

Sankofa did not commit the crime for which he may soon pay the ultimate price. Therefore, Mr. Governor, we request you to weigh all the evidence that is available to you, which could not be considered by the courts, and ensure that justice is done by preventing his execution and granting him a conditional pardon and the right to a new trial.

Mr. Governor, what we have here is a very compelling case for granting Mr. Sankofa clemency. Unfortunately, we are concerned that the merits of his petition may get overlooked in the current atmosphere of your candidacy for the Office of the President of the United States. The life of an innocent man may be at stake, and politics must not be allowed to cause a miscarriage of justice that can never be undone. For the foregoing reasons, we respectfully request you to grant an immediate stay of Mr. Sankofa's execution, and work with the Texas parole board to approve his petition for clemency.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please feel free to contact Jeffrey Davis, Legislative Counsel, in Congressman Towns' office should you need any additional information.

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#### HONORING JUDGE JOE FISHER

### HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 20, 2000*

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in great sadness to honor Judge Joe Fisher, who passed away yesterday, June 19th. Judge Fisher was a remarkable man who was committed to his community, his country, and above all, his family.

Judge Fisher received his law degree from the University of Texas in 1936 and was appointed by Dwight D. Eisenhower as a U.S. District Judge in 1959. Following his appointment many of his rulings set legal precedents.

In 1972, he ruled for the first time that manufacturers of asbestos that didn't warn workers of the potential dangers could be held liable and awarded a family \$79,000 in damages. The case went all the way to the Supreme Court and is still the basis for law today. The first desegregation plan for Beaumont was drafted by Judge Fisher in 1970 after the U.S. Justice Department ordered the integration of the South Park school district in Beaumont.

Always a man who believed in equality and justice, in 1994 Judge Fisher struck down the Klu Klux Klan's attempt to adopt a highway as part of a state highway cleanup program. He was a man of great courage he wrote in his decision that members only applied "as subterfuge to intimidate those minority residents \* \* \* and discourage further desegregation."

After he retired from active duty in 1984, he continued to work full time as a senior judge and continued to hear a substantially full caseload up until two weeks before his death. His impact on the community could be felt outside the court room as well. Judge Fisher contributed to the Salvation Army and the YMCA.

He was of the utmost character, and his attributes of selflessness and commitment to others are rare gifts that this nation was lucky to have. Judge Fisher was a man who served his country as a Federal Judge with great pride and devotion. He often thought outside the box to make sure that his decisions were fair and honorable.

His work was part of the fiber of Southeast Texas, and with his passing a great loss will

be felt in the spirit and the heart of our community. Today, as an American we lost a great jurist, but as a Congressman I have lost a mentor and a friend.

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#### FAITH BASED LENDING PROTECTION ACT

### HON. EDWARD R. ROYCE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 20, 2000*

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, each day our nation's religious institutions quietly go about performing critical social programs that serve as lifelines to individuals and families in need. Besides providing places of worship, religious institutions also serve their communities by operating outreach programs such as food banks, soup kitchens, battered family shelters, schools and AIDS hospices. To families in need, these programs often provide a last resource of care and compassion.

Yet, in spite of the clear social good that these programs provide to communities across America, we are faced with the growing reality that religious institutions are finding it increasingly difficult to secure the necessary capital resources at favorable rates that enable them to carry on this critical community work.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to introduce legislation that I believe will help ensure that religious institutions have available all the financial resources necessary to carry out their missions of community service. The "Faith-Based Lending Protection Act," which enjoys bipartisan support, seeks to amend the Federal Credit Union Act by clarifying that any member business loan made by a credit union to a religious nonprofit organization will not count toward total business lending caps imposed on credit unions by federal law.

Each year credit unions loan millions of dollars to nonprofit religious organizations, many located in minority and/or lower income communities. Historically, these loans are considered safe and help sustain critical social outreach programs. Without legislative action, Mr. Speaker, these religious institutions will find it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to secure the necessary funds under favorable terms to allow them to continue their work. I urge my colleagues to join me in this legislative effort.

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#### INTRODUCTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE ACT OF 2000

### HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 20, 2000*

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the International Anti-Corruption and Good Governance Act of 2000, legislation I introduced today to make combating corruption a key principle of U.S. development assistance.

