

unwavering advocate for multiculturalism and diversity, and it was with that in mind that she founded the Inter-district School for Arts and Communications, the ISAAC Charter School. Since 1997, the ISAAC school has offered a unique educational experience for students in southeastern Connecticut where they can learn about the importance of diversity and the value of community service.

Ruth's belief in compassion and open-mindedness is a message that she carried to all she met. It is a spirit that lives on in her own children, Emily, Hannah and Lily. While her compassion for all children marked her legacy, it was the love that she had for her own children that defined her life.

We in eastern Connecticut are blessed to have had such a dedicated public servant and those of us who knew her are blessed to have had such a friend. We will take solace in her memory and the example that she set for thousands of young people across our State. To Lee, her beloved husband, and the entire Cole-Chu family, please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you.

**CITY OF BELLAIRE'S 100TH
ANNIVERSARY**

HON. JOHN ABNEY CULBERSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Mr. CULBERSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the City of Bellaire's 100th Anniversary. The prosperous and tranquil neighborhoods of Bellaire, Texas exemplify why so many new people and businesses move to Texas every day. The people of Bellaire take pride in their thriving city, which was founded in 1908 alongside the City of Houston. I grew up in West University Place, right next door, and I experienced what every young person in Bellaire enjoys today—the comfort and joy of growing up in a small town, even though we were in the middle of one of the biggest cities in America.

One of Houston's greatest strengths is the small town feel of neighborhoods all over Harris County, and nowhere is that small town safety, security, and prosperity stronger than Bellaire. The people of Bellaire look after one another, and take pride in their city and their neighborhoods and fill up every parking spot for blocks around whenever there is a parent meeting at a local school.

When Hurricane Ike knocked down trees and damaged property and knocked out the power, the people of Bellaire showed once again why their beautiful city is so successful. They did not sit around and wait for the federal government to help them. Neighbors simply pulled out their chain saws, and their hammers and tools and walked door to door on their street to see who needed help. Elderly or infirm residents were helped by their next door neighbors in the very best spirit of America.

Bellaire's small town roots go back to its founding six miles outside of Houston in 1908 by William Wright Baldwin. In 1918, when Bellaire was incorporated as an independent city, its population was 200, and during World War II the city grew rapidly. By 1948, the City of Houston had completely surrounded Bellaire, yet Bellaire has always maintained its independence as a home rule city.

Bellaire's fire and police departments are among the best in Texas. Building on a strong foundation of neighbors helping neighbors, Bellaire's firemen and policemen have helped make Bellaire one of the safest cities in America. People from all over Texas and America continue to vote with their feet and their dollars by moving their homes and businesses to Bellaire at a time when other communities across the nation are shrinking.

Bellaire was a part of the Seventh Congressional District in 1966 when the District's first Congressman was future President George H. W. Bush, who was followed by the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee Bill Archer. Population growth in the greater Houston area caused District 7 to be drawn farther west until 2006, when Bellaire once again became part of this historic congressional district.

As someone who grew up next door in West University, with many fond memories of Bellaire, I am especially proud to represent the people of this great city as their Congressman in Washington, D.C. It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the people of Bellaire on building one of the safest, most prosperous, and most pleasant cities in America over the last 100 years, and I will always do everything I can to preserve, protect, and defend Bellaire's wonderful quality of life for the generations that will follow us in the next 100 years. Congratulations Bellaire.

HONORING BERNIECE HUGHES

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I stand up today before my esteemed colleagues to honor a lifelong resident of my district who just flat-out loved politics. Nothing—short of time with her three children, five grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and nine great-great-grandchildren—made Berniece Hughes of Conroe, Texas, happier than getting mad at what we all had to say on her favorite all-news channels. The daughter of the late W.V. and Lennie Galloway Holliday of Polk County, Berniece Hughes did her growing up during the Great Depression. She was a girls' basketball and track team member at Goodrich High in Polk County where she was in the 1934 graduating class. The oldest of six, Berniece is now reunited in heaven with her brothers and sisters and her sweetheart, B.F. "Bert" Hughes.

A master of the one-liners, Berniece, even at 92, was—as her daughter puts it—a "doodle mama just like Driving Miss Daisy." Liking her mother and father to screen giants Tracy and Hepburn, Lana says quick quips and laughter were just part of growing up a Hughes. Berniece thoroughly enjoyed being home with her children—B.F. "Mike" Hughes, Jr. of Livingston, and Wayne Hughes and Lana Hughes of Houston—as they were growing up. She was even more delighted to spend the second half of her days in Conroe enjoying watching her children bring her grandchildren and her grandchildren bring her great-grandchildren and so on. Everyone who met her described Berniece as "a pistol."

