

Ms. Portillo's most lasting legacy was her service as founding member and Executive Director of Project Amiga, a non-profit, community based organization that provides education and computer training, support services, job placement and other assistance to at-risk youth and adults in Los Angeles County. Irene personally oversaw Project Amiga's training programs, and mentored many Welfare to Work participants and at-risk youth to help improve their lives and become self-sufficient.

Irene truly loved her community. Not only did she create a whole new organization in Project Amiga to provide badly needed support services for our most economically disadvantaged and vulnerable populations, but she also dedicated much of her life to educating and molding our youth. She did this through many different avenues, as a tenured instructor at Rio Hondo College and as a Presidential Appointee on the National Advisory Councils on Vocational Education and Women's Educational Programs.

Irene also worked hard to give folks a second chance at life, as the first Hispanic woman to manage one of the largest California State Employment Development Department offices. Through the EDD, she worked with felons recently released from the penal system and transitioning back into the community. Irene received many awards for her work, from L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis and many others.

I urge my House colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Irene Portillo for her record of community service, her indomitable spirit and her remarkable service and contributions to her community and to our nation.

RECOGNIZING GILBERT HOLMES,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE  
ACLU OF INDIANA, FOR A LIFE  
OF PUBLIC SERVICE

**HON. ANDRÉ CARSON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 22, 2012*

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of his retirement, I would like to congratulate Gilbert Holmes for a lifetime of trailblazing leadership and devoted public service.

From humble roots growing up in Sparta, Illinois, Gil ascended to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army, where he served valiantly for twenty years, including in Vietnam and as aide-de-camp to Major General Fred-eric Davison.

Upon leaving the service, Gil applied his organizational acumen with venerable Hoosier organizations, including the Indianapolis Museum of Art, Methodist Hospital, and Lincoln National Corporation.

From 1989 to 1996, Gil rendered distinguished public service as Commissioner of the Indiana Bureau of Motor Vehicles, and later, as President and CEO of IndyGo.

Gil's career culminated in his selection as executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana, where he has served ably for the past three years as both steward and advocate.

Gil has spent his life combating prejudice, proving skeptics wrong, and empowering those with whom he works to achieve great

things. On March 31, 2012, Gil will retire, leaving behind a legacy of lives bettered by his mentorship and leadership. On behalf of the 7th Congressional District of Indiana, I wish him well in his retirement and extend to him our gratitude for his commitment to his fellow Hoosiers and to the advancement of civil rights for all.

## PROTECTING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. LEE TERRY**

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 21, 2012*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5) to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system:

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Chair, I support full repeal of the Independent Payment Advisory Board. The health reform law takes away power that has traditionally been left to Congress, and places health care decisions in the hands of an unelected, board of bureaucrats.

Unfortunately, the House has decided to attach a bipartisan bill to repeal the IPAB, with legislation that is unconstitutional and I believe a federalization of our tort reform system. This is a blatant violation of Article 1, Section 8 and a violation of the 10th Amendment.

Tort law is an area of law traditionally left completely to states discretion. In fact, it's one of the few rights left to the states. Most states have implemented some form of medical liability laws. It is not the federal government's role to say that one state's laws are better than another's or even mandate one state's beliefs on another.

Many of us believe the health reform law is a government takeover of our health care system. If one considers themselves to be a true state's rights person, why do we give states the latitude and ability to do it, and then take it away with a one-size-fits all mandate from the federal government.

## TRIBUTE TO PETE P. PETERS

**HON. JIM COSTA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 22, 2012*

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life of one of our Nation's most principled and generous business leaders, Mr. Pete P. Peters. Sadly, Mr. Peters passed away on March 13, 2012 at the age of 94. His remarkable impact on California's San Joaquin Valley will ensure that his legacy lives on for years to come.

The son of Armenian immigrants, Pete was truly a shining example of the American Dream. With hard work and perseverance, he and his family were able to become business leaders and generous community benefactors.

Mr. Peters, and his brother Leon, were both notable entrepreneurs; he was a self-trained engineer who pioneered a design for a stain-

less steel circular tanks that have been used for decades by winemakers worldwide. His innovative spirit and passion allowed the brothers to run Valley Foundry and Machine Works as a family operation.

Upon his retirement in 1989, Mr. Peters immersed himself in our community and was active in a number of organizations. He oversaw the Leon S. Peters Foundation and served as chairman of the Pete P. Peters Foundation. While he did not have the opportunity to go to college, Mr. Peters was an ardent advocate for higher education and felt it was necessary for young Americans have the opportunity to go to college, regardless of their financial circumstances. As a result, he was an enthusiastic supporter of colleges and universities in the San Joaquin Valley, including: California State University, Fresno (CSU Fresno), Fresno City College, and Reedley College.

Mr. Peters was also a supporter of Community Regional Medical Center, Valley Public Television, the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, and the San Joaquin Valley Winemaking Association. His numerous gifts to our Valley enhanced thousands of lives.

Recognizing his immense contributions to the San Joaquin Valley, California, and our Nation, CSU Fresno conferred on him an honorary doctoral degree—the CSU's highest honor.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of Mr. Pete P. Peters. His humility and unwavering commitment to the improvement of our community not only made him an asset to the San Joaquin Valley, but a role model for our entire Nation.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. ADAM KINZINGER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 22, 2012*

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, I was unable to cast my vote on H.R. 886, which would request Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the 225th anniversary of the establishment of the United States Marshal Service. Had I been able to, I would have cast an "aye" vote in favor of the legislation.

## OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 22, 2012*

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$15,574,428,564,198.34. We've added \$4,947,551,515,285.26 to our debt in 3 years. This is debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.