

years later, a group of women in Jackson County began a league locally.

For 75 years the Jackson County League of Women Voters has helped all voters, men and women, to prepare for elections. The League has held demonstrations on how to vote, sponsored forums for candidates to explain their views and published election guides. For several decades, League members have served in Jackson County as deputy registrars, registering voters at local events and stores.

The League believes in open and accountable government. Locally, it promoted the City Manager form of government for the City of Carbondale and has studied the professionalization of and the various forms of both city and county government. For many years before the advent of the Open Meetings Act which requires that public bodies post agendas and hold open meetings, the League sent observers to many public meetings as a reminder to public officials about the citizens whom they serve.

The Jackson County League of Women Voters has also helped to desegregate the schools, integrate the neighborhoods, develop recycling and other environmental programs, create standards for large scale livestock farms and ensure the safety of the drinking water. The League has also published a guide to mental health services in the County and a booklet about county offices. Nationally, the League has studied issues as wide-ranging as national security, urban transportation and health care.

Currently, the League of Jackson County is working to break the cycle of violence in children by ending aggressive behavior in schools, a project through the local health department. It is examining the forms of election of Illinois State legislators and promoting campaign finance reform. The League sponsors a series of talks by local county officials on local issues. It is studying the need for a new County Courthouse and other facilities. The League is also encouraging voters to take a friend to vote, as a means to encourage citizens to vote. The League of Women Voters adheres to the belief that democracy is not a spectator sport.

The League of Women Voters is open to men and women, at least 18 years of age. The League is non-partisan, but involved in many efforts in our communities. Always, the focus of the League is encouraging active citizen involvement and participation in the community and in the government.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the men and women of Jackson County on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Jackson County League of Women Voters.

IN SUPPORT OF VAWA  
REAUTHORIZATION

**HON. PATSY T. MINK**

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 6, 2000*

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge the leadership of the House of Representatives to schedule floor action on the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which expires this year.

The Violence Against Women Act, H.R. 1248, was reported out of the House Judiciary Committee on June 27, 2000. With 216 co-sponsors, H.R. 1248 enjoys strong bipartisan support. It reauthorizes current VAWA grant programs for 5 years, makes targeted improvements, and adds important new programs.

The passage of the Violence Against Women Act in 1994 was one of the greatest accomplishments of the 103rd Congress and the Clinton Administration. Since 1995, VAWA grants have provided a major source of funding for national and local programs to reduce rape, stalking, and domestic violence. The 1994 Act bolstered the prosecution of child abuse, sexual assault, and domestic violence cases; provided services for victims by funding shelters and sexual assault crisis centers; increased resources for law enforcement and prosecutors; and created a National Domestic Violence Hotline.

VAWA has made a difference in the lives of millions of women, but we need to do more. We must ensure that we adequately address the needs of all victims of domestic violence and sexual assault including immigrant women, older women, women with disabilities, and women of color. We must help women who are trying to escape domestic violence by providing transitional housing and legal assistance services.

H.R. 1248 vastly improves VAWA by strengthening the existing provisions and by adding new provisions to address dating violence, reach underserved populations, facilitate enforcement of state and tribal protective orders nationwide, provide transitional housing, create programs for supervised visitation and exchange for children, develop training programs on elder abuse for law enforcement personnel and prosecutors, provide civil legal assistance funds, strengthen the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, and more.

Passage of the Violence Against Women Act has been identified as the top priority of the Congressional Women's Caucus. It is certainly one of my top priorities.

I urge the leadership to schedule a vote on this vital legislation within the next ten days. The Senate is ready to vote on its VAWA bill. We must be ready to go to conference and to send this bill to the president before the 106th Congress adjourns.

We cannot in good conscience go home to our districts without acting on this critical legislation, which so strongly impacts the safety and well being of women and children throughout our nation.

TRIBUTE TO ST. ANDREW'S AFRICAN  
METHODIST EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH

**HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 6, 2000*

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to St. Andrew's African Methodist Episcopal Church of Sacramento. On October 1, 2000, St. Andrew's will be celebrating its 150th anniversary. It is the oldest church of its kind on the Pacific Coast. As the Congregation members gather to celebrate, I ask all of my col-

leagues to join with me in saluting this monumental achievement.

St. Andrew's was founded in 1850, three months before California was admitted as the 31st state to the Union. It is the first African Methodist Episcopal Church and the first African-American religious congregation established on the Pacific Coast of the United States.

In the beginning, a small group of worshippers gathered in Sacramento at the home of Daniel Blue. Under the leadership of Barney Fletcher, this group would form the church that would later be known as St. Andrew's A.M.E. Church. In the fall of 1850, Reverend Isaac Owen, pastor of the Seventh Street Methodist Episcopal Church, participated in the formal organizing of the church.

The first trustees, James R. Brown, John Barton, George Fletcher, John L. Wilson, and Chesterfield Jackson purchased part of the lot in the square between G and H Streets. At this site, the first church was erected and named the Methodist Church of Colored People of Sacramento. In 1851, the members of the church petitioned the Indiana Conference for admission to the African Methodist Episcopal Church and officially became the Bethel African Methodist Church. Later in the 19th century, the church acquired its current name, St. Andrew's African Methodist Episcopal Church.

St. Andrew's has been a pioneer in organizing an educational and religious haven for people of color. In 1854, the first A.M.E. Sunday School in the far west was organized. This also became the site of the first public school organized for children of African, Asian, and Native American descent. In 1855, the church was the site of the first statewide convention of the colored citizens of California. This was the first organized political activity by people of African descent in California aimed at securing citizenship rights.

During the following years of westward expansion in the United States, St. Andrew's became a pivotal point in the far west for African Methodism, and it hosted numerous political, secular, educational, and cultural activities for African Americans. The church helped to develop educated and trained leaders of the African American community, even before the end of slavery.

Today, St. Andrew's continues to shine as a pillar for the community. In 1995, the church was recognized as a California Registered Landmark for being the oldest African-American Church on the Pacific Coast. For 150 years, the church has admirably served the ethnically diverse Sacramento community.

Mr. Speaker, as the exceptional people of St. Andrew's African Methodist Episcopal Church gather to celebrate their 150th anniversary, I am honored to pay tribute to one of Sacramento's most outstanding institutions. Throughout their proud history, the people of St. Andrew's have maintained an impressive tradition of service to the African-American community and other minority communities in greater Sacramento. I ask all my colleagues to join with me in wishing the people of St. Andrew's continued success in all their future endeavors.