Once again, Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues for allowing me to share the story

of a life well lived and ask for their thoughts and prayers as Berniece's large, loving family will gather together at the Forest Park Lawndale Cemetery and Funeral Home to say their final goodbyes to their "doodle mama," this Saturday morning.

**IN RECOGNITION OF MARSHALL
BILLINGSLEA, DEPUTY UNDER
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY**

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Marshall Billingslea, the outgoing Deputy Under Secretary of the U.S. Navy. I am proud to recognize his service to the Nation and thank him for his contributions to our national defense.

Marshall entered public service after receiving his master of arts in law and diplomacy from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1995. He served for over 6 years as the Senior Professional Staff Member for National Security Affairs on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. During this period, he was the senior advisor to the chairman and members of the committee on all proliferation, arms control, defense, intelligence, and counter-terrorism issues. These experiences provided an enormous breadth of knowledge and laid the foundation for a career of outstanding public service.

Mr. Billingslea later joined the Bush administration as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Negotiations Policy and served as the chief negotiator for all major international agreements. In this capacity, he was the principal Department of Defense representative on numerous U.S. arms control delegations, and the U.S. Head of Delegation for Transparency and Verification negotiations with the Russian Federation in connection with the Moscow Treaty on Strategic Nuclear Reductions.

In recognition of his outstanding accomplishments, he was appointed the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict. As the principal civilian advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Defense on Special Operations Forces and counter-terrorism efforts against al Qaeda and other terrorist groups, he had enormous responsibility to safeguard the American people in supervising all special operations activities in the Department of Defense.

Prior to his current position, he served as NATO's assistant Secretary General for Defence Investment. He bolstered the national security of the United States by promoting NATO armaments cooperation policies and programs, and for military common funding. Additionally, he served as Chairman of NATO's Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD) and Chairman of the Board of Directors for NATO's Consultation, Command, and Control Organization.

As the first Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy in over 7 years, Marshall has been the senior advisor to the Secretary of the Navy on a wide range of policy and intelligence matters. His advice and counsel to the Secretary during a time of war, as well as his leadership in standing up the DUSN organization, has been invaluable to the Secretary and the Department of the Navy as a whole.

I am proud to recognize Marshall's achievements and wish him and his wife, Karen, along with their daughters, Morgan Alyssa and Elsa Breanne, well as they pursue new endeavors.

IRAQ'S STRUGGLING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I would like to share with our colleagues a letter I sent yesterday to Secretary Rice regarding the plight of Iraq's struggling Christian community.

It is my hope that people of faith throughout the country contact both the incoming and outgoing administrations and urge immediate action to protect this ancient community, some of whom still speak Aramaic, the language of Jesus.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 8, 2009.

Hon. CONDOLEEZZA RICE,
*Secretary of State,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR SECRETARY RICE: Millions around the world just celebrated Christmas. In churches and homes throughout our own country children learned of Mary, Joseph, a census, a stable—of Nazareth and Bethlehem and other far away places. These lands of old that are found throughout the Bible are still home to ancient Christian communities with deep spiritual and cultural roots. In fact, with the exception of Israel, the Bible contains more references to the cities, regions and nations of ancient Iraq than any other country.

The patriarch Abraham came from a city in Iraq called Ur. Isaac's bride, came from northwest Iraq. Jacob spent 20 years in Iraq and his sons (the 12 tribes of Israel) were born in northwest Iraq. A remarkable spiritual revival as told in the book of Jonah occurred in Nineveh. The events of the book of Esther took place in Iraq as did the account of Daniel in the Lion's Den.

Tragically Iraq's ancient Christian community is facing extinction on this administration's watch. According to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), Iraq's Christian population has fallen from as many as 1.4 million in 2003 to between 500,000 and 700,000 at present. USCIRF also reports that "while Christians and other religious minorities represented only approximately 3 percent of the pre-2003 Iraqi population, they constitute approximately 15 and 20 percent of registered Iraqi refugees in Jordan and Syria, respectively, and Christians account for 35 and 64 percent, respectively, of all registered Iraqi refugees in Lebanon and Turkey."

It is critical to note, as the figures above indicate, that the violence and intimidation that Iraq's Christians and other ethno-religious communities have faced is targeted. In July 2008, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Migration & Refugee Services said this about the minority religious communities: "These groups, whose home has been what is now Iraq for many centuries, are literally being obliterated—not because they are fleeing generalized violence but because they are being specifically and viciously victimized by Islamic extremists and, in some cases, common criminals."

