

Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act, and to urge its swift passage in the House of Representatives.

This important legislation would expand the federal definition of hate-motivated crimes to include gender, sexual orientation, disability and gender identity. Violence provoked by prejudice has no place in our society. It jeopardizes not only the safety of the victims but also their friends and neighbors, and upsets public order by making people feel threatened in their communities.

For example, persons with disabilities are often vulnerable to criminal hateful acts because they may seem different or use unfamiliar assistive technologies. Thirty-one states and the District of Columbia, including my home state of Rhode Island, already recognize and prosecute these cases as hate crimes. However, there is still no uniform recognition on the national level that a disability could make a person uniquely susceptible to prejudice. Equally troubling is that Rhode Island law enforcement officials reported that nearly 50 percent of hate crime victims were targeted because of their sexual orientation. Yet even as so many Americans joined together to mourn the loss of Matthew Shepard last October, on the tenth anniversary of his brutal murder, hate-motivated crimes still go unrecognized under federal statute.

H.R. 1913 has the practical purpose of authorizing training and grants for local law enforcement officials to facilitate prevention, investigation and prosecution of hate crimes. However, the passing of this bill today is equally as important as the civil rights legislation that was enacted several decades ago, which enforced the principle that our country does not accept targeting any American for violence or discrimination based on hatred. I urge my colleagues to join me in fighting bigotry that threatens our communities by voting for the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

CREDIT CARDHOLDERS' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 29, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the bill (H.R. 627) to amend the Truth in Lending Act to establish fair and transparent practices relating to the extension of credit under an open end consumer credit plan, and for other purposes:

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Chair, for too long now, credit card companies have toyed with the lives and financial health of the American people. For far too long, credit card companies have seemed to offer hard-working Americans a lifeline, but that lifeline is really an endless web of debt.

Cardholders are surprised by huge hidden fees that are buried in the fine print.

Credit card companies aggressively prey on our young college students who are not yet working. These companies rove college campuses and entice students with gifts, with the intent of collecting interest payments as the student ravel herself in debt.

We are in the midst of a horrible recession. Millions of Americans are without work, trying to keep their homes, feed their families, and stay healthy, because a trip to the doctor could be the straw that breaks the camel's back. But credit card companies remain cold, chasing the almighty dollar.

Many people have a hard enough time just paying monthly interest charges, yet these companies add on additional fees and increase interest rates by 10 and 20 percent—all without notice.

The truth is they do not want consumers to pay off their balances. It is much more profitable to feast on the interest.

We must put an end to this. We can no longer allow these unjust practices to continue. We cannot allow this industry to continue to profit on the hardship of Americans who use their services.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE "WAYSIDE SHRINE AND CROSS CRAFTING IN LITHUANIA" EXHIBIT

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Folk Art exhibit of "Wayside shrine and cross crafting in Lithuania" on the occasion of Lithuania's Millennium being celebrated this year.

Cross crafting in Lithuania has a rich 400 year old history and was inscribed into the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Heritage List of Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2001. The exhibit "Wayside shrine and cross crafting in Lithuania," displayed at the Embassy of Lithuania in Washington, DC features beautifully crafted crosses and shrines which are traditionally built to recognize special occasions and significant events for individuals, families or communities. These crosses can be found throughout Lithuania in churchyards, roadsides, villages and even government buildings, and typically feature the Virgin Mary and various saints. The craft of cross making is one that has been passed down through generations since the 16th century and serves as a symbol of Lithuania's rich cultural and historical history.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of Lithuania's rich history and the cultural significance of cross crafting as featured in the "Wayside shrine and cross crafting in Lithuania" exhibit.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, on March 23, 2009, March 24, 2009, March 30, 2009, March 31, 2009, and April 21, 2009, I missed rollcall votes Nos. 145–149, 157–168 and 193–195 due to flooding in my State of North Dakota. Had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner: Rollcall No.

145, "aye"; rollcall No. 146, "aye"; rollcall No. 147, "aye"; rollcall No. 148, "aye"; rollcall No. 149, "aye"; rollcall No. 157, "aye"; rollcall No. 158, "aye"; rollcall No. 159, "aye"; rollcall No. 160, "aye"; rollcall No. 161, "nay"; rollcall No. 162, "aye"; rollcall No. 163, "aye"; rollcall No. 164, "aye"; rollcall No. 165, "aye"; rollcall No. 166, "aye"; rollcall No. 167, "aye"; rollcall No. 193, "aye"; rollcall No. 194, "aye"; and rollcall No. 195, "aye."

