

At home, however, Georgia confronts the unresolved conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In December, I chaired a briefing by the Helsinki Commission that examined the conflicts in the Caucasus, including Abkhazia and South Ossetia as well as Nagorno-Karabakh. I was impressed by the witnesses' expert testimony but concerned by their warning about the possibility of renewed hostilities in this strategically important region.

Despite mediation by the OSCE Minsk Group, the parties seem no closer to a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute than they were years ago. Prospects for settling the conflicts in Abkhazia and South Ossetia are even more remote, with Russia having recognized the independence of those separatist regions, where OSCE monitors have also been excluded.

Of course, the U.S. Government has for years been involved in negotiating a settlement of these conflicts, through participation in the Minsk Group and by attempting to move Russia toward a constructive approach in the Geneva talks on Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Washington's efforts have unfortunately not resulted in a resolution of these protracted disputes.

We have seen how quickly so-called "frozen" conflicts can come unfrozen, with terrible consequences. It is my understanding that Secretary Clinton is planning a trip to Georgia. I hope this is a sign that the region will receive a continuing and high priority in U.S. diplomacy.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. MARK S. NEWMAN

**HON. GEOFF DAVIS**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mr. Mark S. Newman, the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of DRS Technologies, as he retires after thirty-nine years of dedicated service to the defense industry and our servicemen and women.

Mark's leadership and inspirational concern for providing our warriors with the very best technology this nation can produce has led to the development and fielding of products which have directly saved lives on the battlefield, created enhanced situational awareness and provided superior advantages to our armed forces. He has, for his entire career, sought to place equipment in the hands of our troops that ensured they not only completed their missions, but returned home safely.

Mark joined DRS Technologies in 1973, four years after the company's founding, and was named a director in 1988. After serving many years as the company's Chief Financial Officer, he was named President and CEO in 1994, and in 1995 was elected Chairman of the Board. Under his watch, the company grew from a small specialty electronics supplier to a highly diversified defense technology provider with 10,000 employees—over 15% of whom have served in the U.S. Armed Forces. In short, Mark has built a company that is a true American success story.

In 2005, Mark established the DRS Technologies Charitable Foundation, with a focus on helping those who serve—a cause he

knew would resonate throughout the entire DRS workforce. Through the years that followed, he has raised about \$600,000 to support the Intrepid Fallen Heroes Fund and their efforts to build a world-class, state-of-the-art physical rehabilitation center at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. Mark also helped raise over \$500,000 to assist the USO with the initiative "Operation Enduring Care," becoming a Global Partner with the USO in the process. In 2009, Mark helped raise over \$600,000 for the building of the state-of-the-art Intrepid Center of Excellence to research, diagnose and treat Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) suffered by those injured while serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, and just last year Mark made it his personal mission to support "Operation Mend" at UCLA Medical Center matching the \$240,000 donated by DRS leadership with \$240,000 of his own money. His patriotism and philanthropic initiatives supporting military charities makes him a hero in his own right.

Mr. Speaker, I ask House—me in recognizing Mark S. Newman's contributions and thanking him for his dedication to our servicemen and women.

HONORING THE THADDEUS KOSCIUSZKO SOCIETY AS THEY CELEBRATE THEIR 100TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to join the many families and community leaders who have gathered today to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Thaddeus Kosciuszko Society—a remarkable milestone for this very special organization.

Like so many others of its kind, the formation of the Thaddeus Kosciuszko Society was rooted in the common need of immigrants to support one another. Milford, Connecticut was an ideal location for Polish farmers who had recently immigrated to America to settle because of the agricultural opportunities the land presented. In a new country and beginning new farms, these families faced many challenges. Seeing the need to have someone or something available to them to assist in a time crisis, a group of seven men met on Sunday, April 1, 1912, and established an organization through which they could not only help each other, but also future generations. Their mission, as stated in their original bylaws was simple: "To promote social activities, recreation and mental improvement among its members and to provide relief benefit therefor in cases of sickness or trouble."

From that handful of farmers, the Society has grown throughout the years. Many of today's seventy-five members are descendants of the original seven. Throughout its 100-year history, the Society has often been a source of comfort and support for newly immigrated families. Over that time, the Society Treasury, funded by member dues and modest fundraising events, has enabled the Society to provide financial support to relatives and survivors of the sick and deceased as well as more than \$50,000 in scholarships to students of Polish decent seeking higher education.

Keeping with the practice started by their founders, the Thaddeus Kosciuszko Society still meet once a month on a Sunday afternoon and their Annual Summer Picnic, now a well-known community tradition, is still held on a mid-summer Sunday afternoon. Though times and the needs of members have changed, the Society continues to make a difference in the lives of those in need, strengthening the bonds of friendship and community from one generation to the next. Today, as they celebrate their 100th Anniversary, they can proudly look back on their rich history and be secure in the knowledge that the Thaddeus Kosciuszko Society will remain a source of support and encouragement for many more families in the years to come.

RECOGNIZING LOUISIANA'S LONGEST MARRIED COUPLE

**HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize Louisiana's longest-married couple, Norman and Norma Burmah.

The Marksville couple, who celebrated their 81st wedding anniversary, will be inducted into the Louisiana Family Forum's Marriage Hall of Fame, and were recently commended by Governor Bobby Jindal in a reception held in their honor on Valentine's Day.

After an introduction by Norma's friend, the couple began their courtship in 1930 at the Roof Garden Dance Hall in New Orleans. The following year, Norman and Norma were married at Holy Ghost Church in the Crescent City.

Known as "Maw" and "Paw" to their loved ones, they are the proud parents of two daughters, and have been blessed with six grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. After Hurricane Katrina destroyed their home in 2005, Norman and Norma relocated to Marksville where their strong commitments to each other, family and God have continued.

It is an honor to recognize Norman and Norma Burmah and give my heartfelt congratulations to them on this truly incredible event in their lives. I ask my colleagues to join me in extending best wishes to Louisiana's longest married couple.

EARTHQUAKE AWARENESS MONTH IN MISSOURI

**HON. RUSS CARNAHAN**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 29, 2012*

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring the important issue of earthquake awareness to the attention of the members of the House.

February is Earthquake Awareness Month in Missouri. My district lies within the New Madrid Seismic Zone, the nation's most active earthquake zone east of the Rocky Mountains. Every year there are more than 200 small earthquakes in this region and there have been earthquakes as strong as magnitude 7.0