

on-stream reservoirs. Additionally, they are more acceptable from an environmental perspective, because they are off-stream and do not block streams or disturb riverine habitats.

In addition to protecting our Nation's farmers from the costly effects of drought, enhancing their irrigation capacity will allow our farmers to expand production to more acres and increase the productivity of existing acres. Cost-share assistance to construct small, environmentally-friendly, reservoirs located on the farm will provide us with the tools necessary to grow additional bio-fuel crops; which will allow us to wean ourselves from foreign oil. This will reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions by increasing the availability of the cleaner burning fuels these crops produce.

GENETIC INFORMATION  
NONDISCRIMINATION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOE BARTON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 25, 2007*

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I want to commend the work of the Energy and Commerce Committee in making certain improvements to H.R. 493. In particular, I note the inclusion of information on embryos, fetuses, and adopted children. I further note a clear statement that nothing affects claims processing and quality improvement activities and related items. Finally, I am happy that there is a provision for covered entities already subject to regulations governing personally identifiable health information.

The primary author of the House bill, Ms. SLAUGHTER, has stated:

"GINA prohibits group health plans and health insurers from denying coverage to a healthy individual or charging that person higher premiums based solely on a genetic predisposition to develop a disease in the future. Furthermore, it bars employers from using an individual's genetic information when making hiring, firing, job placement or promotion decisions."

That is the focus of this legislation. I expect the relevant Federal agencies will interpret this bill in light of the primary focus. GINA is a very complicated bill with a number of definitions capable of counterproductive readings. We have tried to improve the bill to reduce these problems. In the spirit of these efforts to improve the legislation I support its passage from the House and look forward to work in Conference.

SPOKANE NAMED 2006 ABILENE  
TROPHY WINNER

**HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 1, 2007*

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the Spokane community for their work in supporting Fairchild Air Force Base in Washington State. On April 12, 2007, Spokane was selected as the 2006 Abilene Trophy winner during the Phoenix Rally at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida.

The Abilene Trophy, sponsored by the Abilene, Texas, Chamber of Commerce, recognizes the community that provides the most outstanding support to an Air Mobility Command unit. The 92nd Air Refueling Wing at Fairchild is one of 11 Air Mobility Command bases eligible to compete for the Abilene Trophy in the United States.

The Abilene Chamber of Commerce noted Spokane's standout support for our troops at Fairchild, particularly through programs such as Operation Spokane Heroes and the Honorary Commanders program.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, I am committed to keeping our Nation and communities safe by ensuring we have a trained and equipped military. Since taking office, one of my top priorities has been to protect and expand the mission of Fairchild Air Force Base. The people of Spokane share that priority and recognize the importance of supporting our men and women in uniform and their families.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Spokane and the members of this community for their outstanding support of Fairchild Air Force Base. I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Spokane community on this great achievement.

ACCEPT TAIWAN INTO THE WHO

**HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON**

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 1, 2007*

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support for Taiwan's efforts to participate in the World Health Organization. Taiwan's participation in the WHO is a health issue rather than a political issue. Taiwan has been directly impacted by many of the new, global health threats that have swept Asia since 2002. During the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, or SARS, Taiwan saw one of the highest incident rates of infection. More recently, Taiwan has reported incidences of avian flu outbreak, a disease which presents a global threat.

For many years, in my district, Idaho State University hosted a unique program providing a language and cultural education program for junior diplomatic officers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I spent time discussing the American political system and current events in Taiwan with the junior diplomats, and they taught me a great deal about Taiwan's political system and the challenges it faces. As Taiwan deals with new arising health threats, the lessons that I learned from the young diplomats reminded me of the importance of ensuring that all people throughout the world can access resources to fight potential pandemics.

Madam Speaker, global health pandemics recognize no borders. Taiwan has been seeking observer status at the WHO since 1997. Other non-sovereign entities, such as the Holy See, maintain observer status. Protecting people's health is not a political issue, and gaining access to global health organizations should not be a political issue either. Safeguarding world health requires the participation of everyone in the international community. Madam Speaker, I urge the international community to accept Taiwan into the WHO community this year.

HONORING MICHAEL D. THOMAS

**HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 1, 2007*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Michael D. Thomas, who was killed on April 27, 2007 in Hirat Province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Michael was a sniper, a weapons sergeant and a combat medic assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and was killed when his unit came under rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire.

