

they celebrate 100 incredible years of community service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN BARROW

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 28, 2010

Mr. BARROW. Madam Speaker, I was not present for votes on Wednesday, September 22, 2010. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall vote 532 and "yes" on rollcall vote 533.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF JOHNNIE AYCOCK

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 28, 2010

Mr. BACHUS. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to recognize the contributions of Johnnie Aycock, the President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, for his dedicated and tireless work to bring greater opportunity to the people of our region and State. Johnnie has announced plans to retire from the Chamber effective March 21, 2011 after 28 years of exemplary service.

During Johnnie's tenure, the West Alabama Chamber of Commerce has earned statewide recognition and respect for economic and workforce development, education initiatives and innovation in community development programming. West Alabama has enjoyed significant economic achievements, from the recruitment of large manufacturing plants to the development of many new small businesses. Johnnie's ability to build partnerships among the private sector, educational institutions, and government has been an integral part of this success.

Johnnie has stressed the importance of business leaders being active in public affairs and in their communities. He founded Leadership Tuscaloosa, which has trained more than 900 citizens in leadership. He has served on the Alabama Governor's Commission on Existing Industries and as Co-Chair of the Committee on Tax, Incentives & Fiscal Policy and has freely given of his time and talents to numerous civic organizations including the Alabama Jaycees, the Literacy Council of West Alabama, Junior Achievement, and the Rotary Club of Tuscaloosa. Johnnie has been recognized for his outstanding work with honors that include the Phi Delta Kappa's Outstanding Citizen For Education in Tuscaloosa County, the Tuscaloosa Advertising Federation's Bronze Oak Wreath Award for Community Service, the Outstanding Commitment to Public Service Award from the University of Alabama, and induction into the Tuscaloosa County Civic Hall of Fame.

A skilled communicator, Johnnie is the author of "Tuscaloosa: The Tradition, The Spirit, The Vision" and a contributor to the book, "Tuscaloosa: Centennial Progress, Millennial Hopes." He has been a columnist for the Tuscaloosa Business Ink Magazine, Planet Weekly, and Tuscaloosa Christian Family Magazine and for 7 years wrote a weekly column for the Tuscaloosa News.

Johnnie Aycock is a graduate of Auburn University and the Institute of Organization Management at the University of Notre Dame. He is also a graduate of the Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro, North Carolina. Johnnie is a former member of the faculty of the Kettering Foundation's Public Policy Institute and has served as an adjunct professor at Stillman College's Management Institute.

The sound economic base and high quality of life that distinguishes West Alabama can be traced in no small part to the energy and enthusiasm of Johnnie Aycock. It is has been my pleasure to work with Johnnie on many economic development, education, and service initiatives during my time in Congress. Though Johnnie is retiring from his leadership position at the West Alabama Chamber of Commerce, I have no doubt that he will continue to be a devoted servant to the community that he so dearly loves.

HONORING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF TREE FRESNO IN FRESNO, CALIFORNIA

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 28, 2010

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tree Fresno on the occasion of their 25th anniversary celebration. Tree Fresno has made a significant impact on the community of Fresno by promoting environmental stewardship programs and educating the community on the importance of preserving the environment. During their quarter-century of work, Tree Fresno has been responsible for planting over 37,000 trees in the greater Fresno area.

Tree Fresno was founded in 1985 during the city of Fresno's centennial anniversary by a group of concerned citizens dedicated to improving the local environment and preserving green spaces. Initial efforts from this group came to fruition in the form of a telethon raising \$27,000 which was used to purchase trees to be planted in the downtown and Tower District areas.

While Tree Fresno's primary focus is on preserving green space in the community of Fresno, educational programs remain an important aspect of Tree Fresno's mission. Educational and stewardship programs such as Trees for Campuses & Kids and the Junior Board of Directors help teach Valley children the value of green spaces and caring for the environment. The Trees for Campuses & Kids program, which has planted over 4,100 trees on Fresno County school campuses, is only one example of the great services Tree Fresno provides to the community.

Community support, including endowment and membership programs, has helped Tree Fresno accomplish a variety of projects in the Fresno community. Examples of these initiatives include the planting of 500 trees along the McKinley Avenue Canal Bank and 939 trees on Blackstone Avenue, as well as partnerships such the "A Shade Better" program with Pacific Gas & Electric which allowed for 400 trees to be provided to homeowners to reduce energy costs. Through their efforts, Tree Fresno has planted over an average of a thousand trees a year in Central California. Tree

Fresno also continues to make progress on the Friant Oak Loop-Scenic Highway Beautification and Reforestation Project and the Master Urban Parkway Plan which will create a network of over 200 miles of urban trails and connect schools, parks, and recreation areas.

