

to countless individuals that he touched through his service to the people of the East Bay.

John was an active member of our community, serving in several local community groups. He was a proud member of the Hayward Rotary Club for 32 years and served as its president from 2002–2003. In 2005, John was honored as Outstanding Hayward Rotarian of the Year. John also was a member of the boards of the Hayward Chamber of Commerce, the Alameda County Fair, and the Rowell Ranch Rodeo Association.

John operated his small business in Hayward, alongside his beloved wife Robin, since 1976. He always was willing to donate his professional time to many, including the motorcycle units of the Hayward Police Department and the Alameda County Sheriff's Office. For his outstanding business practices, John was honored with the Hayward Chamber of Commerce's Inaugural Businessperson of the Year Award in 1989.

John always lived his life by the Rotary International motto of "Service Above Self." A few years ago, John and his family helped start The Dictionary Project, wherein local Rotarians would visit each third grade classroom in Hayward and provide these students with a dictionary to assist them with learning, reading, and academic advancement. This is but one example of John's dedicated service through which he touched and improved the lives of so many of those around him.

John is survived by his wife of 43 years Robin Wilma, daughter Lieutenant Colonel Alisa R. Wilma, brother Charles Wilma, sister-in-law Cindy Wheeler, and brother-in-law Christopher de St. Croix. I am honored to be paying tribute to John today. His tireless efforts and generosity in service to the East Bay community will be missed.

CBC HOUR: IMMIGRATION REFORM

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 4, 2013

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, let me thank all of my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus for highlighting the importance of immigration reform for our community and our country.

Recognizing immigration reform as a key civil rights issue, the CBC continues to be at the forefront of this important topic.

As someone who represents a district with rich cultural diversity, I have witnessed firsthand the need for comprehensive immigration reform.

I have seen families separated by a backlogged visa system, students denied the opportunity to contribute to the country that gave them the tools to succeed and innovate, and LGBT couples unfairly singled out and denied the opportunity to live together within the borders of this country.

Mr. Speaker we need immigration reform because our system is broken. We need it for family unity, for accountability, for fairness and equality, and for the good of our country and economy.

Most importantly we need to create a roadmap to citizenship for the men, women, children, and students living in our country.

These individuals, Americans in every sense of the word but on paper, are just the latest generation of immigrants to contribute to the cultural diversity and vitality of our Nation.

They are hardworking, they are dedicated, and they came here in search of better lives for themselves and their families; their lives are modern-day tales of the American dream and that echo the experiences of the parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents of each one of us.

And now we are at the brink of reforming this broken system and creating one that reflects our values of hard work, family unity, and equity.

Immigration reform will change things for the better, including in those communities that aren't usually at the forefront of this debate: immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean.

And while these immigrant communities aren't typically acknowledged, they have made tremendous contributions to getting us where we are today.

Take for example Shirley Chisholm, my dear friend and mentor, whose father was born in British Guiana and mother in Barbados.

She became the first African American woman elected to Congress and was one of the founding members of the Congressional Black Caucus. She was also the person who inspired me to take part in the political process when I was just a young college student.

And there are others, like Colin Powell, who was born to Jamaican parents and rose to the ranks of four-star General and Secretary of State.

And Harry Belafonte, the "King of Calypso," was also born to Jamaican parents.

And Maureen Bunyan, a well-known news anchor and founder of the National Association of Black Journalists and the International Women's Media Foundation, who was born in Aruba. And the list goes on and on.

I am also proud to say that my own district is home to a growing community of immigrants and their families from places like Ethiopia, Eritrea, and the Caribbean.

They are active contributors to the East Bay region, as well as to a vibrant immigrant community that highlights their distinct cultural backgrounds while emphasizing a strong sense of local unity.

With a new immigration system, members of these communities will finally be able to unite with close family members, many after years and even decades of separation, same-sex binational couples will be able to express their love and obtain status equal to that of their neighbors without being separated by a border wall, and we will have an immigration system that people will go through rather than go around.

We also need to make sure that the new system protects and assists workers by increasing the enforcement of workplace standards and antidiscrimination laws.

It must also include more robust programs for job training, including adult education opportunities and programs for low-wage workers.

Lastly, it must make it easier for individuals to compete for jobs and provide resources to take the workers where the jobs are.

I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to make this new system a realization and to better the lives of the immigrant groups in my district and throughout the country.

Thank you again to my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus for continuing this discussion and working toward a bipartisan solution.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF WILLIAM
"BILL" SHERMAN WEEKS

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 8, 2013

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of a real American hero and proud resident of the Eighth District of Texas, William "Bill" Sherman Weeks, who was laid to rest in the Houston National Cemetery this week.

It was very fitting that so many from our community joined Mr. Week's friends and family to honor this amazing man who offered over thirty years of service in defense of this nation.

As someone who was playing American Legion baseball and going on Boy Scout campouts at age 14, I can't help but be amazed by Bill Weeks, who at 14 donned this nation's uniform to serve in World War II.

Bill Week's service didn't end with the War to End all Wars; he went on to serve in the Korean War and two tours in Vietnam. His military service has been honored with over 22 ribbons and medals including the Bronze Star with Valor, the Korean Campaign Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal and the Vietnamese Honor Medal presented by the Vietnamese government. On top of all of that, he was also awarded a Purple Heart.

Mr. Weeks retired from the Air Force in 1974 as Chief Master Sergeant, and settled in Shenandoah where this devoted family man enjoyed his retirement, especially his time with his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

In an interview with one of our local newspapers, the Conroe Courier, Mrs. Weeks described her husband of 20 years as ". . . very modest and reserved, not only about himself but also about his time spent serving his country."

"As I'm going through things, I'm sure I'll still find stuff that I didn't know he did," said Mrs. Weeks.

That, my friends, is what's right about America. Bill Weeks was the best of Americans because he showed us what makes a hero with his actions and those actions spoke more than any words ever could.

Americans love their nation and the freedoms we cherish. Some, like Bill Weeks, loved this nation enough to lend this nation the best years of their lives. A hero isn't someone who wins a battle, but who serves others. Mr. Weeks was a great American and a hero.

Our nation is forever in his debt as we are to the millions of Americans who volunteer their service to our nation. We pray God's comfort for this family and honor the memory of this Airman, husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather who has left such an amazing legacy.