFF CRAIG WEBRE

HON. BOBBY JINDAL

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. JINDAL. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce a resolution honoring and recognizing the achievements of Sheriff Craig Webre of Lafourche Parish, Louisiana.

Elected as Sheriff of Lafourche Parish on July 1, 1992, Sheriff Webre ushered in a new era of accountable, responsible and professional law enforcement in Lafourche Parish. In the past 15 years, Sheriff Webre enhanced first responder morale, equipment, and communication capability, and initiated or improved over 40 public service programs including Crimestoppers, Crisis Management Unit Team, and Police Social Services, a one-of-a-kind comprehensive victim assistance program that serves approximately 1,400 crime victims per year.

Under Sheriff Webre's leadership, the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office became the second Sheriff's office in Louisiana history to become nationally accredited, placing the Sheriff's office in the top four percent of all the law enforcement agencies in the United States.

Sheriff Webre played an instrumental role in coordinating distribution of personnel, material and supplies to storm damaged parishes during and after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and worked to provide access for outside agencies to come to the aid of neighboring parishes in Louisiana.

Widely respected by his peers, Sheriff Craig Webre was elected as First Vice President of the National Sheriffs Association in 2006, and is in line to become National President in 2007.

I call on my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in honoring and recognizing the achievements made by Craig Webre, who exemplifies the willingness, dedication, and sacrifice to ensure the security and safety of the citizens of Lafourche Parish.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, because of a family medical emergency, I missed 2 recorded votes on January 9. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner.

H. Res. 35—"no"; H.R. 1—"no."

HONORING JOHN HINDMAN

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay public tribute to John Hindman, a public servant, businessman and citizen from my congressional district. John is

retiring this month as vice president of Public Affairs and Communications for UPS Airlines, ending a 32-year career with the company.

A native of Ottumwa, Iowa, John earned his bachelor's degree in education from Iowa State University. John first joined UPS in 1974, advancing through various positions in package operations. Over the next 20 years, he managed the Des Moines facility and spent tenures in the West Region's Marketing, Industrial Engineering, Human Resources, Employee Relations and Public Affairs departments.

Before serving in his current position, John spent six years as Air Group Public Affairs manager, monitoring government activity and promoting legislative objectives in Frankfort and Washington, D.C. Since being named vice president of Public Affairs and Communications, John has demonstrably strengthened the reputation of UPS among the public and employees.

Through his work, John has secured millions of dollars in incentives to support UPS projects and corporate social responsibility. I would especially note his stewardship of Metro College, a program that provides kids an opportunity to go to college while working for UPS.

John has distinguished himself as a community leader, serving on the board of directors for the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, the Louisville Medical Center Development Corp., and the Boy Scouts of America. He formerly served on boards for the YMCA, Kentucky Forward, Associated Industries of Kentucky and the Louisville Zoo Foundation.

John's vast business knowledge and strong work ethic has earned the attention of several Kentucky Governors including Governor Ernie Fletcher who appointed John to the Louisville Arena Task Force in 2006 and Governor Paul Patton who appointed him to the Southern Governors Association's Transportation Task Force in 1999. John was awarded the 2006 Governor's Economic Development Leadership Award.

It is my great privilege to recognize John Hindman today before the entire U.S. House of Representatives for his leadership and service. His unique achievements make him an outstanding American worthy of our collective honor and appreciation.

STEM CELL RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I find it no coincidence that as we were preparing to deliberate federal funding for human embryonic stem cell research, a study was released that announced a breakthrough in the form of amniotic-fluid stem cell research. These stem cells do not present any ethical controversy and have already shown more promise than embryonic stem cells.

Federal funding already goes to research and development for embryonic stem cells. The NIH currently spends \$40 million for such studies. It spends \$600 million on stem cell research in general. In fact, nearly \$3 billion has

been spent on all stem cell research over the past six years.

Much of this research, like the amniotic fluid stem cell research, is without the ethical dilemma, and has simply proven to be more effective.

Researchers have expended years of time and energy trying to develop a single treatment or cure for any disease from embryonic stem cells to no avail; and actually finding adverse consequences like tumors at the implantation site. But adult stem cells have already provided us with treatment options for 72 diseases. Adult stem cells have shown a real return on the American people's investment.