I did not have the privilege of knowing Staff Sergeant Thomas personally but by all accounts he was a dedicated family man who was devoted to serving his country. He grew up in Seffner, Florida and joined the military police in 1991, serving in Somalia and in Korea. After already having served in the military police for 13 years and with only 3½ years until he could retire, he volunteered to be a Green Beret. At 34, Michael was one of the oldest in his unit which earned him the nickname "Gramps."

Michael was a highly decorated soldier. His awards and commendations include the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Defense Medal, the Parachutist Badge and the Special Forces Tab.

Michael was an avid Tampa Bay Buccaneer fan who visited the team's training camp whenever he could. I've been told that he decorated his Fort Bragg room with Buccaneer memorabilia, including signed footballs and helmets. He was also an accomplished guitarist who liked watching movies and going for long walks with his wife, Teresa.

Madam Speaker, my heart aches for Michael's family. He leaves behind his wife, Teresa, his children, Diana and Craig, his sisters, Krista and Cassie, and his parents, Debbie and Robert Kirpatrick. May God bless the Thomas family and continue to watch over the country that Staff Sgt. Thomas so loved. We shall never forget him.

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE  
HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE  
HONORABLE JUANITA  
MILLENDER-MCDONALD, MEMBER  
OF CONGRESS FROM THE STATE  
OF CALIFORNIA

SPEECH OF

**HON. NITA M. LOWEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, April 23, 2007*

Mrs. LOWEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy and accomplishments of our recently-passed colleague and dear friend JUANITA MILLENDER-MCDONALD.

JUANITA MILLENDER-MCDONALD's life epitomized one of a true leader. Her deep commitment to those she served led her to be the first African American woman to chair a committee in Congress.

JUANITA MILLENDER-MCDONALD's vision and leadership since 1996 will have a lasting impact on the House of Representatives. Her

fight for full voting participation for all Americans and her tireless efforts for fair elections in the United States have helped millions of Americans and made our democracy stronger.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to join me in paying respect to the family of JUANITA MILLENDER-MCDONALD and in honoring her career in service to our country.

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TRIBUTE TO MS. PAIGE E.  
MCMANUS

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HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2007

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ms. Paige E. McManus, former staff director for the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, who recently concluded 13 years of honorable service in this body.

During my tenure as chairman of the Veterans Affairs Subcommittee on Benefits in the 107th Congress, my colleagues and I were direct beneficiaries of Ms. McManus's counsel on legislative, policy, budgetary, and oversight matters.

Ms. McManus's considerable expertise served the subcommittee in many thematic areas. She oversaw the \$24 billion per year Department of Veterans Affairs disability compensation and pension entitlement program, including herbicide-related disabilities, cold weather-related disabilities, Persian Gulf undiagnosed illnesses, disabilities common to ex-POWs, adapted housing and automobile benefits for seriously disabled veterans, Medal of Honor special pension benefits, and Merchant Mariner benefits; the surviving spouse programs, including dependency and indemnity compensation, Survivor Benefit Plan, and CHAMPVA; burial benefits and services under VA's National Cemetery Administration and the State Cemetery Grants Program, as well as policy matters associated with Arlington National Cemetery and the American Battle Monuments Commission; and national insurance programs, such as Veterans' Group life Insurance and Servicemembers' Group life Insurance.

Ms. McManus's longstanding work at the direction of Veterans' Affairs Committee leadership on the creation of the World War II Memorial and VA's National Shrines initiative, enactment of special combat pay, or concurrent receipt, and dependency and indemnity compensation for remarried spouses proved especially meritorious. The legislative road traveled by each of these measures was long and exceptionally arduous. Ms. McManus's advice and perseverance added great value. The depth and breadth of her policy expertise and advice indeed proved hard to match.

Madam Speaker, Paige McManus has exemplified the highest ideals of public service serving the Committee with honor, integrity, and energy. Thank you, Paige, for your many years of dedicated service to the United States Congress and to our Nation.

A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN  
BURMA

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HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2007

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, a humanitarian crisis is occurring in Burma where political dissidents and ethnic groups are being suppressed. The existence of over 1,000 political prisoners, the practice of land confiscation and forced migration, demonstrates the totalitarianism with which this military government rules over its people. Citizens are being imprisoned for peaceful opposition while state members continue to violate fundamental rights to property and security. The house arrest of non-violent, prodemocracy activist Aung Sang Suu Kyi demonstrates this oppressive state of affairs.