INTRODUCTION ON IRAN REFINED PETROLEUM SANCTIONS ACT

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, our nation has a vital national security interest in ensuring that Iran does not possess nuclear arms or achieve the means to produce them on short notice. My bill, the Iran Refined Petroleum Sanctions Act (IRPSA), is designed to help prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapons capability.

This legislation requires that any foreign entity that sells refined petroleum to Iran—or otherwise enhances Iran's ability to import refined petroleum through, for example, financing, brokering, underwriting, or providing ships for such activity—will be effectively barred from doing business in the United States. The same would be true for any entity that provides goods or services that enhance Iran's ability to maintain or expand its domestic production of refined petroleum.

Because of its limited refining capacity, Iran is forced to import roughly one-quarter of the gasoline and other refined petroleum products it consumes from other countries. Without this outside help, much of the Iranian economy would grind to a halt. It seems hard to believe that one of the world's leading oil exporters could find itself in this position, but it is reality—one that can only be attributed to shockingly poor planning and administration by the Iranian regime.

I and the other co-sponsors of this bill therefore believe that this measure could have a powerfully negative impact on the Iranian economy, rendering it more difficult for the Iranian government to continue to fund a nuclear program that the international community has repeatedly called upon it to suspend. Our goal, of course, is not to punish the Iranian people, but to maximize the chances that we can persuade the Iranian government to accede to the will of the international community.

Let me be clear: I fully support the Administration's strategy of direct diplomatic engagement with Iran, and I have no intention of moving this bill though the legislative process in the near future. In fact, I hope that Congress will never need to take any action on this legislation, for that would mean that Iran at last has complied with the repeatedly-expressed demand of the international community, as embodied in five separate U.N. Security Council resolutions, to verifiably suspend its uranium enrichment program and to end its pursuit of nuclear weapons once and for all.

The larger purpose of my bill is to demonstrate to one and all—but particularly to the Iranian regime—the importance that the U.S. Congress places on the Iranian nuclear issue.

I share President Obama's conviction that it is unacceptable for Iran to possess nuclear weapons and his determination to seek a diplomatic solution to this issue. However, should engagement with Iran not yield the desired results in a reasonable period of time, we will have no choice but to press forward with additional sanctions—such as those contained in IRPSA—that could truly cripple the Iranian economy. In that respect, I am pleased that Secretary of State Clinton has said that she is already intensively engaged with our allies and other key states in the international community for the purpose of, in her words, “laying the groundwork for the kind of very tough . . . sanctions that might be necessary in the event that our offers are either rejected or the process is inconclusive or unsuccessful.”

This legislation is offered in that spirit.

HONORING TEXAS NURSES ASSOCIATION

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, The nearly 2.9 million registered nurses in the United States comprise our nation's largest health care profession; and

Whereas, A renewed emphasis on primary and preventive health care will require the better utilization of all of our nation's registered nursing resources; and

Whereas, Texas Nurses Association has had a mission to advance nursing through leadership, advocacy and innovation; and

Whereas, Texas Nurses Association was founded on February 22, 1907 in Fort Worth, Texas with a group of 19 nurses as the Texas Graduate Nurses' Association and is the oldest professional nursing association in Texas; and

Whereas, Texas Nurses Association has advocated to improve the practice and perception of nursing and to ensure quality care for all Texans; and

Whereas, The demand for registered nursing services will be greater than ever because of the aging of the American population, the continuing expansion of life-sustaining technology, and the explosive growth of home health care services; and

Whereas, Texas Nurses Association has been successful promoting the growth of the nursing practice by getting the Nursing Shortage Reduction Act of 2001 to increase nursing school enrollments; and

Whereas, That more qualified registered nurses will be needed in the future to meet the increasingly complex needs of health care consumers in this community; and

Whereas, Texas Nurses Association in 2007 celebrated 100 years of advocating for professional nursing in Texas; and

Whereas, Along with the American Nurses Association, the Texas Nurses Association has declared the week of May 6–12 as NATIONAL NURSES WEEK with the theme ‘Nurses: Building a Healthy America’ in celebration of the ways in which registered nurses strive to provide safe and high quality patient care and map out the way to improve our health care system; therefore

Be it hereby *Resolved*, That Congressman HENRY CUELLAR, in representing the 28th Con-

gressional District of the State of Texas, honors the Texas Nurses Association.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF CORPORAL BRAD A. DAVIS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor and remembrance of United States Army Corporal Brad A. Davis, who dedicated himself to serving our country, his community and his family as he courageously and selflessly rose to the call of duty.