We need a comprehensive policy or even a point person at the embassy in Baghdad to

address the unique situation of these defenseless minorities. An article in Christianity Today by Philip Jenkins described what was happening this way: "What we are seeing then is the death of one of the world's greatest Christian enterprises."

I urge you, in your final days as Secretary of State, to take dramatic action on behalf of this hurting population and a good starting point is the recent recommendations put forward by USCIRF. I respectfully request a response from you, rather than the assistant secretary for Legislative Affairs.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,
Member of Congress.

IN MEMORY OF MARY JAMES

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, it is with deep sorrow that I inform the House of the death of Mrs. Mary L. James.

Mary, who was born in West Plains, MO, was a graduate of Harrisonville, MO, High School and the University of Missouri, where she received a bachelor of science degree in education. Mary also earned a master's of public administration degree from the University of Kansas.

Through the years, Mary dedicated her life to education, health care, and to the betterment of her community and her state. She was a teacher, a volunteer, and lived her whole life surrounded by or working in the news business. In 1999, Missouri Governor Mel Carnahan appointed Mary as a member of the University of Missouri Board of Curators, and she became the board's president in 2005.

Mary also served organizations affiliated with the University of Missouri, which she so dearly loved, including the Chancellor's Fund for Excellence, the Advisory and Development Committee within the College of Education, and the Griffith's Leadership Society for Women. Mary was also a member of the Jefferson Club. In 2005, the Alumni Alliance recognized Mary for Outstanding Alumni Service to the University of Missouri System.

Mary also worked as the executive director of the Cass Medical Center Foundation, on the board of the Healthcare Foundation of Greater Kansas City, and on the board of the Cass Medical Foundation. In 2006, she was recognized by the University of Missouri as a Distinguished Friend to the School of Nursing because of her commitment to health care and to the University.

Mary also served as a member of the Harrisonville Park Board, including time as chairman. During her tenure on the park board, she advocated for a community sales tax that led to building a pool and maintenance facility for the city of Harrisonville, she wrote a grant and raised funds to build an outdoor theater, and she helped plan for a community center. Mary was a member of the Harrisonville Chamber of Commerce, the Harrisonville United Methodist Church, Chapter G.R. PEO, Delta Gamma, and the University of Missouri Alumni Association.

Mary's family had been prominent in the Missouri newspaper business. Her parents,

the late J.W. Brown, Jr., and Wanda A. Brown, were publishers of the Cass County Democrat-Missourian in Harrisonville. Her father served as Missouri Press Association President. She worked for 26 years as the human resources manager for Cass County Publishing, volunteering extensively in her spare time.

In 1971, Mary married Bill James, who himself has been a prominent figure in the Missouri newspaper business and is a former president of the Missouri Press Association. Bill is now the publisher of the Daily Star-Journal in Warrensburg, Missouri.

Mary, who is survived by Bill, by her two sons and their wives, by one granddaughter, by her mother, and by her sister, will be remembered fondly by all who had the privilege of knowing her, including me. She has led an exemplary life, which ought to serve as a model for young people in Missouri and throughout our nation. I know members of the Congress will join me in paying tribute the life of Mary James and in extending condolences to her family and friends.

INTRODUCTION OF THE KALAU-PAPA MEMORIAL ACT OF 2009

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 9, 2009

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill to authorize establishment of a memorial at Kalaupapa National Historical Park on the island of Molokai, Hawaii, to honor the memory and sacrifices of the some 8,000 Hansen's disease patients who were forcibly relocated to the Kalaupapa peninsula between 1866 and 1969. I want to thank my friend and colleague Congressman NEIL ABERCROMBIE for cosponsoring this legislation.

I had hoped to see this bill become law last year. The 110th Congress version of the bill (H.R. 3332) passed the House in February 2008. It was approved by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in June 2008. Unfortunately, despite heroic efforts by Senators AKAKA, INOUE, and BINGAMAN, the bill did not come before the full Senate for a vote.

The policy of exiling persons with the disease that was then known as leprosy began under the Kingdom of Hawaii and continued under the governments of the Republic of Hawaii, the Territory of Hawaii, and the State of Hawaii. Children, mothers, and fathers were forcibly separated and sent to the isolated peninsula of Kalaupapa, which for most of its history could only be accessed by water or via a steep mule trail. Children born to parents at Kalaupapa were taken away from their mothers and sent to orphanages or to other family members outside of Kalaupapa. Hawaii's isolation laws for people with Hansen's disease were not repealed until 1969, even though medications to control the disease had been available since the late 1940s.

While most of us know about the sacrifices of Father Damien, who dedicated his life to care for those exiled to Kalaupapa, fewer know of the courage and sacrifices of the patients who were torn from their families and left to make a life in this isolated area. It is important that their lives be remembered.