

I challenge my colleagues to do their part to spread the word and celebrate this important holiday. Too often, the news of Flag Week is pushed aside for flashier stories, or relegated to the back pages on a slow news days. It is our duty to carry on the proud tradition of this week.

Mr. Speaker, progress in our country often originates from the efforts of just one man. The establishment of Flag Week serves as an important reminder of the same. In recognition of Vito Cannella's patriotism, and to honor the sacrifice of Americans through the ages dedicated to preserving our liberty, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Flag Week, 1998.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY  
HOUSTON PROJECT

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 19, 1998*

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the contributions to my district that Habitat for Humanity and its sponsors have made to my district over the past week.

Through the efforts of former-President Jimmy Carter, Habitat for Humanity, a handful of private sponsors, and several thousand miracle-working volunteers, 100 homes will be built for needy families this week in the city of Houston.

Houston was chosen as the site for this project because of its tremendous need for housing. Of the 1.7 million people that live in the city, 150,000 of them are considered to be "marginally" homeless. That number is completely unacceptable for America's fourth largest city.

Even when people are able to find housing, there is a good chance that it will be inadequate. Over 100,000 of the housing units in Houston are dilapidated, and 72,000 of them are officially overcrowded.

Yet as awful as those conditions are, there are still over 9,000 families on waiting lists for public housing. Unfortunately, the government cannot solve the housing shortage for all of them. Someone else needs to step up to the bat and help these people help themselves. Fellow colleagues, someone has.

Habitat for Humanity and the Jimmy Carter Work Project have come to bat for the people of Houston. With them, they brought an army of volunteers, and a fabulous group of sponsors.

The supplies needed for these 100 houses were all supplied by contributions from private corporations, organizations, church groups, and businesses. Many of these organizations also contributed manpower, either through their employees or their members. I am grateful to all of them. Specifically, I want to name those sponsors who made donations for the homes built in my district. They include: South Main Baptist Church; U.C.C. Celebration House; Presbyterian House—First Grace, Memorial Drive and St. Andrews; St. John the Divine Episcopal; St. Martin's Episcopal Church; Congregation Beth Israel; Congregation

Emanu El; Presbyterian House No. 2; the Shell Oil Company Foundation; Umland International House; the Junior League of Houston; Fondren Foundation; Exxon; St. Luke's Episcopal Health System; Notre Dame Alumni Association; Notre Dame Student Chapter; El Paso Energy; Continental Airlines; Newsradio 740 KTRH; The Brown Foundation; Apache; Friends of Habitat; Stanley Tools; Dow Chemical; Indianapolis Life; PMI; Paul Leonard House; Weyerhaeuser Co.; Churchs Chicken; the Aluminum Association; Southwest Airlines/Oprah Angels; the Farris Foundation Inc.; Houston Habitat for Humanity Revolving Fund; Houston Apartment Association; and Habitat World. To all the sponsors—You have all done a great service to this community, and to our future generations. I congratulate you all.

I also want to thank and congratulate a particular group of very special people—the Gibson Family. I worked alongside of Mr. and Mrs. Gibson for the better part of the day on Monday. They have two girls, both under the age of ten, and they have another child on the way. For the past few years, they have lived in a small apartment in a dilapidated building, the whole while, looking for ways that they could better their living situation. Like many families, they have searched for options that would keep them from having to send their hard-earned money to the landlord every month, knowing that they would never own a piece of that property.

I am happy to report to you that the Gibson Family, with the help of Habitat for Humanity and their sponsors, are on their way to owning their first house. They had to work hard, physically, to get this opportunity, but they seized it.

T.S. Eliot once said, "Home is where one starts from." With the help of President Carter, Habitat for Humanity, and thousands of volunteers and sponsors, the Gibson Family has a new start. It is a fresh chance to raise their children, and grandchildren in a way which every American deserves. I also want to congratulate the other 99 families who will also be receiving homes as a part of this effort. Each and every one of them deserves this tremendous opportunity as well.

As grateful as I am, for this effort to better the community in Houston, there is still substantial work to be done, and need left. There are still too many people who need adequate shelter. There are still too many cities who need adequate housing. There are far too many children growing up in unsuitable conditions.

I hope there are many more people, out there across America, who are willing to follow the example of the miracle-workers of Houston. I urge corporate America to follow the lead of the many corporate sponsors I named earlier, who put aside profit for the sake of humanity.

I pledge my loyal support to Habitat for Humanity and the people that make it work—the sponsors and the volunteers. I ask that my colleagues do the same. These people truly embody the best of the human spirit, and I applaud their heroic efforts.

JAPAN; IT'S TIME FOR REFORM

**HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 19, 1998*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, Japan's economy is in recession. As an editorial in the Thursday, June 18 edition of The Washington Post noted, "the fact that once again U.S. pressure was needed to spur a commitment to reform is one more sad indication of the abdication of leadership in Japan."

While Japan has been a strong and loyal ally of the U.S. since the end of World War II, that does not mean friends cannot provide constructive criticism. I have some constructive criticism for Japan.

As one of the world's largest economies, Japan has a responsibility to provide open and fair market access for imports. To this day, Japan continues to maintain restrictive barriers to its domestic market. While Japan has reduced tariff rates on imports to reasonable levels, non-tariff barriers continue to hinder imported goods and services from the U.S. and other parts of the world.

From 1996 to 1997, the U.S.-Japan trade deficit increased from \$47.6 billion to \$55.7 billion. Our trade deficit with Japan is the largest out of any other nation in the world, and it points to the systemic problems with Japan's market.

Now is the time for Japan to show real leadership to the international community by initiating wide-spread economic reforms specifically targeted to rescinding excessive and outdated government regulations. A U.S. Trade Representative report stated, "[Japan's] unnecessary regulations restrain economic growth, raise the cost of doing business in Japan, lower the standard of living for Japanese consumers, and impede imports." Japanese economists estimate that 40 percent of all economic activity in Japan is regulated by the government. The regulations included burdensome testing and certification requirements, outdated price control measures, and unnecessary and archaic standards.

While I understand that most of these regulations were implemented when Japan was still a developing nation when it was necessary to protect certain infant industries, they are no longer needed and, in fact, retards Japan's economic growth. A nation with a mature economy such as Japan's must jettison those outdated regulations in order to expand the economy. Japan's reluctance to do so has clearly caused its current recession. By placing archaic and unnecessary restrictions to imports, Japan has only wound up hurting itself.

The solution to Japan's economic problems, Mr. Speaker, is quite simple. The Administration must work with Congress to put more pressure on Japan to provide open and fair markets, and Japan must take the necessary steps to fully honor its trade agreements with the U.S. Only by implementing this and other reform measures can the Japanese economy recover from its current recession.