FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY IN VIETNAM

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 334, which I introduced yesterday. This resolution calls for the release of 118 Vietnamese citizens who have been arrested, detained or harassed for signing the Manifesto on Freedom and Democracy in Vietnam.

The manifesto is a peaceful, nonviolent declaration demanding political freedom and respect for Vietnam's citizens.

House Resolution 334 also directs the Secretary of State to establish a ''Countries of Particular Concern'' list to condemn the government of Vietnam and other countries for engaging in particularly harsh human rights violations. Vietnam's ongoing denial of its citizens' fundamental human rights and political liberties is unacceptable.

I introduced H.R. 334 to mark the 3-year anniversary of the original signing of the manifesto and to raise awareness of the Vietnamese Communist government's failure to improve its human rights record.

In May we will honor the 15th anniversary of Vietnam Human Rights Day. I urge my colleagues to stand up for human rights and to join me in this resolution.

DETROIT FREE PRESS WINS PULITZER PRIZE

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Detroit Free Press for winning journalism's most esteemed award, the Pulitzer Prize, in the category of Local Reporting. Through old-fashioned hard work and investigative journalism, reporters Jim Schaefer and M.L. Elrick helped to secure their newspaper's prize by uncovering evidence which revealed endemic corruption at Detroit City Hall.

The Free Press's journalistic prowess and integrity provided a needed check to government power and corruption, a tradition which is firmly rooted in America's great tradition of a free press. The reporting of Schaefer and Elrick, and their work in uncovering the truth for the people of Detroit, is something that this entire country can be proud of.

Regardless of all of the ways that the media have changed in recent years, one thing that will never go out of style in America is the ability of a free press to keep the public accurately and honestly informed about its government.

Congratulations to the Detroit Free Press. You make us all proud, and you truly exemplify the spirit of the first amendment.

WATER FOR THE WORLD

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, one of the greatest environmental threats in the entire globe is the supply and quality of water.

In honor of the 39th annual Earth Day Celebration, I'm proud to introduce the Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2009. The purpose of this act is to empower the United States Government to respond to the pressing environmental, poverty and security threats presented by mismanagement and shortage of global fresh water.

Today, one-fifth of the world's population relies on fresh water that's either polluted or inadequately supplied. The lack of safe drinking water and sanitation remains the world's greatest health problem, accounting for 2 million deaths and half the illnesses in the developing world.

The bipartisan ''Water for the World Act'' builds upon the framework of our 2005 Water for the Poor Act, expanding United States foreign assistance capacity, elevating sustainable water and sanitation policy, and investing in low-cost, high-impact solutions.

There are lots of things that divide us here in Congress, but one of the things that brings us together is a commitment to make the world and its environment better. And I deeply appreciate the leadership of my colleagues, Congressmen DONALD PAYNE, WAMP, ROHRABACHER, BOOZMAN and BURTON in joining me on this Earth Day to enact this important legislation.

LOUISIANA STATE REPRESENTATIVE PATRICK WILLIAMS COMPLETES 226–MILE WALK TO BATON ROUGE

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Louisiana State Representative Patrick Williams, who recently completed the 226-mile walk from Shreveport, Louisiana, a major city in my district, to the State capitol in Baton Rouge to raise awareness for autism and childhood obesity.

Autism is a serious developmental disability in the United States, with one in 150 children likely to have some form of this disability.

Representative Williams also brought attention to a serious factor affecting childhood obesity—nutrition in the home, especially among poor families.

And let me say parenthetically that for every obese child, we very likely have a future diabetic.

After completing his walk, Representative Williams made a promise to talk to Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to promote healthy eating in regards to food stamp recipients, as well as encouraging them to buy more fruits and vegetables.

As a family physician, I couldn't agree more, and look forward to working with Patrick Williams to find solutions to both of these medical issues.

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT CAUCUS

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on Earth Day, as a member of the Sustainable Energy and Environment Caucus, the so-called Green Dogs, to talk about the importance of investing in clean, renewable energy to help build a new green economy.

Investing in homegrown American renewable energy will create thousands of new American jobs that cannot be shipped overseas. In my State of Nevada, a thriving renewable energy industry will help diversify our local economy, which we so desperately need. Whether it is the researcher in the lab developing new generation biofuels, or the electrician on the roof installing solar panels, these jobs will stay right here in the United States.

We are currently losing clean energy jobs and market share to China, Germany, Korea and other countries, but now we have the opportunity to make a real difference. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure that we make the investments necessary today to help create clean energy jobs for tomorrow.

UNREASONABLE RENEWABLE ENERGY REQUIREMENTS

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, the Democrat leadership is moving forward on the change that they've promised. Last week, the EPA, Environmental Protection Agency, moved forward to regulate carbon dioxide emissions under the Clean Air Act, with or without congressional consent.

This week the Committee on Energy and Commerce is holding hearings on cap-and-tax legislation. And this is what we're learning. The renewable energy requirements in the bill are entirely unrealistic.

Currently, 3 percent of our electricity that is generated is by renewable energy, and the chairman's bill is mandating 25 percent by 2025. That would require 20,000 megawatts of renewable energy to come online every year until 2025. That is far above what the projections are, the government-generated projections.