This bill will help to accomplish two objectives of pivotal importance to the United States. By making anti-corruption procedures a key principle of development assistance, it

will push developing countries further along the path to democracy and the establishment of a strong civil society. Moreover, by helping these countries root out corruption, bribery and unethical business practices, we can help create a level playing field for U.S. companies doing business abroad.

According to officials at the U.S. Department of Commerce, during the past five years, U.S. firms lost nearly \$25 billion dollars-worth of contracts to foreign competitors offering bribes.

Bribery impedes trade and hurts our economic interests by providing an unfair advantage to those countries which tolerate bribery of foreign officials. By making anti-corruption procedures a key component of our foreign aid programs, this bill will help those countries to set up more transparent business practices, such as modern commercial codes and intellectual property rights, which are vital to enhancing economic growth and decreasing corruption at all levels of society.

My bill requires U.S. foreign assistance to be used to fight corruption at all levels of government and in the private sector in countries that have persistent problems with corruption—particularly where the United States has a significant economic interest.

The United States has a long history of leadership on fighting corruption. We were the first to criminalize international bribery through the enactment of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977. Moreover, United States leadership was instrumental in the passage of the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions. Enactment of this bill would be a logical next step.

Corruption is antithetical to democracy. It chips away at the public's trust in government, while stifling economic growth and deterring foreign economic investment. In addition, corruption poses a major threat to development. It undermines democracy and good governance, reduces accountability and representation, and inhibits the development of a strong civil society.

This bill takes a comprehensive approach to combating corruption and promoting good governance. By outlining a series of initiatives to be carried out by both USAID and the Treasury Department, the legislation addresses the political, social and economic aspects of corruption.

As the largest trader in the global economy, it in the United States' national interest to fight corruption and promote transparency and good governance. Not only does it help to promote economic growth and strengthen democracy, but it helps to create a level playing field for U.S. companies that do business overseas.

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#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE KEELY JARDELL SCHOOL OF DANCE

### HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 20, 2000*

Mr. NICK LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the outstanding accomplishment of the young ladies of Keely Jardell's School of Dance in Nederland, Texas. The school consists of approximately 500 students

from throughout the area of southeast Texas ranging from ages six to eighteen years of age. The school focuses not only on dancing, but also on the importance of discipline and character. In addition to studying in the Jardell School of Dance, the students also participate in academic, athletic, and religious activities within the community. Practicing 12–15 hours a week, these young ladies have demonstrated an ability to balance their responsibilities and excel in them with grace. Lessons like these give the students of the Keely Jardell School of Dance skills that will be invaluable to them as they encounter challenges in their futures. These young ladies serve as role models to their peers and to members of the community as well.

Recently, sixty-nine of these students participated in regional competitions in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in Houston, and across the state of Texas. Members of the team devoted countless hours to perfecting their craft; their efforts have paid off. At regional competitions, the school was awarded the highest score, judge's choice, choreography, overall high score, and spirit awards. Their outstanding performances at the regional level has qualified them for the National Competition in San Antonio, Texas this summer. The prestige of the school and its talented performers is known well throughout the nation. In late 1999, an invitation was received inviting the girls to perform in Washington D.C. and in New York City during the month of July, 2000. The members of the school have graciously honored the request and will be performing Sunday July 2nd at 5:30 p.m. at the Post Office Pavilion, here in Washington. I urge all who have the opportunity to enjoy a truly amazing show worthy of your time.

After the appearance in Washington, the performers will attend special dance classes at the Broadway Dance Center in New York City. Numerous fund-raisers and community events are being staged to defray the expenses of the trip. It has been a total commitment of all involved, but well worth the work. The members of the Keely Jardell School of Dance have relentlessly committed themselves to perfecting their talents in preparation for the National Competition.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to have the honor of commending the students of the Keely Jardell School of Dance on their astounding achievements and abilities. Young people such as these should serve as examples to America of the extraordinary breed of leaders it can expect in its future. These young ladies deserve our attention, support, and best wishes as they demonstrate the remarkable product of their labor and talent.

