

The first section of this bill requires the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) to publish annual reports on the gross domestic product (GDP) for the U.S. Territories of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Guam, and the United States Virgin Islands (USVI), as well as for the three Freely Associated States (FAS) for which the United States has entered into a Compact of Free Association. The three FAS are the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and the Republic of Palau (ROP). The economic data that the BEA promulgates and publishes are important for states and our country. These statistics are used by federal, state, and local governments for budget development and projections; by the Federal Reserve for monetary policy; by the private sector for planning and investment; and by the American public to follow and understand the performance of the national economy.

Historically, the BEA has not encompassed the U.S. Territories in its Regional Economic Accounts or as part of its annual State GDP reports. Until last year, a formalized, uniform and federal framework for estimating the GDP in the U.S. Territories did not exist. In March 2009, the BEA and the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) at the U.S. Department of the Interior entered into a formal agreement to develop such a framework and federally assist the U.S. territories in developing and producing annual (GDP) statistics for their respective jurisdictions. The agreement established these efforts as the "Statistical Improvement Program" (SIP) and OIA financed it under its discretionary budget at \$1.6 million over a period of 18 months (March 2009–September 2010). The results were unveiled this year, and the bill I have introduced today would direct BEA to permanently continue its efforts in estimating the GDP for these jurisdictions as part of its existing program and resources so that this important work continues.

The second section of this bill amends the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 (CNRA), Public Law 110–229, for the purpose of implementation of the new Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program and other provisions. The interim final rule issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security last year limited the full administration of the new Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver program and it did not fulfill the Congressional intent, established under the law. Secretary Napolitano used her discretionary parole authority to allow travel of certain visitors only to the CNMI. While this was an important action to preserve the CNMI economy, it did not fulfill the intent of a new joint visa waiver program.

Given that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is in the process of issuing a final rule regarding the joint Guam-Visa Waiver Program, this bill is timely and essential in preserving the regional economy of Guam and the CNMI. Most importantly the bill requires the Secretary of DHS to "provide for an alternative procedure" to achieve the benefits that formal inclusion of countries determined to have had significant economic benefit in the CNMI would otherwise bring under the Guam-Northern Mariana Islands Visa Waiver Program. The bill does not specify or give definition to a scope of possible "alternative procedures;" it leaves it to the discretion of the Secretary of DHS. This is important to the economy of the Western Pacific, as tourism remains our largest industry.

I look forward to working with my colleagues as this bill moves forward in the legislative process.

HONORING THE WORK OF THE NISQUALLY LAND TRUST

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Nisqually Land Trust and their exceptional efforts to address the Northwest's continuously challenging coastal issues.

The Coastal America Partnership awarded the Nisqually Land Trust and its Red Salmon Restoration Team partners with the 13th Annual 2010 Coastal America Spirit Award. This national award was given in recognition of the Red Salmon Restoration Team's restoration of salmon and migratory bird habitat located in the Land Trust's Red Salmon Creek Management Unit in the Nisqually River Delta.

In partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nisqually Tribe, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Veterans Conservation Corps, Nisqually Stream Stewards, Pierce County Stream Team, Intel Corporation, and various school groups, the Nisqually Land Trust has provided superior leadership in protecting, preserving, and restoring the region's coastal resources and ecosystems.

Established in 1992, the Coastal America Partnership is a coalition of Federal agencies, State and local governments, and private organizations that work to protect, preserve, and restore the nation's coasts. Coastal America regional teams have initiated more than 700 restoration protection projects in 26 states, restoring thousands of acres of wetlands and protecting critical habitats.

Continuing the tradition of preserving the region's coasts and wetlands, the Nisqually Land Trust manages and protects over 2700 acres of land and habitat within the Nisqually Watershed. In addition, the Land Trust and its partners have been successful in permanently protecting 71 percent of the river's salmon-producing shoreline. As these efforts have helped to ensure the continued health and sustainable population of the Pacific Northwest Native Wild Salmon, it is clear why Coastal America selected this effort for its Spirit Award.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate the Nisqually Land Trust on its excellent work to protect and manage the critical wildlife and habitat areas of the Nisqually River Delta.

RECOGNIZING SCHERTZ TALES MAGAZINE

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Schertz Tales Magazine, the monthly publication of the City of Schertz, which was recently honored with four international 'Awards of Distinction' at the 2010 Communicator Awards announced by the

International Academy of the Visual Arts in New York City, New York.

