

fighting for the reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Program without any cuts to the program. In conjunction with the Community Food Resource Center, Veronica spearheaded an innovative pilot project to help 500 Local 372 members take advantage of their eligibility for Earned Income Tax Credit.

Madam Speaker, Veronica Montgomery-Costa was unanimously elected for three consecutive terms as President of the 125,000-member District Council 37 by the Council's delegates and also serving in her second term as a member of the Steering Committee of the Municipal Labor Committee. It is an honor to pay tribute to her exceptional leadership on behalf of working men and women. She is most deserving of our recognition today.

ELSIE LEE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Elsie Lee of Kansas City, Missouri. Elsie is a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, and earning the most prestigious award of Girl Scout Gold Award.

Elsie has been very active with her troop, participating in many scout activities. In order to receive the prestigious Gold Award, Elsie has completed all seven requirements that promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values and leadership skills.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Elsie Lee for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Girl Scout Gold Award.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE AND CELEBRATING GREEK AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

SPEECH OF

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2008

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker, I wish to acknowledge Tuesday's consideration and passage of H. Res. 1024, a bill recognizing the 187th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating Greek and American democracy.

I am honored to support a bill whose significance is so extensive and which has such enormous personal meaning to me. I am immensely proud of my Greek heritage, and the profound influence this legacy has had not only on American democracy but on governments around the world.

Early on, America's Founding Fathers looked to the ancient Greeks and their enlightened society for inspiration in forming a new government. As we know, American representative democracy is rooted in the philosophy and ethos of Greek government.

It is this example of freedom and representation that so many governments strive to emulate today. And now, more than ever, it is imperative for that message to be heard.

The Greek American community continues to work admirably to connect Greek culture and heritage with the global society of today. They have grown that symbiotic relationship into an extensive Greek-American legacy.

This legacy is made of the contributions of millions of Greek-Americans, such as my paternal grandfather who emigrated from Greece in the early 20th century and earned his citizenship in his new country by fighting in World War I. My father, Socrates, continued the Space family's patriotic tradition by serving in the Marines during the Korean War. After the war, my father attended Ohio State's law school, thanks to the GI Bill, thereby paving the way for his future family—for me.

The opportunities afforded to my father and my grandfather in America were—in my opinion—a result of the democratic by-products of freedom and liberty that Americans enjoy, thanks to the Greeks.

Today, as we celebrate the anniversary of this wonderful nation's independence, it's important that we continue to recognize the significance of Greek contributions to the global society. Needless to say, as a Greek-American, I very much support H. Res. 1024.

HONORING SAN MARCOS HIGH SCHOOL MADRIGAL SINGERS

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2008

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an exceptional high school choir in my district, the San Marcos High School Madrigal Singers of Santa Barbara, CA, which was chosen to perform at New York City's legendary Carnegie Hall on March 10, 2008.

The San Marcos high School Madrigal Singers were selected out of dozens of high school choirs across the country for this performance. The concert featured 200 students from four states, and is the capstone of Carnegie Hall's yearlong National High School Choral Festival. The concert was conducted by Dr. Craig Jessop, esteemed Music Director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, who has been working with the choirs and their conductors throughout the year. Apart from their world-renowned performances, Carnegie Hall brings innovative music education programs to students across the Nation. I am delighted that these young people have been given this opportunity.

Led by Carolyn Teraoka-Brady. The Madrigal Singers, one of 5 choral groups at San Marcos High School, performs a varied repertoire of choral literature, Renaissance to contemporary, for the community and at festivals. In the last 4 years, the group has consistently received superior ratings at State and regional festivals in CA. In 2006, the group received a first place score at the invitational "National Festival of Gold" in New York City, featuring some of the country's finest ensembles. In addition to choral activities, these students are also leaders in the school's theatre productions, student government, Mock Trial, school newspaper, and CIF sports. The Mad-

rigal Singers have performed for Donald Brinegar, Lynne Gackle, Anton Armstrong, André Thomas, and Weston Noble.

I am honored to have one of the 4 schools in the Nation chosen for the Carnegie Hall National High School Choral Festival come from my California district. The Madrigal Singers should be proud not only of their musical achievement, but their embodiment of the quality musical education the State of California provides. I commend these students and their leaders for their success.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, the time has come to enact the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. We need to end discrimination against those with mental illness and substance use disorders, just as we have worked to end discrimination more broadly. I regret that I could not be here to vote on its passage out of the House.

If you cannot be moved by a sense of compassion to support this important legislation, then maybe you can be moved by the statistics. More than 57.7 million Americans suffer from mental disorders. That's one in five Americans—people in our families, our friends, and coworkers. Mental disorders and addictions affect us all—regardless of race, gender or socioeconomic status. H.R. 1424 ensures that health insurers and group health plans treat mental disorders and addiction no differently than any other disease.

This is not a mandate. The Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act simply says that if plans choose to offer mental health coverage, then that coverage must not be subject to different standards than the coverage for treatments of physical disease. Parity will ensure that treatment for mental disorders and addictions will be no more restrictive than treatment limits applied to comparable medical and surgical benefits.

Opponents of true parity claim that H.R. 1424 could result in decreased access to employer provided health insurance. That is merely a scare tactic designed to undermine the broad-based support for the bill. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has estimated that the impact on premiums is just two-tenths of one percent. Statistics show us that depressed workers lose 5.6 hours a week of productive work time. This translates into tens of billions of dollars annually in lost productivity for employers.

We also know that every dollar spent in treatment saves up to \$12 in health care and criminal justice costs alone. Do the math, and you'll see that treating mental health and addiction disorders is a wise investment. No one in this day and age should lose years of their lives in the fog of mental illness and addiction when help is available. We would never think of denying diabetes patients insulin. Yet, it seems to be acceptable to erect financial barriers or take other steps that ultimately deny patients with physical and chemical imbalances treatment for their mental illness. That