50TH BIRTHDAY OF THE MANCHESTER, NH, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL CENTER

**HON. JOHN E. SUNUNU**

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 20, 2000*

Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Manchester VA Medical Center, located in New Hampshire's First Congressional District, on the occasion of the Hospital's 50th birthday, July 2, 2000. This outstanding facility continues to provide exem-

plary health care to thousands of veterans who have served America with distinction and honor. As the hospital celebrates its 50th year, I hope we will also take a moment to reflect on the service and sacrifice of those service men and women. The devoted staff of the Hospital, including Public Relations Director Paul Lamberti who provided me with an extensive historical background of the Center, also deserves special thanks and appreciation for their dedication to the health care of our veterans.

The establishment of the Manchester VA Medical Center began at the conclusion of World War I with the World War Veterans' Legislation Subcommittee on Hospitals' recommendation that the New Hampshire project be funded. Congressman Fletcher Hale followed suit with legislation seeking Presidential approval for the construction of a facility to treat veterans throughout northern New England. Specifically, the measure called for "a modern, sanitary, fireproof, two-hundred bed capacity hospital plant for the diagnosis, care, and treatment of general and medical and surgical disabilities and to provide Government care for the increasing load of mentally afflicted veterans regardless of whether said disability developed prior to January 1, 1925, at a cost not to exceed \$1,500,000."

Final legislative approval came in 1945, and in 1946, after the end of World War II, the United States Government acquired a parcel of land, previously owned by Governor Frederick F. Smyth, that would become the site for the Hospital. Smyth served from 1866 to 1880 on the Board of Managers of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers and was well acquainted with the needs of veterans everywhere. The Smyth Tower, the replica of a famous Scottish lookout, can be found on the grounds today. The structure was erected by Smyth in 1888 and is named as an Historic Site on the National Register.

Construction of the VA Medical Center began in 1948 and two years later, on July 2, 1950, the VA Medical Center was officially dedicated. In the following decade, staff attended to the health care needs of approximately 23,500 patients.

The VA Medical Center joined with Harvard Medical School to become a training facility for surgical residents in the late 1960's and has remained an active teaching hospital for Harvard and Dartmouth Medical School residents. Through the years, students aspiring to become nurses, dentists, physical therapists, physician assistants, occupational therapists, optometrists, medical assistants, dieticians, and pharmacists, have found a diverse clinical experience there.

Recognizing the need to address the long-term residential health care need of aging veterans, the Hospital dedicated a Nursing Home Care Unit in the late 1970's. Expansion continued in 1977 with the groundbreaking for a new Ambulatory Care wing.

Outpatient care became an important priority in the years that followed. Those patients requiring specialty care were previously required to travel to other VA hospitals in the region to receive care. After determining veterans should not have to travel long distances for their care, the staff formed specialty clinics including Orthopaedics, Optometry, Audiology, Neurology, Pain, Ear, Nose, and Throat.

Locally accessible care continues today in the form of Center-sponsored health

screenings in local communities throughout the state. The Manchester VA Hospital also serves as a research center for a large number of health care programs. Of note is the facility's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder research center which has received both national and international recognition for its work.

Although New Hampshire's veterans' population has decreased, their health care needs remain a high priority. These men and women sacrificed a great deal for each and every American and their needs continue to be met today. Community Based Outreach Clinics can be found throughout the state including the communities of Tilton and Newington and future facilities are planned for Lancaster, Conway, Wolfeboro, and Keene.

Through its changes, the VA's importance holds strong with a purpose "to serve those who have served us well," its commitment "to advocate for the total well-being of veterans," and its promise "to be there when veterans need us."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JAMES P. MORAN**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 20, 2000*

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 293, I was unavoidably detained on official business. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MAJOR R. OWENS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 20, 2000*

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I was unavoidably absent on a matter of critical importance and missed the following votes:

On the motion that the Committee of Whole House on the State of the Union Rise, introduced by the gentleman from California, Mr. WAXMAN, I would have voted "yea."

On the amendment to the rider on H.R. 4635, regarding the use of Veterans' Administration funds for tobacco litigation, introduced by the gentleman from California, Mr. WAXMAN. I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. XAVIER BECERRA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 20, 2000*

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on June 15, 2000 and in the early hours of June 16, 2000, I was traveling to my District, and therefore unable to cast my votes on rollcall numbers 280 through 291. Had I been present for the votes, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes 281, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, and 290; and "nay" on rollcall votes 280, 282, 288, 289, and 291.