We have seen results from adult stem cells and should continue to support and subsidize progress in this field. And, as I mentioned a moment ago, there is a new option in the form of amniotic stem cells which has already shown great promise and even more success than embryonic stem cells.

The face of this debate has already changed in the short time since it came before us last summer; and while this latest discovery provides hope, it should also act as a warning. A warning that we cannot make rash decisions which cost not only federal dollars, but also human lives.

IN RECOGNITION OF RENA BITTER,
RECIPIENT OF THE 2006 THOMAS
JEFFERSON AWARD

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Rena Bitter, a Dallas native and a Foreign Service officer currently serving as Consular Chief at the U.S. Embassy in Amman, Jordan, for winning the 2006 Thomas Jefferson Award presented by American Citizens Abroad (ACA).

This honor is extended to State Department employees who have displayed exemplary service to the American community overseas. ACA founded this award to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Jefferson, America's first Secretary of State and third President. They described Jefferson as "the quintessential Overseas American" who lived outside the new republic for many years while helping to secure its independence and promote its political, economic and national security interests. In a similar manner, Rena serves our country today as Jefferson once served.

Rena entered the Foreign Service in 1994 having previously served in Mexico City, Mexico; Bogota, Colombia; and London, England. After spending a year with the British Foreign Office, Rena served as Chief of the Non-immigrant Visa Unit at the American Embassy in London. During an assignment in Washington, DC, Rena served as a Special Assistant to former Secretary of State Colin Powell. Rena received additional leadership awards while serving both at the American Embassy in London and the office of the Secretary of State.

Currently in Amman, Rena has a wide range of responsibilities. She not only assists American citizens living and working in Jordan, but supports David Abell (co-winner of

this award) and his co-workers at the U.S. Embassy in Iraq. Rena's dedicated efforts provide for the needs of our fellow citizens in very difficult times. As a testimony of her dedication to Americans overseas, one of her supervisors once wrote that "If my grandkids were to find themselves in trouble, I would hope it would be Rena, or someone like her, who would be available" to help them.

I wish Rena Bitter all the best, and I thank her for her dedicated service to the American citizens overseas.

HONORING ATHALIE RANGE

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, on Monday, January 15th, Americans in my Congressional district of South Florida and across the nation will gather to celebrate the birth, the life, and most importantly, the dream of civil rights pioneer Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. While Dr. King's dream has yet to be fully realized, he reminds us that "Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable . . . Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals."

In reflecting upon the words of Martin Luther King Jr., I am reminded of the many members of the South Florida African-American community who led the struggle for equal rights, most notably the late Athalie Range—a civil rights advocate and dedicated civil servant.

As the president of the Liberty City Elementary PTA in 1953, Athalie Range launched an unprecedented fight against the dismal conditions and lack of resources available to students attending local segregated schools. Steadfast in her conviction, Athalie went before the all-white school board, demanded immediate improvements—and got them.

In 1966, Athalie became the first African-American to serve in the Miami Commission, where she fought to improve her community's local infrastructure, reduce crime and poverty, and expand local government services for minorities. In the 1970's Athalie continued to break ethnic barriers when she served as the head of the Florida Department of Community Affairs, and then appointed by President Jimmy Carter to serve on the National Railroad Passenger Corp.

Athalie also guided the careers of many prominent members of the South Florida African-American community including former Congresswoman Carrie Meek, with whom I had the pleasuring of serving with in the House of Representatives.

Athalie's passing this November was a tremendous loss to our community, a community she loved so much.

During her decades-long career, Athalie brought about tremendous and positive change, while opening doors for our community, and leading an example for others throughout the Nation.

As Americans and citizens of humanity, we owe a debt of gratitude for leaders such as Athalie Range and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for their invaluable contributions to democracy, equality, and freedom.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "STUDY
OF WAYS TO IMPROVE THE AC-
CURACY OF THE COLLECTION OF
FEDERAL OIL, CONDENSATE,
AND NATURAL GAS ROYALTIES
ACT OF 2007"

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, today I am re-introducing the "Study of Ways To Improve the Accuracy of the Collection of Federal Oil, Condensate, and Natural Gas Royalties Act," which was H.R. 6368 in the 109th Congress." I am pleased to be joined by Representatives HINCHEY (D-NY) and GRIJALVA (D-AZ) in introducing this legislation. On May 7, 2006, the Washington Post reported allegations that American taxpayers are being shortchanged by oil and gas companies in the royalties that they are paying to the Federal Government ("Firms Harvesting Energy from Public Lands May Owe U.S."). Jack Grynberg, a plaintiff in a false claims action against seventy-three energy and pipeline companies, was featured in the article. Based on his expertise, the legislation I am introducing asks the National Academy of Engineering to conduct a study regarding improving the accuracy of collection of royalties on production of oil, condensate, and natural gas under leases of both onshore and offshore Federal lands and onshore Indian lands.

