

extend a warm welcome to all of the reunion participants on behalf of the people of Pennsylvania's 14th Congressional District.

#### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 28, 2000*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House passed H.R. 1248, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 1999 by a vote of 415-3. H.R. 1248 will reauthorize the act for 5 years and expand preventive measures against violence against women.

This measure will maintain and expand battered women's shelter programs, rape prevention programs as well as provide assistance to the growing number of victims.

While I was a state senator in California, I introduced similar legislation because I believed then, as I do now, that this issue is extremely important to the lives of women and their children. It has been ignored for too long.

In the past, domestic violence was not considered a crime. Today, however, police officers are getting trained to understand these crimes as well improve their ability to enforce the law.

VAWA has provided critical services to thousands of battered women. Since VAWA passed, the Department of Justice and Health and Human Services have awarded over \$1.6 billion in grants nationwide to support the work of prosecutors, law enforcement officials, the courts, victims' advocates, health care and social service professionals, and intervention and prevention programs.

In addition, VAWA established a domestic violence hotline, which has received over half a million calls.

Unfortunately, domestic violence still devastates the lives of many women and children. Nearly 900,000 women experience violence at the hands of an intimate partner every year. Close to one-third of women murdered each year are killed by their husbands or significant other; and domestic violence accounts for over 20% of all violent crimes against women.

Children should not have to watch their mothers get beaten. Unfortunately, some of these children grow up to continue the cycle of abuse. And, they end up in prison.

Again, I am pleased with the passage of the VAWA because it has helped to save numerous lives of women and their children. This law has provided battered women and their children, a safe haven, and the support necessary for their physical and emotional security.

VAWA has given a second chance to these women as well as saved many of their lives.

Violence against women should not be tolerated. This legislation provides greater protections to all the women who have been victimized and abused.

#### AMERICAN INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOHN D. DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 26, 2000*

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the House passed H.R. 5272, the inappropriately named "Peace Through Negotiations Act of 2000." This legislation is unnecessary, ill timed and not in the best interest of our country or the Middle East peace process. I believe, like the Administration, that the Palestinian Authority should not unilaterally declare statehood outside the framework of a negotiated peace settlement. Unilateral actions by either the Palestinians or Israelis can erode, disrupt, and possibly derail a peace process that we all support and want to see to conclusion in order for future generations to be able to live a normal and stable life.

For starters, this legislation was wholly unnecessary given President Arafat's recent decision not to unilaterally declare a state because it would jeopardize the peace process. Instead of acknowledging the fact that the Palestinian Authority acted with considerable restraint in making this decision, which I will note was not popular among the Palestinian people, we have unfairly and unnecessarily condemned the Palestinian Authority at the very time discussion between Arafat and Prime Minister Barak were underway.

I ask my colleagues, have you read this legislation known as the "Peace Through Negotiations Act?" I have and that is why I am concerned, because while the message sent by H.R. 5272 was bad, its substance is worse.

In particular, I am concerned that Section 4a(1) of the legislation supercedes a portion of the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act and reverses a presidential determination on the national security of the United States. Reversing a standing law that has successfully guided our policy in the Middle East peace process should only be done after serious deliberations. Reversing a Presidential action that he determines is in the national security of the United States is even more serious. Both these actions are done by this legislation without a single hearing or public request for the President's views. Members of the International Relations Committee were given less than twenty-four hours notice of the mark-up of this legislation. The bill passed the Committee on Tuesday with barely half the Members present and voting. The full House passed it on Wednesday under restrictive procedures denying anyone the opportunity to amend it. This legislation is too important to be acted upon in such a rushed fashion. To have done so does not speak highly of the Republican leadership of the House of Representatives.

Moreover, the legislation is flawed because it does not address unilateral actions of all parties. In my view, the unwillingness of the legislation to address unilateral actions of both sides puts our Middle East peace process negotiators in a terrible position. We in Congress should not take actions that make the efforts of American peacemakers more difficult.

My hope is that our colleagues in the Senate do not follow the House's sad example and rush to action without sufficient consider-

ation of all of the ramifications of this legislation.

HONORING U.S. REPRESENTATIVE SOLOMON P. ORTIZ IN RECOGNITION OF THE PORT OF CORPUS CHRISTI'S DEDICATION OF ITS WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT AS THE CONGRESSMAN SOLOMON P. ORTIZ INTERNATIONAL CENTER

**HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 28, 2000*

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, the Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus rise today to honor a respected colleague, an extraordinary Texan and effective public servant, Congressman SOLOMON P. ORTIZ. Since 1982, Congressman ORTIZ has served as a strong advocate for his constituents in the 27th Congressional District of Texas. During his 18 years of service, he has fought tirelessly to bring jobs and enhance the quality of life for residents of the Bay of Corpus Christi to the international border with Mexico.

In recognition of Congressman ORTIZ's lifetime of remarkable leadership and his work on behalf of the Port of Corpus Christi in the area of economic development and trade, Members from the Congressional Hispanic Caucus will join South Texans in Corpus Christi on September 29, 2000 to dedicate the Port of Corpus Christi's new international meeting facility and cruise terminal as "The Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz International Center."

According to William Dodge III, Port Commission Chairman, Congressman ORTIZ ". . . is a strong advocate for the Port of Corpus Christi. He continues to be a leader on international trade issues that significantly impact the Port and the South Texas region. The Congressman recognizes the importance of the Port to the region and always works to ensure that the Port has the necessary resources to help fulfill the mission of diversification. Naming the waterfront development in his honor is a tribute to his contributions and support of the Port."

Working with Congressman ORTIZ in the U.S. House of Representatives, and knowing first-hand of his endless passion and dedication to public service, we, the Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus applaud and endorse the actions of the citizens of South Texas in naming the International Center in his honor. Congressman ORTIZ will continue his significant work to support and strengthen the Port of Corpus Christi, promote international commerce, and ensure that global trade benefits his constituents and the people of the United States.

We urge all our colleagues to join us today in recognition of his 18 remarkable years of service and offer our personal congratulations on the occasion of the dedication of the Port of Corpus Christi's waterfront development as "The Congressman Solomon P. Ortiz International Center."