INTRODUCTION OF NATIONAL MINER'S DAY RESOLUTION

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, as we, in the Congress, continue to debate the course of energy in America; as we consider the science of efficiency, the effects of power generation on the environment, and the impact of energy supply on the economy and on national security, I believe we also need to remember some very fundamental things.

We need, for example, to pay acute attention to the effects that the decisions we make in Washington will have on the men and women, the families, and the communities back home who have, for generations, provided the natural energy resources that fuel America.

Today I am proud to introduce—along with my colleagues from West Virginia, Representatives ALAN B. MOLLOHAN and SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO—a resolution honoring America's miners.

The government has long recognized that it has an obligation to do all that it can to ensure that our coal miners have safe, healthy workplaces. But I contend that we also have an obligation to do all we can to ensure that our miners simply have work.

America has grown strong through the labor of coal miners. Their work has provided, light, warmth, and economic security for generations of growing American families. it has fueled the steel furnaces that built our great cities and our military might And the labor of miners has made reality of the creative imaginings of America's most inventive minds.

These hard-working, selfless, earnest men and women, their livelihoods, their way of life, and the future of their families and their communities are at stake. Mining can be difficult, dangerous work, but mining is also a noble, honest profession, and miners and their families are proud of the work they do for America, as well they should be.

We can mine and use coal more safely, more cleanly, and more efficiently. And we will. Our future depends upon it.

So, Madam Speaker, I introduce this resolution to support the goals and ideals of a National Miner's Day that will commemorate the work and the sacrifice of miners past and present. But I do so, as well, as a demonstration of support for the jobs of miners future.

HONORING ZACK GRAHAM

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Zack Graham, a very special young man who has earned a spot on the National USA Karate Team. I join with Zack's family and friends in expressing best wishes on his significant achievement. I commend Zack on attaining such a high honor and wish him the best of luck as he competes in the World Karate Championships in Dublin, Ireland, this October.

Gaining recognition for this remarkable achievement reflects both Zack's hard work and dedication. As a member of the standalone Missouri team, as well as the team with the largest number of students to be selected from a single school, Zack should be proud of his accomplishments. He is a member of a celebrated team and has represented the State of Missouri well. With such drive and determination I am certain Zack will be a strong contribution to the national team.

Madam Speaker, I respectfully request you join with me in commending Zack Graham for his success with Sensei Mark Long's Shotokan Karate team and for his effort put forth in achieving this prestigious goal.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, I want to state for the record that yesterday I missed the six rollcall votes of the day. Unfortunately I missed these votes because I was detained in my district.

Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 835, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, as Amended—H.R. 3949—Veterans' Small Business Assistance and Servicemembers Protection Act of 2009.

Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 836, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass—H. Res. 398—Recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift's success.

Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 837, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass—H. Res. 866—Expressing support for designation of a National Veterans History Project Week to encourage public participation in a nationwide project that collects and preserves the stories of the men and women who served our nation in times of war and conflict.

Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 838, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, as Amended—H. Res. 867—Calling on the President and the Secretary of State to oppose unequivocally any endorsement or further consideration of the "Report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict" in multilateral fora.

Had I been present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 839, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass—H.R. 3157—To name the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Alexandria, Minnesota, as the "Max J. Beilke Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic."

Lastly, had I been present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 840, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree—H. Res. 736—Honoring President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address on "Dedication Day", November 19, 2009.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NATIVE HAWAIIAN HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Reauthorization Act of 2009. This legislation is a companion to S. 76, which was introduced earlier this year by Senator DANIEL K. INOUYE.

Native Hawaiians, like American Indians and Alaska Natives, are an indigenous, native people. The Native Hawaiian Health Care Act of 1988, 42 U.S.C. 11701 et seq., provided the authority for the establishment of a range of programs and services designed to improve the health care status of the native people of Hawaii. While Native Hawaiian health care programs have been continuously funded since 1988, they have not been reauthorized since 1992. The bill I introduce today will reauthorize the Native Hawaiian Health Care Act through 2014.