These valuable resources are owned by the American people, who should be fairly and accurately compensated. I believe that this study would prove invaluable in accomplishing this important goal and will tell us if there is a problem, including the extent of the problem, with the collection of royalties from Federal lands and Indian lands.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT WOODY

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, it has come to my attention that a long and distinguished career has come to an end. Robert Woody retired as Fire Chief of Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, on January 3, 2007, after 32 years of service.

Robert Woody earned a Bachelor of Science degree in business from Southwest Missouri State University and a Bachelor of Science degree in Fire Science from Drury College. Mr. Woody began his career as a firefighter in 1975 and after 4 years of service was promoted to driver. On February 20, 1983, he was promoted to crew chief where he served as a positive role model to many young firefighters. In 1999, after serving 8 years as assistant fire chief, he was promoted to fire chief where his leadership is to be commended. Under Mr. Woody, the Fort Leonard Wood Fire Department received the "Fire Department of the Year: Northwest Region".

Mr. Woody was a member of the Missouri Association of Fire Chiefs, Firefighter's Association of Missouri, Professional Fire and Fraud Investigation Association, and the Pulaski County Fire Chief's Association. He was

honored with a Superior Performance Award in 1980, a Commander Award for Civilian Service in 1988 and 1999, a Special Act of Service Award in 1991, the Superior Civilian Service Award in 1992, and a Meritorious Civilian Service Award in 1996.

Madam Speaker, Robert Woody is a valuable member of his community and his leadership will be greatly missed. Mr. Woody plans to travel with his companion, continuing farming, teaching Fire Science and Safety with Missouri's Division of Fire Safety, and spending time with his two sons, Andy and Adam. As he begins the next phase of his life, I know the Members of the House will join me in thanking Robert Woody for his service to the Fort Leonard Wood Fire Department and wish him well as he begins his retirement.

STEM CELL RESEARCH
ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Ms. DeLAURO. Madam Speaker, no single action this Congress could take would have a more profound, more life-affirming impact than allocating federal funds for biomedical scientists to conduct research with human embryonic stem cells. Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, brain and spinal cord disorders, diabetes, cancer—at least 58 diseases could potentially be cured through stem cell research. Diseases that touch every family here in America and throughout the world.

And Mr. Speaker, I stand here as someone who understands the promise of biomedical research all too well. Having been diagnosed with ovarian cancer by chance on an unrelated doctor's visit two decades ago, I know first-hand how this research can change lives—it saved mine. It can quite literally mean the difference between life and death. Between hope and despair.

To be clear, I think it is safe to say that every Member of this body is excited about the recent news regarding the scientific potential in amniotic stem cells. One can only imagine the medical breakthroughs this research has in store for us.

But scientists tell us it is no replacement for embryonic research—just as the limited number of stem cell lines President Bush made available in 2001 were not a replacement for full federal funding of this research. Indeed, this finding simply reminds us how critical it is that we pursue any and every kind of research that can contribute to our understanding of these diseases—so long as we can ensure it is performed with the utmost dignity and ethical responsibility. That is what “expanding stem cell research” is all about.

And for sure, this legislation does just that—permitting peer-reviewed federal funds to only be used with public oversight and by only allowing research on embryos that were originally created for fertility treatment purposes and that are in excess of clinical need and will otherwise be destroyed.

I believe the real moral issue here is whether the United States Congress is going to stand in the way of science and preclude the scientists from doing lifesaving, ethical re-

search. We do not live in the Dark Ages—and nor should our public policy. With this vote, this Congress has an opportunity to show the world we are a country that believes science has the power to advance life.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we are such a country. The world has always looked to America as a beacon of hope precisely because of our capacity to use our abundant resources to promote the best ideas in the world. Let's continue that tradition. Let's lead the way—let's support this bill.