In honor of Tree Fresno's 25th anniversary, they are launching a new endeavor called the "Real Green" program which aims to plant 100,000 trees over the next 10 years in partnership with organizations in the Fresno area. Tree Fresno's 25 years of advocacy for green spaces has contributed immensely to making the Central Valley a better place to live, work and raise a family. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Tree Fresno on the occasion of their 25th Anniversary and applaud their tireless work and enormous contributions as they continue their mission to preserve green space and provide environmental education for the community of Fresno.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 6222, THE NATIONAL OPPORTUNITY AND COMMUNITY RENEWAL ACT

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 28, 2010

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, hunger and poverty are scourges on our society, but they do not have to be enduring or debilitating. Over the last hundred years, we have created a safety net system in this Nation that ensures that low-income families do not go without food, shelter and healthcare. No longer do we see mass starvation in this country. Communities aren't ravaged by disease and low-income families, for the most part, have access to doctors and medicine when they do face illnesses.

The sad fact, however, is that we are not winning the battle against poverty in this country. Recent Census data show that over 43 million Americans now live in poverty and, of those people, over 15 million are children.

If that weren't bad enough, we are continuing to recover from the worst economic times this Nation has faced since the Great Depression. Federal and state funds are tight and private donations to non-profits and charities aren't coming in at the same levels as before the recession.

It's easy to talk the talk when it comes to poverty. There may be a press release or a quick statement for the local papers. Some may even give a policy speech talking about the travesty of poverty and professing the need to do something bold.

But actions speak louder than words. We need to renew our commitment to fighting poverty. We need to refresh our thinking about the way our communities target poverty. Frankly, it's time we start addressing poverty in a new way, a way that reflects the challenges of low-income families while respecting these difficult economic times.

That's why I introduced "The National Opportunity and Community Renewal Act" today. I'm pleased that Senator BOB CASEY from Pennsylvania introduced a companion version in the Senate and I look forward to working with him on this issue.

The idea is simple—reduce poverty by better utilizing federal and state resources in

smarter and more sensible ways. Making ends meet through federal programs is not how people in this country want to live. The families I talk to want good paying jobs that allow them to put good, nutritious food on their table; pay for a roof over their head; and have a job that provides access to good, comprehensive healthcare. But the current federal safety net programs don't help people lift themselves out of poverty.

This bill, however, will help them do that. The National Opportunity and Community Renewal Act will award ten communities grants for five years each to test new and innovative approaches to poverty reduction. Each award is for \$10 million that must be used in ways that will reduce poverty in half over 10 years. In other words, this bill allows communities to come up with antipoverty plans while maximizing the amount of funding spent on these plans.

We know that some plans work better in urban areas than in rural areas; that fighting poverty in Central Pennsylvania is different than fighting poverty in Central Massachusetts. But that doesn't mean the goals and means are any different.

Let me be clear—no one should interpret this legislation as cut to the social safety net. During these difficult times, we must ensure that low-income families have the support they need to put food on the table, heat their homes and receive proper medical care. This legislation is a starting point in this effort, a way to begin the dialogue on ways to improve and more efficiently run our anti-poverty programs. Frankly, it's a way to start the conversation on how to cut poverty in half in 10 years; a way to shift the conversation from individual safety net programs that manage the problem to a focus on results that actually help lift people out of poverty.

We need to commit to reducing poverty, but we need to do so smartly and responsibly. We need to allow communities the flexibility to come up with plans that suit their communities and we need to properly but responsibly fund these programs.

Ultimately, we'll be judged by the results of these programs. I believe we can reduce poverty in these participating communities by half in 10 years and I'm looking forward to working Senator CASEY, Father Larry Snyder and the Catholic Charities community on this worthy project.

HONORING UKRAINIAN GENOCIDE
REMEMBRANCE DAY 2010

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 28, 2010

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay homage to the 10 million innocent men, women and children who lost their lives in the Ukrainian genocide of 1932–1933. As a result of Joseph Stalin and the Soviet government's brutal economic policies, peasants were stripped of their land, herded onto collective farms, and all the food that was produced was property of the state. Due to this deprivation of food and aid, masses of Ukrainian people began to starve in what is now known as one of the greatest atrocities known to civilization: an intentional, manmade famine intended to

defeat all resistance and break the will of the Ukrainian people.