Native Hawaiians have the highest cancer mortality rates in the State of Hawaii—216.8 out of every 100,000 male residents and 191.6 out of every 100,000 female residents. These cancer rates are 21 percent higher than for the total state male population—179.0 out of every 100,000 residents—and 64 percent higher than that for the total state female population—117.0 per 100,000. With respect to breast cancer, Native Hawaiians have the highest mortality rates in the State of Hawaii and nationally Native Hawaiians have the third highest mortality rates.

The death rate from heart disease for Native Hawaiians is 68 percent higher than that for the entire population of the State of Hawaii. The death rate from hypertension is 84 percent higher and the death rate from stroke is 20 percent higher for Native Hawaiians than for the general population of the State of Hawaii.

Congress has previously recognized the unique and historical relationship between the United States and the indigenous people of Hawaii. I urge my colleagues continued support for the health and well-being of Native Hawaiians.

Mahalo (thank you).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEVIN NUNES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

Mr. NUNES. Madam Speaker, on the legislative day of Tuesday, November 3, 2009, I was unavoidably detained and was unable to cast a vote on a number of rollcall votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: rollcall 835—"yea"; rollcall 836—"yea"; rollcall 837—"yea"; rollcall 838—"yea"; rollcall 839—"yea"; rollcall 840—"yea."

HONORING JESSICA GRAHAM

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jessica Graham, a very special young lady who has earned a spot on the National USA Karate Team. I join with Jessica's family and friends in expressing best wishes on her significant achievement. I commend Jessica on attaining such a high honor and wish her the best of luck as she competes in the World Karate Championships in Dublin, Ireland, this October.

Gaining recognition for this remarkable achievement reflects both Jessica's hard work and dedication. As a member of the stand-alone Missouri team, as well as the team with the largest number of students to be selected from a single school, Jessica should be proud of her accomplishments. She is a member of a celebrated team and has represented the state of Missouri well. With such drive and determination I am certain Jessica will be a strong contribution to the national team.

Madam Speaker, I respectfully request you join with me in commending Jessica Graham for her success with Sensei Mark Long's Shotokan Karate team and for her effort put forth in achieving this prestigious goal.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately Monday night, November 2, 2009, and the morning of November 3, 2009 I was unable to cast my votes on H.R. 1168, H. Res. 291, S. 509, H.R. 3949, H. Res. 398, and H. Res. 866 due to a scheduled town hall meeting in Cerro Gordo, Illinois.

Had I been present for Rollcall No. 832, on suspending the Rules and passing H.R. 1168, the Veterans Retraining Act of 2009, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for Rollcall No. 833, on suspending the Rules and passing H. Res. 291, Recognizing the crucial role of assistance dogs in helping wounded veterans live more independent lives, expressing gratitude to The Tower of Hope, and supporting the goals and ideals of creating a Tower of Hope Day, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for Rollcall No. 834, on suspending the Rules and passing S. 509, to authorize a major medical facility project at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Walla Walla, Washington, and for other purposes, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for Rollcall No. 835, on suspending the Rules and passing H.R. 3949, Veterans' Small Business Assistance and Servicemembers Protection Act of 2009, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for Rollcall No. 836, on suspending the Rules and passing H. Res. 398, Recognizing the 60th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift's success, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for Rollcall No. 837, on suspending the Rules and passing H. Res. 866, Expressing support for designation of a National Veterans History Project Week to encourage public participation in a nationwide project that collects and preserves the stories of the men and women who served our Nation in times of war and conflict, I would have voted "aye."

It is my fervent hope that my absence in no way be interpreted as a lack of support and enthusiasm for these important issues and undertakings. Congress' schedule in recent days has been subject to sometimes unpredictable additions and subtractions of days. As the original schedule had established an adjournment date of Oct. 30, 2009, I felt safe in scheduling a town hall meeting the evening of Monday, Nov. 2, for the purpose of meeting with and hearing from my constituents—the voters and citizens who are critical in guiding my votes and my conscience on the important issues we all face.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF LABOR PIONEER AND CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER WILLIE JAMES

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in memoriam of my dear friend, Labor Pioneer and Civil Rights Leader Willie James, who departed this life peacefully on Friday, October 30th, 2009. This strong spirited and God-fearing man dedicated his entire life to uplifting the hopes and dreams of African Americans and people in the Labor Movement and we are all consumed by his passing. In February of 1996, Willie James made labor history, when he became the first African American elected to serve as President of the Transport Workers Union, Local 100.