HONORING TONY GWYNN'S ELEC-
TION TO BASEBALL HALL OF
FAME

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Ms. CARSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize my good friend Tony Gwynn and congratulate him on his election to the Baseball Hall of Fame. This high honor caps a career of great accomplishment, respect for the game, the fans and his team the San Diego Padres.

Tony is an all around athlete having been drafted by both the Padres and Clippers before focusing on his baseball career. He is a member of the exclusive 3,000 hit club, a five-time gold glove winner at right field and an eight-time National League Batting Champion. These numbers are amazing enough but adding to that the Roberto Clemente award for dedication to community and 15 trips to the All-Star Game at the request of baseball fans worldwide shows the love and respect fans of baseball showed to him as well.

Congratulations on your election today to the Baseball Hall of Fame. I am proud of you Tony, you deserve it and the best of luck in retirement.

TRIBUTE TO ARMY PFC PAUL
BALINT, JR.

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the courage of a young hero from my district. On December 15, 2006, Army Private First Class Paul Balint, Jr. (B Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division) died in Al Ramadi, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Private Balint had served in the Army for over a year and in Iraq for three months, before sustaining fatal injuries during an attack on his battalion.

Balint was known as a loyal friend and soldier. His parents remember him as a compassionate man and a mediator, always thinking about others and wanting to make sure everyone was having a good time. He also had a love for hip-hop music and was going to add music to the home videos he filmed while in Iraq.

His parents had no doubts about what their son wanted to do with his life. He was going to be a soldier. Balint used to recite the “The Soldiers Creed” at the kitchen table while his

mother cooked. When his father asked him what he wanted to do, he said he “wanted to be in the infantry.” When his father then asked him about the issue of Iraq, Balint responded that he wanted to go “fight that stuff.”

Balint enlisted in the armed forces in Willow Park, Texas, with his brother, mother and father at his side.

After completing basic training, Balint had the Soldiers Creed branded into memory, and into his heart.

Madam Speaker, in honor of Private Balint, I would like to read aloud the Soldiers Creed.

THE SOLDIERS CREED

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team.

I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills.

I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.

Private Balint is gone, but he will never be forgotten. God Speed to his family and to the United States of America.

STEM CELL RESEARCH
ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, the issue of embryonic stem cell research places humanity on the frontier of medical science and at the outer edge of moral theology.

On the side of science there is much hope, even expectation that extraordinarily effective therapies will be developed to treat—and possibly cure—a wide range of maladies such as diabetes, Parkinson's, spinal cord injury and a host of others. Progress has been achieved in the laboratory in animal studies and in human application. Much has yet to be learned, however, about adverse outcomes, which is why scientists proceed cautiously without over promising and with respect for the moral considerations of their research.

The latter gives me the greatest pause. An editorial in America Magazine said it well: “The debate over embryonic stem cell research cannot be fully resolved because it is ignited by irreconcilable views of what reverence for life requires.”

Let us recall Louise Brown, the first test tube baby. Her life began in vitro, as a fertilized egg. There are many potential Louise Browns, potential human beings conceived in the laboratory but leftover as cryogenic embryos. Are they to be discarded, or, can they ethically be used for stem cell research? That is the moral theology issue that we must resolve.

The reality is that human life is established in creating an embryo, whether in vitro or in

uterus. Each of us has to decide the morality of this core element of the embryonic stem cell research issue. It is extraordinary research on the farthest frontier of science, experimenting with the very origins of human life. It is research which raises profound questions, anchored in moral theology, about the intrinsic nature of human life—when it begins, when it is infused with an immortal soul, and when it ends.

The answers to those questions are not crystal clear; they are not subject merely to scientific formulation; the answers may simply lie in conscience between each of us and our God.

For myself, I resolve the uncertainties of this moral dilemma in favor of the most vulnerable: unborn human life, which compels me to vote no on the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act (H.R. 3).

STEM CELL RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, while I support promoting ethical stem cell research to advance the progress of medicine and cure diseases, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3, the "Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act."

In 2004, my State of California approved a \$3 billion bond measure to fund embryonic stem cell research. The referendum was sold to voters as an investment in cures for debilitating diseases, like spinal cord injuries and Alzheimer's. Yet a December 3, 2006, article in the Los Angeles Times, entitled "Reality Check for Stem Cell Optimism," notes that these promises were vastly overstated. In fact, the research institution's draft plan now says it is "unlikely" that any stem cell therapies will be developed for clinical use during the project's 10-year lifespan.