So our question is, are we saddling our States and our energy consumers

with unrealistic demands and mandates at prohibitively high prices? Well, basically, the Democrat leadership presents a choice. We can acquiesce to bad regulation that will have certain and disastrous impacts on our economy, or we can legislate an even more harmful system.

Basically, Mr. Speaker, it's as though, when faced with a gun to our heads, we are taking it and opting to shoot ourselves in the chest.

EARTH DAY

(Mrs. DAHLKEMPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Mr. Speaker, 39 years ago, then-Senator Gaylord Nelson from Wisconsin established a day on which millions of Americans across the country could demonstrate their support for the most precious resources we have, a healthy, sustainable environment.

For nearly four decades tens of millions of Americans continue on this tradition every April 22, a day we call Earth Day.

I want to acknowledge the commitment and vision of the millions of forward-thinking citizens who use this day to do their part, whether planting a tree, picking up litter, or teaching their children what they can do each day to better the world. Each and every one of these individuals is playing a crucial role as we work to meet the challenges that we all face as a Nation and as a world.

Mr. Speaker, I have always been a proponent of the environment. In fact, I founded and operated the Lake Erie Arboretum at Frontier Park in Erie, Pennsylvania, and I have tried to impart upon my children the important role they can play in meeting the environmental challenges of the 21st century.

In the House of Representatives, I'm proud to continue this work as we take proactive steps to protect our environment and our way of life.

This week we will consider the National Water Research and Development Initiative Act to help improve our environment by securing fresh, clean water for all Americans. To this end, I'm very proud to have attached my amendment that encourages reuse and recycling of our water to promote conservation and sustainability for generations to come.

Thank you to all Americans and those around the world doing their part not only today—Earth Day—but each and every day.

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TEA PARTIES

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today with a message from a few of my constituents. This scroll is a petition signed by hundreds of Centre County residents who participated in one of the many TEA parties that took place this past week in my district.

Not only do I agree with their message that the Federal Government has overstepped its bounds and continues to spend, tax and borrow too much, but I am proud of these folks who took a stand.

I came to Washington in January to be a part of democracy in action, and today, I can say that I am proud of my constituents who spoke out in their displeasure with this broken process that we call Washington. I am proud that they exercised their first amendment rights.

You see, Mr. Speaker, what occurred this past week is democracy. It's what our forefathers envisioned when drafting the Constitution and, later, the Bill of Rights. It's what our soldiers fight for each and every day. Mr. Speaker, it is the American way.

With that, I thank my colleague from Texas for his assistance.

THE 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGEDY AT COLUMBINE HIGH SCHOOL

(Mr. PERLMUTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to recognize and mourn the 10-year anniversary of the Columbine High School tragedy in Littleton, Colorado.

On April 20, 1999, the people of Colorado and across our Nation learned about the senseless act of violence which took 13 lives that day. My friend Congressman COFFMAN represents Columbine High School. I represent an area where many of the families attended Columbine High School. One of my daughters played soccer against a girl who was killed at Columbine. Our neighbors had a nephew who was killed at Columbine. It was a tragedy that affected our community deeply and affected this country deeply; but from a terrible tragedy such as that, with unspeakable evil and violence, we've seen the growth of a community, the coming back together of a community, and we've learned from the families of the victims of this terrible violence.

There is a memorial now built at Clement Park to honor the victims. It is near where I live, and it serves as a reminder of the loss but also of the growth we can develop from that point on. It was a terrible day in Colorado 10 years ago, but if you take a look at the people who have risen from those ashes, so to speak, we have five kids who attended Columbine that year who are now teachers at the high school. There is growth in this country. We deal with evil from time to time, but when we come back together, we are a stronger Nation for it. I know my community is stronger for the terrible tragedy that we suffered 10 years ago.

TAXPAYER CONSCIENCE PROTECTION ACT OF 2009

(Mr. OLSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was proud to introduce H.R. 1981, the Taxpayer Conscience Protection Act of 2009. This bill would require individual State departments of health to document whether they are providing any Federal funds they receive through Medicaid to organizations that perform, promote or refer for abortions.

No matter where you stand on the questions of life, this bill would protect the fundamental right that every American taxpayer should enjoy and, frankly, should expect—the right to know whether their money is being spent on activities or organizations to which they are morally opposed.

This administration and this Congress have pledged a new era of government transparency. The legislation would bring increased transparency for the millions of pro-life Americans who are currently in the dark regarding whether and how much of their tax dollars are being funneled to abortion providers.

Only by shining the light of day onto this area of government can we ensure that Federal tax dollars do not fund morally objectionable practices.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

(Mr. COSTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 94th anniversary of the start of the Armenian genocide, which was the first genocide of the 20th century. Sadly, that template has been a cycle that continues to this day.

In this case, it was established by history that from 1915 to 1923 the Ottoman Empire systematically killed an estimated 1.5 million Armenians and drove hundreds of thousands of others into exile from their ancestral homeland.

President Obama made promises during his campaign that he would finally recognize the Armenian genocide. It is vital to our Nation and to our foreign policy that we accurately reflect history. My district, in the San Joaquin Valley of California, is home to thousands of Armenian Americans, many of whom are the sons and daughters of survivors. We are quickly approaching the 100th anniversary of the start of the Armenian genocide. I am hopeful we don't have to wait until then to bring justice to my Armenian friends and neighbors.

We know that genocide, sadly, continues to this day. The United States