Corporal Davis grew up in Garfield Heights, Ohio and graduated from Garfield Heights High School. Shortly thereafter, in 2006, he enlisted in the Army, and served our country in two tours of duty in Iraq. He served in F Company, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division.

Throughout his tenure in the Army, Corporal Davis consistently reflected bravery, commitment and compassion, and he often and easily offered his assistance to anyone in need, without regard to his own sacrifice. Corporal Davis risked his own safety to assist his fellow soldiers and was awarded the Purple Heart Medal of Honor by President Barack Obama. He was also awarded the Bronze Star Medal and the Good Conduct Medal by the Secretary of the U.S. Army.

Corporal Davis was an exceptional and courageous United States soldier, and an equally exceptional human being. His young life was framed by commitment to family, service to country, loyalty to his brothers and sisters in uniform, and reflected an unbridled love of life. Corporal Davis' family and friends were the center and foundation of his life. He was the youngest child of Terri and Bob Davis, and the youngest sibling of Jennifer, Robert and Rebecca. A kind young man with a generous and fun-loving heart, Corporal Davis loved being around family and friends and was always the one to bring people together, whether for a last-minute summer game of cornhole or an organized softball tournament.

Madam Speaker, and Colleagues, please join me in honor and remembrance of Corporal Brad A. Davis, whose heroic actions, commitment and bravery will be remembered always. I extend my deepest condolences to the family of Corporal Davis his beloved parents, Bob and Terri, his beloved sisters and brother—Jennifer, Rebecca and Robert; his beloved nephews, Landon and Lukas, and his extended family and friends. The significant sacrifice, service, courage that defined the life of Corporal Davis will be honored and remembered by throughout the Cleveland community.

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 30, 2009

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, on March 24, 2009, the House of Representatives

passed H. Con. Res. 55—recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA)—unanimously by voice vote. The Members of this House have spoken in one voice affirming the need to further deepen the relationship between the United States and Taiwan.

This anniversary is an important milestone and represents an incredible opportunity for us to further build upon and strengthen the U.S.-Taiwan relationship. On April 12, 2009, President Ma Ying-jeou in his address on the anniversary of the TRA declared “the TRA has come to symbolize the strong friendship and trust forged between America and Taiwan over these past decades” and the TRA has served as an anchor of “peace and stability.”

In his address, President Ma laid out the historical and political significance of the TRA and the diplomatic path hewed by its enactment:

The TRA was enacted in 1979 by the U.S. Congress to cope with the Taiwan situation after the U.S. had switched diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing. It replaced the terribly inadequate arrangement of the Carter Administration, by keeping all aspects of the Taiwan-U.S. relationship intact except, of course, formal diplomatic ties, a mutual defense treaty and the stationing of American troops in Taiwan. One American commentator said in 1979 that while the U.S.-China Joint Communiqué establishing diplomatic relations derecognized Taiwan, the Taiwan Relations Act has re-recognized it. My Harvard professor Detlev Vagt said to me after the passing of the TRA that Taiwan is the most recognized unrecognized government of the U.S.

In an imperfect world, the TRA, which largely accommodates Taiwan's needs for continuity, reality, security, legality and governmental status in the new Taiwan-U.S. relationship, is the second-best choice for Taiwan. Today the TRA is more than a convenient solution to a political dilemma. Its very existence changed the evolutionary course of cross-strait development by stabilizing the triangular relationship among Taiwan, the United States and mainland China.

President Ma also addressed the need to promote Taiwan's economic growth and to take the necessary steps to ensure Taiwan's rightful place in our global economy:

We believe that rapprochement with mainland China will improve Taiwan's prospects for expanding our international space. Certainly, the international community will benefit significantly from this change, whether by capitalizing on the new business opportunities thereby made available or simply by no longer being caught in volatile cross-strait relations. For example, the establishment of the Three Links has made it logistically feasible and economically cost-effective to fly, ship or send mail across the Taiwan Strait.

The establishment of direct cross-strait travel and transport provides an incentive for the international community to include Taiwan in regional economic arrangements in East Asia. In fact, right after we inaugurated the Three Links across the Taiwan Strait, Taiwan was able to join the Government Procurement Agreement last December, which we had been unable to participate in when we became a member of the World Trade Organization six years ago. This new development is good news to many potential foreign investors in the U.S., Japan and Europe.

The United States interest will always be in the defense of democracy and in honoring our