As my good friend the gentleman from Florida, Dr. WELDON, has explained, the latest science demonstrates the enormous potential of non-embryonic stem cells. I urge my colleagues to vote against a bill that authorizes further spending of taxpayer dollars on speculative research about which many Americans have deep moral concerns.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Dec. 3, 2006]

REALITY CHECK FOR STEM CELL OPTIMISM
(By Mary Engel)

The meeting was almost over when Roman Reed steered his wheelchair to the microphone.

On the table before him sat a 149-page book of budget charts and timetables, the first concrete outline of what California's voter-approved stem cell institute plans to accomplish in its 10-year lifespan.

"I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart," Reed said to the institute's staff and 29-member oversight board in October. "I promised my son that one day I would be able to walk, stand next to him and go hold my wife's hand. And seeing this road map to cures, I know that this will come true."

The room at Los Angeles' Luxe Hotel thundered with applause for the Fremont resident, who broke his neck while playing college football in 1994.

Despite the enthusiasm of Reed and his audience, the book offered no promise of a cure for his paralysis.

Two years after California voters authorized \$3 billion in bonds to fund stem cell re-

search, the institute created to oversee the enterprise has just begun what experts see as a long and slow scientific journey. Even with the \$150-million state loan approved recently to kick-start work stalled by legal challenges, there are no breakthroughs in sight. Gone are the allusions to healing such afflictions as spinal cord injuries and Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases that dominated the 2004 campaign for Proposition 71. In fact, scientists say, there is no guarantee of cures—certainly not any time soon—from the measure that was optimistically titled the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act.

Set for final approval at UC Irvine this week, the draft plan is clear: "It is unlikely that [the California Institute of Regenerative Medicine] will be able to fully develop stem cell therapy for routine clinical use during the 10 years of the plan."

Instead, the top goal is to establish, in principle, that a therapy developed from human embryonic stem cells can "restore function for at least one disease."

That would be only the first step toward persuading pharmaceutical or biotech companies to fund expanded clinical trials, a process that takes years and millions of dollars. Fewer than 20% of potential therapies that enter trials make it to market.

In addition, the institute hopes to have treatments for two to four more diseases in development within the decade.

"We picked a goal that we thought was realistic, that, with some luck, would be achieved," institute President Zach Hall said. "The field will go on beyond 10 years. We want to have a whole pipeline of things that are in movement."

Jesse Reynolds of the Oakland-based Center for Genetics and Society, a watchdog group that supports stem cell research but advocates better public accountability, called the goals "refreshingly honest."

"The Prop. 71 campaign went beyond the line of responsible political rhetoric," he said. "If there are therapies, they're decades out."

One TV ad, for instance, showed an unidentified young mother beside a child strapped in a wheelchair and breathing through a tube.

"I will vote 'yes' on Prop. 71, definitely," the woman said. "I believe that it's something that can cure spinal cord injuries."

State Senate Health Committee Chairwoman Deborah Ortiz (D-Sacramento), another research backer, was philosophical about the campaign's optimism.

"A campaign requires a message to be driven home," she said. "You can't raise those hopes and then say, 'Oh by the way, it may take us 10 or 15 years.' That's just the nature of campaigns."

California's attempt to cure diseases by referendum is unique. But touting dramatic cures in exchange for research dollars has become "the American way" of doing medical research, said Robert Blendon, professor of health policy and management at the Harvard School of Public Health.

The Nixon-era "war on cancer" suggested that a country that could put a man on the moon—in less than a decade—could surely find a cure within the same time frame. Now, Blendon said, "You can't just talk about investing in research without the equivalent of the trip to the moon."

Such campaigns appeal to an American public that expresses great faith in science but shows little understanding of the plodding nature of most scientific research. Blendon doesn't see downplaying the time frame as dishonest as long as the research truly holds potential.

Proposition 71 came about in response to President Bush's August 2001 mandate restricting federal funding to only a handful of human embryonic stem cell lines, prompted by moral concerns about destruction of embryos during such research. When the meas-

ure passed in November 2004, jubilant supporters had predicted that \$350 million a year from bond sales would start flowing to scientists by May 2005.

The first reality check came in the form of lawsuits by taxpayer and antiabortion groups.

Today, the bonds remain tied up in litigation, though stem cell institute officials are confident that an appellate court will uphold a favorable ruling from a Superior Court judge. To tide over the institute, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in July promised a \$150-million state loan. A state finance committee formally approved the loan Nov. 20, and the institute is gearing up to award its first research grants in January.