A native New Yorker, Willie James was born in Harlem Hospital on April 28, 1936 to the late Charles James and Geneva Nelson Surrency. From 1954 through 1957, Willie served his country in the United States Air Force as a proud member of the 80th Supply Squadron, Depot Special, and received the Good Conduct Medal for his demonstration of honor, efficiency and fidelity with great distinction. While in the service, he and a few other airmen formed a doo-wop vocal group that covered songs by the Platters and other groups. Willie was an accomplished Baritone and often told how the group was so good that people in Morocco thought they were the real Platters. After serving in the Air Force he returned to Harlem finding work as a shipping clerk.

Later in life he developed an attraction for exotic plants and beautiful flowers and in 1964, God blessed him with his own beautiful rose when he met and married Rosabelle. Their marriage lasted 41 years when she departed this life in 2005. Shortly after marriage he became a New York City Police Officer and in 1967 he began his career with the Transport Workers Union, TWU, Local 100 under the Manhattan and Bronx Surface Transit Operating Authority, MABSTOA.

He started with a metal-plating company where he was assigned to a unit with workers who were perceived as derelict workers beset by alcohol and laziness. Not looking down upon anyone but seeing the opportunity to help others; he discovered his masterful skill of organizing workers. He told the workers that if they worked with him he would make a case to the management to get them higher wages. After a series of meetings and negotiations with the bosses he won them a raise, and developed a promotional ladder for himself.

He rose through the ranks of TWU Local 100 and held a series of positions: MABSTOA DIVISION II Bus Operator; Division II Recording Secretary; Vice Chairman and Chairman at Amsterdam Garage; the Executive Board's Director of Education and Training; and Financial Secretary Treasurer. As he continued climbing the ladder of TWU he recalled how he continuously endured blatant racism.

Defying the odds in 1996, as the first African American elected to serve as President of the Transport Workers Union Local 100 Willie set the mark that raised the bar for all of us. Willie continued to climb the ranks in the TWU and in the labor movement. Serving as Vice President of the New York AFL–CIO; Vice President of the New York City Central Labor Council and Vice President of the International Transport Workers Union.

In addition to his sufficient contributions to the labor movement Willie James was a senior executive for The Municipal Credit Union serving in a variety of roles. From 1983–1992, he served as Upgrade Training Director; from 1992–1994, he served as Treasurer; from 1994–2000, he served as President; from 2007–2009, he served as Acting Chairman; and in May 2009, Willie served as the Chairman. The Municipal Credit Union is one of the oldest and largest Credit Unions in the State of New York with more than 300,000 members and $1.3 Billion dollars in assets.

In the struggle for Civil and Human Rights, Willie James, a Prince Hall Master Mason of Joppa 55 and founding Member of the Society of Afro-American Transit Employees, SAATE, furthered his accomplishments and dedication to helping others by serving on the Executive Board Committee of the New York Branch of the NAACP; Executive Board Member of the Black Trade Union Leadership Committee; Executive Board of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionist; Member of the 100 Black Men of America, Incorporated; and Member of the Board of 500 MEN Empowerment.

Willie was also deeply involved in many civic and community organizations. He was an ordained Deacon at Mount Hermon Baptist Church in the Bronx, New York; and a very active Member of Mount Calvary Baptist Church in Harlem, New York. He served as a Deacon at Rockland Baptist Church in Pomona, New York until his death.

Willie James firmly believed that when the opportunity presents itself, one should selflessly help somebody without expecting something in return. He often quoted. "Just ask the person who you are helping to pass the baton of love and concern to others in this race of life." Willie loved to sing and at every labor march and rally he used his mighty baritone voice to sing out against injustices and inequality; for fair wages and jobs; and Human Rights for all. I will always remember the songs of freedom and struggle that bellowed from the heart of this moral man.

Willie and his late wife Rosabelle leaves to cherish their memory: His sister, Janet Surrency Monroe; two children, Charles James and Daisy Moyd; three grandsons,