

military service. Each story is unique and humbling for those of us who, far from the dangers they have faced, live our lives in relative comfort and ease. The day the Hinkle family learned of the death of their son and brother was probably the hardest day they have ever faced and our thoughts, prayers and deepest gratitude go out to the family and friends of Airman Hinkle. There are no words that can relieve their pain and what words we can offer only begin to convey our deep respect and highest appreciation.

Senior Airman Hinkle's family have all given a part of themselves in the loss of their loved one and we hope they know that his service and the goodness he brought to this world will never be forgotten.

INTRODUCTION OF SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE STEPS TO COUNTER ANTI-MUSLIM SENTIMENT

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 31, 2011

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce this resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the federal government should take steps to counter anti-Muslim sentiment, along with additional cosponsors. Over the last decade, the American Muslim community has confronted a festering level of suspicion which has manifested itself in hostile government policies and bias from the general public. A CBS/New York Times poll released in mid-September showed that as many as 20 percent of Americans said they have negative feelings toward Muslims because of the September 11th terrorist attacks. While Congress has confronted some of the more violent manifestations of this bias, the general climate faced by the community has continued to create barriers to full participation in public life that should be addressed by official government policy.

As a member who represents a district with one of the greatest concentrations of American Muslims in the nation, I believe that this sense of Congress is a logical step toward sending the message that this group of proud citizens should be able to enjoy the rights guaranteed under the Constitution to the same extent as all other Americans. Throughout diverse cities and small towns across the country, American Muslims have a long history of playing crucial roles in law enforcement and the armed forces, and as business leaders, doctors, lawyers, and teachers. However, there exists in our nation today a disturbing and dangerous trend of anti-Muslim rhetoric and bigotry, evidenced by attacks against individuals, religious institutions and entire communities.

The United States is a country founded on the principles of tolerance and religious freedom, as embodied in the First Amendment of the Constitution. The protection of these principles is vital to the ongoing sense of community shared by the diverse peoples and religious groups of this nation. Targeting American Muslims for scrutiny based on their religion goes against the core principles of religious freedom and equal protection under the law. Moreover, the practice erodes trust in

government and law enforcement at all levels, which, in turn, undermines public safety.

The American Muslim community should be able to rely on the federal government to lead the effort in fostering an open climate of understanding and cooperation. These communities must be shielded from the threat of violence and suspicion that was at the heart of last January's thwarted attack against the Islamic Center of America in Dearborn, Michigan. They should also be able to rely on law enforcement's fundamental integrity and respect for First Amendment protected rights. Only through a balanced examination of the challenges facing the nation will we establish a strong policy framework for protecting security, while respecting the Constitution and the interests of affected communities.

This sense of Congress is an attempt to set the record straight and counter the perception of growing anti-Muslim rhetoric. Congress has a solemn duty to ensure that its actions do not fuel misconceptions about, and prejudices toward, any faith community, including the American Muslim community and Islam. Scores of religious, civil rights, law enforcement, and national security leaders and organizations representing diverse Americans and areas of expertise are concerned about messages which appear to target the American Muslim community, sending counterproductive messages both domestically and internationally. It is essential that the federal government send the message that we all must work together to guarantee the security of our country and that no community should be singled out for suspicion.

RECOGNIZING DR. MARIE ROSSMANN

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 31, 2011

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Marie Rossmann on being named the Texas State Assistant Principal of the Year. Dr. Rossmann has worked diligently to promote the high educational standards of the 26th District of Texas. She has been an educator for two decades, and has maintained her passion and optimism.

Most recently, Dr. Rossmann spearheaded the Yellow Project. With the Yellow Project, Dr. Rossmann seeks to "assist teachers with specific interventions which enable students to become more successful in the classroom." This effort is unique in that it encourages teachers to take the entire child into account when coming up with a way to address his or her particular needs. It is so easy to think about the education system as one giant entity, but Dr. Rossmann reminds us that it is in fact a system composing many individual students.

It is this determination and insight that made Dr. Marie Rossmann an obvious choice for the Texas State Assistant Principal of the Year. I am encouraged to know there are people like Dr. Rossmann who are making an impact on our children's lives. Please join me in recognizing this world class educator on her wonderful work.

TRIBUTE TO GERALDINE FERRARO

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 31, 2011

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute and appreciation of Geraldine Ferraro, who blazed a trail for all women, especially in government, and dedicated her life to public service.

Gerry and I shared many priorities, many of which were grounded in our similar experiences. As a former PTA president in Queens, New York, I felt a unique kinship with Gerry, who taught elementary school in Queens. In these capacities, we came to better understand the struggles families faced, the unmet needs of children, and the opportunities—and, indeed, our responsibility—to exercise our precious rights to improve our communities for all our fellow citizens.

One of only three women in her law school class, she advocated for women and children in countless pro bono cases in family court, including during the years she spent at home raising her own children. Gerry's sense of commitment to justice and opportunity for abused women and children was rivaled only by her success. In the Queens District Attorney's office, she led the Special Victims Bureau, prosecuting domestic violence, child abuse, and sex crimes. She gave voice to thousands who desperately needed an advocate and improved the quality of life and safety for all New Yorkers.

Then as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, Geraldine Ferraro fought day-in and day-out in the continuing struggle for women's rights, especially in the workplace. Before any of us knew the injustice Lilly Ledbetter faced in a tire manufacturing plant 900 miles from New York, Gerry was working to ensure women received wages, benefits, and pensions equal to their male counterparts. She laid the groundwork for the Lilly Ledbetter equal pay legislation we passed only two years ago.

The first Italian-American and the first woman on a major-party presidential ticket, Geraldine Ferraro crystallized for millions of women and girls that gender should be no obstacle to public service and national leadership. Hillary Rodham Clinton, NANCY PELOSI, and other strong women in government have benefited from the foundation she laid as the Democratic Party's Vice Presidential nominee in 1984, and she inspired countless women to pursue elected office and assert their power as voters and active civic participants. Thanks to her efforts, the United States is stronger and more representative of our diverse and vibrant population.

Her leadership did not end when she left the halls of Congress. As U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, she was a highly effective voice for women and families not just in the United States, but worldwide. She donated a great deal of her time and talent to highly respected charitable organizations and causes.

Once diagnosed with multiple myeloma, she fought her illness for 12 years with the same tenacity and determination that were the hallmarks of her professional career. I was privileged to be part of honoring Geraldine with the Eleanor Roosevelt Legacy Committee's 2009