The Soviets, however, failed to account for the resilience and unbreakable spirit attributed to the people of this nation as the Ukrainians proved their strong will in emerging from an overtly oppressive regime to form a strong democratic nation. The Orange Revolution and the people of Ukraine are a true testament to the world of how a nation in dire straits can triumph over its oppressor to build a sovereign democracy.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ukrainian Genocide Remembrance Day 2010, as we shed light on the horrific effects of group-targeted acts of violence and commemorate those who suffered. It's important not to fall into the line of retroactive thinking and dismiss these instances of the worst type of groupthink as issues from the past. Regimes in power with the desire and intent to destroy national, ethnic and religious still exist in many countries around the world. The divisive will of these people is only strengthened if we choose to ignore their presence.

HONORING D.C.'S DIFFERENT
DRUMMERS

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 28, 2010

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating D.C.'s Different Drummers on their 30th Anniversary of providing music and entertainment for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community in Washington, D.C.

The marching band began with 9 members in the 1980s, but D.C.'s Different Drummers has grown in membership and is comprised of several marching bands that range from four to 74 players, including the Capitol Pride Symphonic Band, Capitol Pride Winds, DC Swing! big band, DCDD Marching Band, Pep Band, and several other ensembles.

D.C.'s Different Drummers are committed to creating fine music and entertainment for the community. Their annual marches in the Capital Pride Parade and the Fourth of July Palisades Parade have received significant local attention over the years, but their march in the Inaugural Parade of President Barack Obama, as part of the Lesbian and Gay Band Association, brought national attention to their excellence as well. The D.C.'s Different Drummers have marched in Pride Parades in Baltimore, Harrisburg, Fredericksburg and Durham, Maryland.

The community has benefited as well through their volunteer efforts, such as carrying banners, US/DC flags, and the like at parades.

D.C.'s Different Drummers welcome not only non-gay members and non-musicians, but also encompass people of all races, cultures, and backgrounds. They hold open, weekly rehearsals. D.C.'s Different Drummers are truly a community-oriented band with respect for all.

I have marched in Pride parades since coming to Congress to emphasize universal human rights and the importance of enacting

federal legislation to secure the same rights for the LGBT community enjoyed by others. Congress has much work to do. We must pass the Family Leave Insurance Act, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, the Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act, the Respect for Marriage Act, the Safe Schools Improvement Act, the Military Readiness Enhancement Act, the Tax Equity for Health Plan Beneficiaries Act, the Family and Medical Leave Inclusion Act, the Uniting American Families Act, and the Responsible Education About Life Act.

This year our Nation's capital joined Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire in extending equal marriage rights to its LGBT residents.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating the D.C.'s Different Drummers on their 30th Anniversary.

INTRODUCING THE HAITIAN EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT ACT OF 2010

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 28, 2010

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Haitian Educational Empowerment Act of 2010. This legislation will allow those students who have had their studies interrupted as a result of the January 12th earthquake to complete their degrees at a U.S. university. It will also provide grants to American universities that have taken in Haitian students so that these schools can provide necessary support services.

As we are all well aware, this past January, a 7.0 magnitude earthquake rocked the already struggling nation of Haiti. Approximately three million people were affected and 230,000 are estimated to have died. Those that survived are facing unimaginable conditions with a crumbling infrastructure that has hindered the availability of even basic necessities.

However, in addition to the massive physical devastation and loss of human life, the earthquake also dealt a devastating blow to Haiti's already struggling higher education sector. With 87 percent of Haiti's universities located in the affected region, the earthquake leveled many university buildings and killed scores of students and academics. The State University of Haiti, the nation's largest, saw 80 percent of its buildings destroyed.

Even if classes are able to resume under current conditions, many students have found that they can no longer afford to attend as they and their families struggle to recover from the earthquake. Additionally, prior to the earthquake, only 1 percent of Haitians between the ages of 18 and 24 were enrolled in a university. For many of these students, a college education was their ticket out of poverty.

Now, they have not only seen their loved ones perish and their homes reduced to rubble, but their hopes for a better future have been dashed as well. My legislation will allow these students to complete their studies while requiring them to return to the island upon completion to put their education to work.

At a time of extreme instability and crisis, the United States must do all within its power