Schertz's award-winning entries consisted of the July 2008 Magazine Cover; billboard design for the 2008 Festival of Angels event; poster ad for Artz '09; and overall design for the Artz exhibit.

Schertz' newsletter, founded in the mid-1980's, has evolved over the years into the popular monthly Schertz Tales Magazine format. Patterned after successful travel magazines and Texas-centric human interest publications, Schertz Tales Magazine's design reflects its namesake city's acclaimed quality-of-life and can-do spirit. Publisher Brad E. Bailey and his team have shaped the publication to offer important city news and business information while sharing interesting character profiles and local stories.

Schertz Tales Magazine serves a vibrant, fast-growing community that does not have the tradition of a local newspaper, radio station or other source of news and, yet, fills that void effectively. In fact, Schertz Tales Magazine's transformation from newsletter to an internationally acclaimed metropolitan magazine mirrors the emergence of Schertz from a small town founded by German immigrants to one of the premier communities in the State of Texas. Backed by the creative genius of Graphic Designer Alexis Souza, the magazine continues to evolve and grow.

With thousands of entries received from across the U.S. and around the world, the Communicator Awards program is the largest and most competitive awards event honoring creative excellence for communications professionals. Current International Academy of the Visual Arts membership represents a "Who's Who" of acclaimed media, advertising, and marketing firms.

Current and past staff members involved in the award-winning Schertz Tales Magazine include: Leslie Hernandez, Advertising Sales Manager; Mary A. Spence, Business Manager; Jessica Robinson, Event Coordinator; Chuck McCollough, Editor and Writer; and Chris Matzenbacher, Advertising Sales Director. City of Schertz City Manager Don Taylor, Assistant City Managers David J. Harris and John Bierschwale and the entire City Staff can be proud of the recognition bestowed through the IAVA.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize the Schertz Tales Magazine, a valued and recently awarded news source.

LOCAL COLLEGE TAKES NATIONAL BOWLING CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the women's bowling team of a college located in my district, Webber International University. In their inaugural year as a team, the Lady Warriors took home the 2010 United States Bowling Congress Intercollegiate Bowling National Championship.

The United States Bowling Congress Intercollegiate Bowling National Championship was held this year in El Paso, Texas on April 15 through April 17. The tournament pitted together teams from NCAA Division I, II, III, and NAIA colleges.

I want to acknowledge what an accomplishment it is for the Lady Warriors to bring home the championship title on their first year in competition. This feat has not been done since 1975. To reach this, the Webber team first defeated a team from Robert Morris College twice in the semifinals. Advancing from there, the Lady Warriors claimed the championship over the team from McKendree University. The final round ended in a 2–1 victory in a best out of three series.

The team's anchor, Hayley Beavis, was later named the National Tournament MVP. This victory is extra sweet for her because she sprained her ankle a week before the tournament in training and was unsure if she was even going to compete. Teammate Ashley Galante was named as a National Collegiate Bowling Coaches Association Honorable Mention All-American for the season. They were both backed by the strong contributions from fellow teammates Yoselin Leon Garcia, Stephanie Martins, Jessica Santiago, Katie Thoronton, and Brittney Mari. The team was coached by Head Coach Randy Stoughton and assistant coaches Joe Slowinski and Del Warren.

The same team later received the Polk County Female Collegiate Team of the Year Award. This is the first team from Webber International University to receive such an award. The Polk County All Sports Award is meant to honor the areas best high school, college, and professional athletes.

Established in 1927, Webber International University hosts just over 600 undergraduate and postgraduate students. Supported by 45 faculty members, this Babson Park institution not only achieves excellence in sport, but their long tradition of superb education.

On behalf of Florida's 12th Congressional District, I wish to congratulate Hayley Beavis, Ashley Galante, and the whole Lady Warriors team.

HONORING MICHELLE STAUFFER

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Michelle Stauffer upon her retirement from Wawona School.

Mrs. Michelle Stauffer has spent the past 29 years serving as a teaching principal at Wawona School; a kindergarten through sixth grade, one-room elementary school in Yosemite National Park. Wawona School has been serving the children that live in the park since the late 1800's. Park rangers, firefighters and other National Park Service employees rely on this community school, and Mrs. Stauffer, to educate and nurture their children. During its existence, the school has educated the children of many Yosemite pioneer families, including the Washburn, Bruce and Gordon families.

