

She has served as a role model for her family and fellow community members. She is described as a "woman of strong moral values, great strength, integrity and dignity."

Mrs. Ruth C. Gist has five children all of whom I have had the privilege to interact with professionally and socially. She has five grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. In addition, she has served as a surrogate parent to numerous other children in her church and local community all of whom she tries to serve by precept and example.

Because of her selfless devotion and tireless community service, Mrs. Gist's, church family, and the citizens of Union County have deemed it appropriate to recognize her for her years of unselfish service.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mrs. Gist on this momentous day, Mrs. Ruth C. Gist Day, in Union County, South Carolina. I wish her good luck and Godspeed.

ON INTRODUCTION OF BILL THAT  
PAYS TRIBUTE TO STEVEN  
PINIAHA

**HON. MARGE ROUKEMA**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 20, 2002*

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce a bill that pays tribute to an especially brave man from New Jersey, Private First Class Steven Piniaha. This bill would authorize the President to award Private Piniaha, the Congressional Medal of Honor, for his gallantry in action near Pirkenbrunn, Germany, on April 25, 1945. For his courageous and selfless actions on the battlefield, this man is truly a great American patriot.

In response to the call of duty, Private Piniaha was unable to dislodge a force of enemy riflemen from their dug-in positions on a hillside with tank fire. Private Piniaha dismounted his tank and boldly stormed the hill. Although twice thrown to the ground by concussion grenades he continued forward until he was mere yards from the enemy and then forced the surrender of twelve of the enemy. Private Piniaha's fearless courage, dauntless initiative and devotion to duty reflect credit on himself and are in keeping with the highest military traditions.

After leaving the service, Mr. Piniaha, spent a quarter of a century coaching little league baseball and football. He is married and has eight grownup children. He is currently retired.

Although the American colonists were victorious in the revolutionary war 219 years ago, the American pursuit of liberty did not end there. Throughout the past 2 centuries, young Americans like Private Piniaha have fought to preserve our country's values both inside and outside its borders. In this struggle, one of our most valuable resources has been our soldiers and their dedication to upholding American ideals.

This July 4th, when we celebrate the birth of our beloved nation and all it means to us, we must acknowledge the brave and selfless actions of dedicated American soldiers like Private Piniaha. Through his courageous military service, Private Piniaha has done his part to ensure that America may celebrate its independence year after year.

I urge support for this bill that honors Private Piniaha's contribution to American military history. Thanks to brave soldiers like Private Piniaha, we retain our freedom and we protect democracy around the world. I ask all my colleagues to join me in commending Private Piniaha's sacrifice for our nation.

HONORING ERNEST R. GRECCO

**HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 20, 2002*

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ernest R. Grecco, an extraordinary leader and community activist who serves as President of the Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO Unions. Mr. Grecco is recognized for his commitment to "the right of all working people to join unions" and his ongoing work in serving the Baltimore area.

Mr. Grecco's distinguished involvement with the labor movement has flourished since his initial engagement while working for Calvert Distilleries. Ernest Grecco's perseverance and open mindedness have allowed him to rise through the ranks of AFL-CIO Unions leadership. First serving as the COPE Director of the Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO Unions in 1976, he became the director of the Maryland State and District of Columbia branch of this organization in 1983. Then in 1987, as a result of his genuine dedication to bettering the lives of people, Mr. Grecco advanced to his current role as the President of Metropolitan Baltimore division of this organization.

Since then, Ernest Grecco has maintained his commitment in providing services to working people. His support for the Community Service division of the Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO Unions has strengthened projects in areas of education, job placement and community action.

However, his message of hard work, dedication and justice is not confined to the labor movement. Ernest Grecco is extensively involved in all facets of the community. Not only is he the Secretary of the United Way Board of Directors, but Mr. Grecco also serves as a member of the Private Industry Council, the Governor's Work Force Investment Board and the Empower Baltimore Committee, among countless other distinguished organizations.

Through all his public service, Mr. Grecco has distinguished himself in the state of Maryland. He proclaimed that "Labor is alive and well in Maryland" and works hard each day to improve the lives of workers.

In July, Mr. Grecco will be celebrating his 60th birthday with family and friends. I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Ernest R. Grecco for his service to the AFL-CIO Unions and devotion to the people of Maryland.

CONGRATULATING THE WILLIAMS  
SISTERS

**HON. MAXINE WATERS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 20, 2002*

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Williams sisters on their mag-

nificent play during the 2002 French Open. The two sisters, Venus and Serena, met recently in the finals of the French Open and provided an exciting game for us to watch. In the end, Serena defeated her big sister in straight sets, 7-5, 6-3 to become champion. It was a great match and I look forward to watching them compete in the future. I would not be surprised to see them competing against each other in other finals over the next few years.

Recently, Venus was ranked number one in the world by the Women's Tennis Association. And Serena was ranked number two. It is the first time sisters have ever held the top two spots in the world. It is quite an accomplishment.

Venus and Serena have dominated the tennis scene since they arrived in 1994 and 1997, respectively. Together, they have won over 27 tournaments and six grand slam titles. When Venus won the 2000 Wimbledon championship, she became the first female black champion since 1958 when Althea Gibson won the title. In the same year, she teamed up with her sister to win the doubles championship. Venus went on to win Wimbledon last year and is the top ranked woman this year. She also won the Olympic gold medal for singles and doubles in the Sydney Games. To win the Olympic doubles gold medal, she paired up with Serena. The two sisters overwhelmed the competition with power and hard work, winning the gold medal match 6-1, 6-1. With that victory, Venus became the first woman, since 1924, to win the gold in singles and doubles competition.

Serena is also quite accomplished. She has fifteen career wins under her belt. As I mentioned, she won her second Grand Slam title at the French Open this year, her first coming at the 1999 U.S. Open. When she won that title, Serena became the lowest seed to win the women's title in the Open era. She is ranked number two at Wimbledon this year.

So it appears that most expect the sisters to reach the Wimbledon finals this year. If it does happen, it would be the third all-Williams Grand Slam final in 10 months. And their seventh championship in the past 12 Grand Slam singles events.

In closing, I wish Venus and Serena the best of luck at Wimbledon and offer my sincere congratulations to them for their remarkable achievements.

TRIBUTE TO BROOKLAND BAPTIST  
CHURCH

**HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 20, 2002*

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Brookland Baptist Church, of West Columbia, South Carolina, on the occasion of their Centennial year.

This Sunday, June 23, 2002, will be Brookland Baptist Church's Men's Day Celebration during which they will celebrate 100 years of Christian service. Although this church—as many others—is made of bricks and mortar, to its community it symbolizes the body of Christ. In times of need, Brookland Baptist has been, and continues to be, a place of comfort and support. In times of joy, it has