

progress. With so many opportunities now available to our young women and men today, it would be a shame if they were not prepared and ready to take advantage of them. We must make sure that our education system is the absolute best it can be, providing students with the basic skills and academics to succeed in college and in the global marketplace.

IN HONOR OF THE GRAND
OPENING OF PICKERING PLACE

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, on June 18, 1997, the city of Fremont and the Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition will celebrate the grand opening of Pickering Place, a 43 unit affordable housing development, in the city of Fremont in California's 13th Congressional District. I commend both the Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition and the city of Fremont for coming together to complete this project.

Affordable housing is an urgent need in California and the Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition has been a leader in the development of affordable housing. They have developed over 3,300 units in the Greater Bay Area and are currently working on eight more projects. This new project, Pickering Place, will provide 43 affordable townhouse apartments for low-income families in our community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Fremont City Council and the city of Fremont staff who worked together with the Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition to develop the vision and the plan for Pickering Place. This development would not have been possible without the funding and support from a variety of sources in the community, including a loan from the Fremont Redevelopment Agency.

Mr. Speaker, Pickering Place is an example of an extraordinary partnership. I applaud all of those who were involved in bringing this project to our community.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 54,
PROHIBITING THE PHYSICAL
DESECRATION OF THE FLAG OF
THE UNITED STATES

SPEECH OF

HON. VINCE SNOWBARGER

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 1997

Mr. SNOWBARGER. Mr. Speaker, today the House is debating an amendment to the Constitution which will give the people's elected Representatives the authority to protect our Nation's most important and enduring symbol. This emblem is a powerful distillation of our commitment to individual freedom and constitutional democracy. The fact this image is sewn onto the shirt sleeves of Boy Scouts and emblazoned on the heat resistant tiles that protect our Nation's space shuttle fleet, is further testimony to this symbol's relationship to the American character.

This American flag is more than a banner to lead armies. It is the rallying point for our na-

tional conversation about freedom. Many have died defending this Nation, not because some great royal family or despot commanded it, but so that each American would continue to enjoy the blessings of liberty. There is a reason why veterans' organizations like the American Legion support this measure. These men and women know, perhaps more than others, what it means to defend America. Their sacrifice is memorialized in the flag itself. The red stripes, which are so recognizable, are representative of the blood spilled by America's sons to defend our treasured liberty. These Kansans of the American Legion want us to stop hoodlums and thugs from desecrating the flag to attack their legacy.

This flag represents America's historic and principled past and these struggles to extend freedom to all Americans. However, it is more than just a symbol of past triumphs. This flag is important to all freedom loving people around the world who long to construct for themselves a similar constitutional order. When Chinese dissidents wanted to communicate the desire for American-style liberty, they chose our flag to convey that message. They didn't want to be Americans; they wanted the freedom that our flag represents.

It is curious to me, Mr. Speaker, that opposition to flag protection persists. Our country has long recognized the icons and trademarks of American business through the patent and copyrighted acts. These corporate symbols are a valuable form of property that companies spend millions of dollars each year to augment and enhance. We have given America's business community the right to protect and defend their own emblems. Why should the most sacred and important symbol of America be treated differently?

At the very least, we should be allowed to criminalize violent destruction of our flag. This act approximates a personal attack on veterans and patriotic Americans. Remember, as other members—like the distinguished chairman of the Judiciary Committee—have pointed out, we have carved out this type of narrow restriction on expression before. Consider our hate crime laws that prohibit individuals from engaging in certain types of abhorrent speech to which constitutional protection does not apply. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, acts of contempt like burning a cross or displaying racial epithets do not amount to "speech," in the common meaning of the word. To the contrary, these activities fall into a class of behavior meant only to frighten, intimidate, and discourage the very political discourse contemplated by the Framers of the Constitution.

To put all of these issues together, Mr. Speaker, when individuals see an American flag passing in a Labor Day parade or in the fist of an enthusiastic child cheering a returning hero, they feel proud. When Americans see or hear about the desecration of their flag, they feel a tremendous pain. This is not a question about free speech or the right of dissent. Burning a flag is not speech. Nor is it dissent. Dissent is saying how you disagree. It implies a dialog.

This amendment is about preventing an attack on American citizens, collectively and individually. That is why our Kansas Legislature, and the legislatures of 40 other States, have petitioned this Congress to act. We owe it to these Americans, and Americans yet to be born, to extend protection to this transcendent national symbol.

TRIBUTE TO CHICAGO

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 17, 1997

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, June 18, 1997, the Congressional Black Caucus [CBC] will gather in the Rayburn House Office Building to celebrate the unprecedented success of the smash hit premiere national touring musical "Chicago's" in our Nation's Capital. The CBC will honor "Chicago" brilliantly innovative and charismatic cast, and will pay special tribute to the stars: Jasmine Guy, Obba Babatundé, and Carol Woods.

A congressional reception was held April 8, 1997, hosted by the Illinois delegation and featuring the "Singing Senators," Senators TRENT LOTT, JOHN ASHCROFT, LARRY CRAIG, and JIM JEFFORDS to welcome the cast to Washington, DC. Also in attendance were the Honorables BILL BARRETT, HOWARD COBLE, JOHN CONYERS, ASA HUTCHINSON, HENRY HYDE, WILLIAM JENKINS, DENNIS KUCINICH, NITA LOWEY, MICHAEL McNULTY, CONSTANCE MORELLA, SILVESTRE REYES, TIM ROEMER, CARLOS ROMERO-BARCELÓ, JOHN SHIMKUS, LOUISE SLAUGHTER, and Secretary William Daley. "Chicago" cast members, Obba Babatundé and "The Girls," performed for the distinguished audience.

"Chicago" has broken box office records at the National Theatre and in New York City with its Broadway cast. "Chicago" is also the season's biggest musical hit.

The Broadway cast received six Tony Awards including Best Musical Revival, Best Director—Walter Bobbie, Best Choreography—Ann Reinking, and Best Lighting Design—Ken Billington. This wave of recognition continues with nominations from the prestigious New York Drama Desk for Outstanding Musical Revival, Outstanding Direction, Outstanding Choreography, Outstanding Actress in a Musical, Outstanding Actor in a Musical, Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Musical, Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Musical, and Outstanding Lighting Design. The New York Drama Critics Circle, the Nation's second oldest theatre award, after the Pulitzer Prize, voted a special award to the cast and creative team of "Chicago" for outstanding contribution to Broadway. "Chicago" continues to win raves and awards with five Outer Critics Circle Awards, including Best Musical Revival, Best Director, and Best Choreography.

The Musical is based on the 1926 play of the same name by Maurine Dallas Watkins. The play inspired the 1942 movie, "Roxie Hart," starring Ginger Rogers. The John Kander-Fred Ebb-Bob Fosse musical premiered in 1975 and the new revival, under the direction of Walter Bobbie and choreography—in the style of Bob Fosse—by Ann Reinking, opened on Broadway on November 14, 1996. "Chicago" has been hailed as "A triumph" by Time magazine. The New York Times raves "Chicago" is a musical for the ages with the sexiest, most sophisticated dancing seen on Broadway for years. It flies us right into musical heaven.

The Congressional Black Caucus will honor these talented and ambitious African-Americans for their inspiring success as artists and human beings. For it is individuals such as