Mrs. Stauffer is dedicated to providing a solid education for the students. Field trips to Washington D.C., museums, live theater and the San Francisco Opera are part of the curriculum at Wawona School. Mrs. Stauffer believes these field trips are an important part of exposing her students to life outside of the park.

Mrs. Stauffer is an extraordinary person and educator. She is dedicated to the Yosemite community and especially to her students. She is committed to providing her students with the very best education in the most nurturing environment possible.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Michelle Stauffer for her dedicated service to the student of Wawona School. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mrs. Stauffer many years of continued success.

PREVENTING SOCIAL SECURITY FRAUD ACT OF 2010

HON. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the "Preventing Social Security Fraud Act of 2010." This bill will reduce the Social Security Disability backlog by punishing insurance companies that force policyholders to fraudulently apply for disability benefits.

The initial application backlog for Social Security Disability will be more than 1 million applicants by October. The disability hearing backlog sits at an average of 446 days with 718,000 people waiting for a hearing.

Despite these staggering numbers, a handful of bad actors in the insurance industry force individuals who are capable of working to apply for disability benefits, and when denied, forces them to appeal the decision again and again.

These companies do this because it benefits them financially. Each application in the disability process lowers the company's cash reserve requirement. The companies also know that if one of their policyholders happens to hit the jackpot and receive Social Security benefits, then the insurer can lower its monthly payout to the policyholder by that amount.

Nevermind that these individual policyholders must certify under threat of fine or imprisonment when applying for benefits that their claim is legitimate. The policyholder is forced to take all the risk, while the insurer wins either way.

The legislation I am introducing today requires insurers to certify to the Social Security Administration that a claim is legitimate when it forces a policyholder to apply for Social Security Disability. It is important that we protect the right of all Americans to apply for these benefits and appeal legitimate claims.

This bill in no way threatens that system. For those who apply for disability on their own, nothing changes. For those who are forced by their insurers, I merely ask that the insurer take the same oath required of their policyholder and stand by the claim.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

SUPPORT FOR THE REUNIFICATION OF CYPRUS

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Mr. SHERMAN. Madam Speaker, I wish to speak today about an injustice that has been taking place in Cyprus for the last 36 years.

In 1974, when hostilities broke out on the small island, Turkey began its military occupation of more than one-third of Cypriot land.

Nearly ten years later, the Turks declared this land to be the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus". To this day, the only country to recognize this declaration is Turkey, which still illegally occupies the northern part of Cyprus.

Currently there are about 36,000 Turkish troops occupying the North of Cyprus. They stand as a physical manifestation of the barrier Turkey is putting up against Cypriot reunification.

Turkey has made other efforts to discourage reunification. According to the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly, Turkey has deliberately and continuously modified the demographics of the island, and they have enacted a system of "naturalization" that encourages mainland Turks to move to Cyprus.

This occupation is made all the more tragic by its needlessness. Thirteen million Turkish-Cypriots and Greek-Cypriots have crossed into each others communities without incident. They seek to live together as neighbors in countries to which they have emigrated. There is no reason for these peoples to be divided.

We have reason to be hopeful—Turkish and Greek Cypriot leaders have been engaged in UN-sponsored negotiations since September 2008 to reunify the island.

The United States has an important role to play in the reunification of Cyprus. We must ensure that we are doing all we can to make the island unified once more by working with the European Union, Turkey, and all citizens of Cyprus toward a peaceful and fair resolution of this decades-old conflict.

HONORING ERICA CHALKLEY

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 30, 2010

Mr. WALDEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and express gratitude to Erica Chalkley, who dedicated herself in my Washington, D.C. office to serving the people of Oregon's Second Congressional District for nearly three years. In that time, she distinguished herself as a talented young woman who dedicates herself unswervingly to her career, colleagues, and family.

Madam Speaker, it's tough enough to lose the only other Duck in my Washington, D.C. office. But much more than that, Erica brought an enthusiasm and positive attitude every day that will be sorely missed. Countless Oregonians have walked through the doors of my Washington, D.C. office and been greeted first by Erica, who made them feel at home during their visit. I received many exuberant "thank you" notes over the past few years that specifically mentioned how grateful they were for Erica's hospitality and charm.