Even if researchers hit the ground running, the field is young and progress is likely to be slow. Scientists at the University of Wisconsin derived the first human embryonic stem cells just eight years ago, using donated embryos left over from in vitro fertilization clinics.

Dana Cody, executive director of Life Legal Defense Foundation, which represents two of the groups that sued, said the plan's modest ambitions are a sign that the initiative's promise was overblown.

"I just don't understand the fascination with embryonic stem cell research other than that it's something supported by Hollywood," said Cody, whose organization supports research using adult stem cells. "Even proponents say it's going to be years before any breakthroughs are made, if at all."

Those who support the research—especially those whose lives could depend on it—see the institute's plan through a lens of hope.

The science "is coming along fast, in my opinion," said John Ames, whose son David was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease, four years ago. "I'm not trying to contradict the position of the strategic plan, but we have hope. We're going to win."

The life expectancy of someone diagnosed with the devastatingly progressive neuromuscular disease is three to five years.

"The thing that drives these individuals and their families is hope," said Christopher Thomas Scott, executive director of the Stanford Program on Stem Cells in Society. "Without that hope, it's very difficult to get yourself going."

Joan Samuelson prefers to call it determination. The Napa Valley attorney founded the Parkinson's Action Network 18 years ago, two years after being diagnosed with early onset Parkinson's disease. She now sits on the institute's oversight board.

"I care deeply about how urgently we pursue the mission of Prop. 71," she said. "I wake up every day with a disorder that gets worse with the passage of time."

To Samuelson, the campaign was about potential. The institute's plan is about day-to-day implementation. They may sound different, she said, but they are steps toward the same goal.

"I read the realism, if you will, as a statement of the fact that this isn't going to be easy," she said. "Nothing great is easy."

What makes embryonic stem cells unique—and so full of potential—is their ability to become any type of cell in the body.

Some researchers envision someday transplanting such cells into patients whose own cells have been damaged by injury or disease, with the hope that the transplanted cells develop into new spinal cord or pancreas cells. But scientists don't yet understand the cues that trigger an undifferentiated embryonic stem cell to become, say, an insulin-secreting pancreas cell.

The plan more accurately reflects what most scientists studying human embryonic stem cells are actually doing, at least in this early stage of the research: not so much curing a disease as studying it.

Scientists, for instance, can introduce the gene for Lou Gehrig's or Parkinson's into a human embryonic stem cell and unravel some of the mysteries of how such diseases develop. They can use such cells to quickly test thousands of drugs.

"What's happening even now is that human embryonic stem cells and their derivatives are being used for models for developing therapies," said Dr. Arnold Kriegstein, who runs the stem cell research program at UC San Francisco. "It allows us for the first time in a petri dish to have a human disease, not an animal disease. It brings us so much closer to coming up with a therapy that really will work."

Who knows? advocates say. Treatments—even cures—sometimes crop up unexpectedly.

Jeff Sheehy, who represents HIV and AIDS patients on the institute's citizen oversight board, tells the story of his friend Jeff Getty, who died in October of complications from AIDS. In 1995, Getty volunteered for a controversial bone marrow transplant from a baboon.

The transplant didn't take, but Getty, who had been near death, experienced a then-amazing remission that lasted more than 10 years. It turned out that the drugs used to prepare him for the transplant anticipated the antiretroviral cocktail that, a year later, would turn AIDS from a death sentence to an often manageable, chronic disease.

Similarly, Sheehy asked, if scientists fail to successfully transplant embryonic stem cells but along the way discover drugs or other treatments that work, wouldn't the research be considered a success?

"My thing is just not to get obsessed with what was presented in the campaign," Sheehy said. "Science is a very complex business. It's full of failure. It's full of opportunity. And failure often equals opportunity."

HONORING MRS. AGNES FLAWS HUSAK ON THE CELEBRATION OF HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Agnes Flaws Husak on her 100th birthday. Mrs. Husak is an outstanding resident of the Third Congressional District of Illinois and has dedicated her life to public service.

Mrs. Husak was born January 12, 1917, on Union Street, in Chicago, IL. There, her family was at the technological forefront of the era—having the first house on the street with electricity, as well as a telephone. Mrs. Husak continued the family's innovative tradition while working for the GSA in 1940, utilizing revolutionary card punching equipment—the predecessor to the modern computer.

