

my heartfelt congratulations to Sister Gloria Jean as she celebrates her retirement.

CONGRATULATING MISSION SAN JOSE HIGH SCHOOL FOR WINNING EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S BLUE RIBBON AWARD

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 19, 1998

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Mission San Jose High School for winning the Blue Ribbon award from the Department of Education. Mission San Jose was one of six California schools to win this prestigious award and one of 166 schools nationwide.

Mission San Jose proves that public schools can be effective advocates for all students to succeed in the 21st Century. Mission San Jose believes that all students can learn and all students will learn. The facts prove them correct.

Mission San Jose High School has an attendance rate of over 95 percent and a drop-out rate of .05 percent. The student average SAT scores are in the top 5 percent of the nation. 65 percent of the student body is on the honor roll and the most importantly to me is that 95 percent of students go on to post-secondary institutions.

These numbers speak for themselves and for the faculty and administrators at Mission San Jose High. I congratulate Principal Mathog for her outstanding leadership and positive views.

This success by one of our public schools is the best argument against some of the arguments of my colleagues. Eliminating the Department of Education and advocating public funds to be spent on scholarship vouchers for private schools is not the right step to providing opportunity and hope for all students. Public schools work and I can prove it.

Mission San Jose deserves this award and I congratulate them.

HONORING JOHN BRUEN SR.

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 19, 1998

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with regret that I inform our colleagues of the passing of one of the most remarkable residents of my 20th Congressional District of New York.

John Bruen Sr. was 92 years young when he died this past weekend, but right until the end he remained the embodiment of the dignity of the individual.

John Bruen was born in 1906 in Goshen, NY, and lived in that community his entire life. His grandfather was a runaway slave, who had shown John the scars on his back from the whippings he had received as a slave, and which remained on him until the day he died.

Because of his heritage, John was working for civil rights for all Americans long before it became fashionable to do so. As a young man, he worked grooming horses at the Goshen Historic Track in Goshen, New York. It

was there, as a boy, that he learned his love of reading and especially his love of history. A friend gave him a biography of Abraham Lincoln, and that initiated John's lifelong dedication to equality for Afro Americans.

John married Gertrude Van Dyke in 1925, and they had six children.

John loved his family and taught them to share his love of liberty and of history. He worked for 30 years for the Erie Railroad, but was a true renaissance man: in the 1930's, John began his career as a semi-pro baseball player. In one season, he had an astonishing .517 batting average. Those were the days when professional baseball was closed to Black Americans. However, when Jackie Robinson broke that color barrier, forever, John Bruen was one of the first to cheer him on.

John became an expert on the life stories of those heroes who paved the way for equality: Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, W.E.B. Dubois, Martin Luther King, Jr., as well as Jackie Robinson, and a host of others. John was a good friend of another outstanding resident of our region—Floyd Patterson—and the two of them shared their love for boxing, at which John also tried his hand, and for humanitarianism.

John had a gift for the written word, and from 1959 until near his death, the daily and weekly newspapers in Orange County, New York, published his views on the issues of the day. He was a consistent fighter against segregation, prejudice, and racism. He was superb at quoting those figures from the past who he so admired, and who he believed were living proof that all the races should live in harmony.

John was always of tremendous help to me throughout my career in public service. He used his column effectively to promote the causes he so believed in, and to remind us of our responsibilities to human rights for all. John was quick to praise those of us who supported civil rights, but would not consider compromise on those issues he considered basic to human dignity.

To John's surviving children, to his many loved ones, and to those who greatly admired him, we extend our heartfelt condolences. While John Bruen Sr. may not be quoted in our textbooks or popular histories, it is in great part due to the relentless trails blazed and consciences stirred by individuals such as John throughout our nation that we are closer than ever to achieving the dream of Martin Luther King Jr.

John you left your mark—we will long miss you.

TRIBUTE TO THE UNION OF ORTHODOX JEWISH CONGREGATIONS OF AMERICA

HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 19, 1998

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, I am speaking today in honor of a leading organization in America's Jewish community, the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, in recognition of its 100th anniversary.

The Orthodox Union represents over one million members from one thousand congregations across the country in matters religious

and communal. In its efforts to assist Orthodox Jews in America, the Orthodox Union runs the renowned Kashruth Certification Program to guarantee certified kosher food for the observant. The Orthodox Union's National Council for the Jewish Disabled serves as an outreach program for the deaf and the developmentally disabled which has helped thousands of disabled live fuller lives. The Orthodox Union has always been at the forefront of the fight for the concerns of the world's Jewish population, working to strengthen and protect the state of Israel as well as defending Jewish civil rights and playing a vital role in the struggle to save the Soviet Jewry.

The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America was established in 1898 by Dr. Henry Pereira Mendes, the leader of the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue in New York to promote Torah Judaism and help organize the fragmented American Orthodox Jewish community. Since then, the Orthodox Union has served the needs of over 1 million members in more than 1,000 congregations nationwide. To address the need for Jewish continuity the Orthodox Union created the NCSY, a dynamic outreach movement for teenagers. Through its efforts, the Orthodox Union has helped the modern orthodox congregant prosper in a world which often seeks to strip them of their religious and cultural identity. In this role, the Orthodox Union has played a vital part in the worldwide advancement of Judaism.

On this anniversary, I call upon all of my colleagues in the House to join me in giving tribute to the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America in recognition of the defining role that it has played in the formation of modern American Judaism. I congratulate the Orthodox Union on its successful first one hundred years, and wish it many more.

BULLETPROOF VEST PARTNERSHIP GRANT ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 12, 1998

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the House of Representatives for passing H.R. 2829, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 1997.

I have met with law enforcement officials from across my district who feel this is an important and useful bill. Currently, 25 percent of our nation's state and local law enforcement officials do not have access to bulletproof vests. Additionally, police officers not wearing a bulletproof vest have a fatality risk 14 times that of officers wearing a vest. There is an obvious need to make sure those who risk their lives on our behalf have access to these life-saving devices.

H.R. 2829 will ensure that for the days to come, no police officer will be left unnecessarily exposed in the line of duty. Bulletproof vests are one of the most basic forms of law enforcement protection, and America now sends a message to its law enforcement officials—we will protect you who valiantly protect us every day.