Practices like forced evictions and internal displacement cements military control, especially in ethnic areas, at the expense of basic freedoms. I am here today to ask the government of Burma to address these numerous concerns. The government must draft a constitution with the input of all political actors, including members of the National League for Democracy. Land use, property rights, and political rights are issues that must be addressed. Human rights abusers must be punished and civilians brought to justice under a government that defends their freedoms.

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HONORING ARMY STAFF SERGEANT ROBERT SPEED, JR. OF MOBILE, ALABAMA, A WWII HERO RECENTLY AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

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HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Army Staff Sgt. Robert Speed, Jr., who was recently honored with the Distinguished Flying Cross for his service and sacrifice in defense of our great country during World War II.

Sgt. Speed and the entire B-24 crew: 1st Lt. James E. Jatho, 1st Lt. Edward L. McNally, 2nd Lt. George N. Croft, 2nd Lt. Theodore D. Bell, Technical Sgt. Jay T. Fish, Technical Sgt. William A. Magill, Staff Sgt. Frank G. Celuck, Staff Sgt. William F. Maxson, Jr., and Staff Sgt. Daniel P. Toomey distinguished themselves by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial combat on July 15, 1944. The B-24 crew in the 779th Bomb Squadron, 464th Bomber Group, 15th Air Force took off from Pantanella, Italy, to take part in what was to become the heaviest day of bombing the oil refineries near Ploesti, Romania.

The crew encountered heavy anti-aircraft fire—severely damaging the plane—and causing the loss of one engine. Sgt. Speed, a gunner on the B-24 Liberator, courageously manned his gun position and remained at his station throughout the remainder of the flight, which went deep into enemy territory. The mission was successful—the Uniera Sperantza oil refinery and enemy refining capacity were heavily damaged.

The day following this mission, the crew continued to demonstrate courage and devotion to duty when it took part in a raid on Weiner Neusdorf, Austria. During this mission, their plane was shot down, and Sgt. Magill was killed in action. The surviving crew members were captured and taken as prisoners of war and held for the remainder of the war.

Almost 63 years later, the nine surviving members of the crew were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Madam Speaker, the life and actions of Sgt. Speed personify the very best America has to offer. I feel certain his many friends and family, as well as his comrades in the United States Army, are taking this opportunity to remember his many accomplishments. I urge my colleagues to take a moment and pay tribute to Sgt. Robert Speed and his selfless devotion to our country and the freedom we enjoy.

Make no mistake; Robert Speed is a true American hero.

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HONORING JESSICA LONG

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HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2007

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to honor Jessica Long, in celebration other selection as 2006 U.S. Paralympian of the Year by the United States Olympic Committee.

Jessica Long was born in Siberia and was adopted from a Russian orphanage at the age of 13 months along with her brother Joshua by Steven and Beth Long of Middle River, Maryland. Because of lower leg anomalies, her legs were amputated when she was 18 months old. She learned to walk with prostheses and has been unstoppable ever since. Long has been involved in many sports including gymnastics, cheerleading, ice skating, biking, trampoline, and, of course, she loves to swim. She began swimming in her grandparent's pool before joining her first competitive team in 2002. The next year, Jessica was selected as Maryland Swimming's 2003 Female Swimmer with a Disability of the Year. Jessica made the international swimming world take notice at the 2004 Paralympic Games, winning three gold medals. Only 12 years old at the time, Jessica was the youngest athlete on the U.S. Paralympic Team.

Jessica had a phenomenal year in 2006 with a long list of impressive accomplishments. She set five world records and earned nine gold medals at the 2006 International Paralympic Committee Swimming World Championships in Durban, South Africa in December. Her gold medal performances were in free style relay (world record), 100-meter backstroke, 100-meter freestyle (world record), 100-meter fly (world record), IM relay, 100-meter breast stroke, 200-meter IM (world record), 400-meter freestyle (world record), and 50-meter freestyle. She also set three world records at the 2006 U.S. Paralympic National championships in August; two world records at the GTAC Open in Ypsilanti, Michigan, in May; two world records at the Belgian Open in Antwerp, Belgium in May; and four world records at the Spring Can-Am in London, Ontario, in April. She currently holds world records in 12 events, one as part of a