At the GSA, Mrs. Husak rose through the ranks and ultimately became head of her de-

partment. In retirement, Mrs. Husak has been an active member of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association and continues to play an integral role in this organization today.

When asked the secret of living a long life, Mrs. Husak once responded, "Where's your calendar? Show me your calendar." She believes it is important to stay active and certainly does this herself—attending the Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, tending to her rose bushes, and playing Scrabble with her son. It is my honor to recognize Mrs. Agnes Flaws Husak on the celebration of her 100th birthday, an exceptional lady and an inspiration to all generations.

SPINA BIFIDA CAUCUS

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize January as Birth Defects Prevention and the week of January 8th through January 14th as Folic Acid Awareness Week. As the co-chair of the Congressional Spina Bifida Caucus, I have a long-standing commitment to reducing and preventing suffering from Spina Bifida, the nation's most common, permanently disabling birth defect, and helping to reduce future cases of Spina Bifida through increasing awareness of the need for women of child-bearing age to consume folic acid. More than 70,000 individuals in the United States are affected by Spina Bifida—a serious and life-long condition which occurs when the spinal cord fails to close properly during the early stages of pregnancy. Spina Bifida affects virtually all organ systems and results in myriad health, developmental, psychosocial, educational, and vocational challenges and complications.

Research indicates that consumption of the B vitamin, folic acid, before and during early pregnancy can lower the rate of Spina Bifida and other neural tube defects by up to 70 percent. The U.S. Public Health Service recommends 400 micrograms of folic acid daily for all women of childbearing age. Most over-the-counter daily multi-vitamins have this amount of folic acid. It is recommended that women take multivitamins and consume fortified grains as part of a healthy diet.

Despite this startling impact of folic acid on public health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that too many women of child-bearing age still do not consume adequate levels of folic acid. Of particular concern is that statistics show higher prevalence of Latinas in the United States delivering babies with Spina Bifida and other neural tube defects, serious birth defects of the brain and the spine, than non-Hispanic white women. CDC reports that Latinos in the United States consume the least amount of folic acid and have the least knowledge about folic acid among racial or ethnic groups in this

country. More must be done to increase consumption of folic acid among all women, particularly Latino populations, so we can continue to decrease the number of pregnancies affected by Spina Bifida and other neural tube defects.

The National Spina Bifida Program at the CDC provides information and initiatives to empower individuals, families, and health care providers with the resources they need to boost folic acid consumption and prevent secondary effects and complications of Spina Bifida. I commend the CDC for its important work and encourage the agency to expand its Spina Bifida quality of life initiatives and its folic acid awareness campaigns. While much has been accomplished by the National Spina Bifida Program thus far, there remains an unmet need due to limited resources. Increased funding would help ensure that the program has the resources necessary to support and expand folic acid education and awareness and quality-of-life efforts. I thank my colleagues for their support of the National Spina Bifida Program in past years and look forward to continuing to support this program so it can sustain and expand its scope of work.

Also, through my co-chairmanship, it has brought to my attention that not all corn products in the United States are enriched with folic acid. Public health officials believe that much of the Hispanic/Latino Spina Bifida health disparity is due to the fact that a significant proportion of the food consumed by Hispanic/Latino women of child-bearing age is imported corn-based products that are not enriched with folic acid. As such, I encourage all producers of corn products to enrich their foods with folic acid.

I encourage all women of child-bearing age to follow the CDC recommendations and take a daily multi-vitamin with at least 400 micrograms of folic acid. The message of folic acid consumption must be disseminated not only this week and this month—but throughout the year—so that our goal of reducing and preventing suffering from Spina Bifida can be achieved.

I also would like to take this opportunity to commend the Spina Bifida Association for its work to support individuals and families affected by Spina Bifida and to increase awareness of the importance of folic acid consumption.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I encourage all of our colleagues to help spread the word about the importance of folic acid consumption, and I would be happy to provide any interested Members with information to share with their constituents. Also, I ask that my fellow colleagues join me and my co-chair, Congressman CHRIS SMITH, in the Congressional Spina Bifida Caucus. I thank my colleagues for their attention to this important public health issue and again am pleased to recognize January as Birth Defects Prevention Month and this week, January 8th through January 14th, as Folic Acid Awareness Week.