

strive to do their personal best each day. Her classroom is a safe haven, where learning is natural and anything is attainable.

I would like to congratulate Ms. Kathleen McGrath on her election into the National Teachers Hall of Fame, and for continuing to provide the children of Marion County with a fun and inspiring learning environment.

INTERNATIONAL DAY IN SUPPORT
OF THE VICTIMS OF TORTURE

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 25, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, I find myself dealing with the issue of torture many times over during the course of any given year—torture committed by Russian forces in Chechnya, systematic police abuse of Roma in Greece, prisoners tortured to death in Uzbekistan, to give just a few recent examples. Unfortunately, torture remains the weapon of choice by many oppressive regimes, systematically used to silence political opposition, punish religious minorities, or target those who are ethnically or racially different from those in power.

But on the occasion of the United Nations' Day in Support of the Victims of Torture, I'd like to reflect on the steps that can be taken to help prevent torture from occurring in the first place.

Torture is prohibited by a multitude of international instruments, including documents of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Moreover, it is absolute and nonderogable under any circumstances, even wartime. The challenge, then, is to translate this commitment into practice.

Amnesty International has issued a number of recommendations to help end torture. They are remarkably straightforward and easy to grasp: officials at the highest level should condemn torture; governments should ensure access to prisoners; secret detentions should be prohibited; and confessions obtained through torture should be excluded from evidence in the courtroom. I believe the implementation of these fundamental principles would have a significant impact in reducing torture. At the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Annual Session two years ago, I introduced a resolution, passed by the Assembly, that built on these basic concepts.

While we work to eradicate torture, we must not forget those who have already become its victims. Along with Representative TOM LANTOS, I have introduced H.R. 1813, legislation to re-authorize the Torture Victims Relief Act and the list of cosponsors is growing. The Senate companion bill, S. 854 was introduced by Senator COLEMAN. This reauthorization will continue funding for centers here in the United States that help provide treatment for the estimated half million survivors, most of whom came to this country as refugees. It will also provide funds, distributed through the Agency for International Development or the U.N. Voluntary Fund for the Victims of Torture, for treatment centers abroad. While life for torture survivors can never be the same, treatment can provide victims the hope of becoming stable and productive members of their commu-

nities. I urge my colleagues in the House to join in supporting this measure as a tangible support of the victims of torture.

HONORING DR. JAN VAN
WAGTENDONK

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 25, 2003

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Jan van Wagtendonk, who recently received the 2002 Excellence in Wilderness Stewardship Research Award. Van Wagtendonk was presented the award on June 12, 2003 at the Forest Service's 2002 National Wilderness Awards ceremony in Arlington, VA.

Dr. Wagtendonk has been involved in wilderness science for over 30 years. Van Wagtendonk grew up in Indiana where he studied forestry at Purdue University. During the summer, he worked as a smokejumper for the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. This led him to Oregon State University where he received his B.S. in Forest Management. He then served four and a half years in the U.S. Army as an officer in the 101st Airborne Division where he was also an advisor to the Vietnamese army. He entered graduate school at University of California, Berkeley where he received his M.S. in Range Management and his Ph.D. in Wildland Resource Science with a specialty in fire ecology. From 1972 through 1993, van Wagtendonk was a research scientist with the National Park Service at Yosemite National Park. Since then he has been a research scientist with the U.S. Geological Survey. In 2001, van Wagtendonk was chosen to be an invited speaker at the 7th World Wilderness Congress held in South Africa.

Through his extensive research, interagency wilderness programs in the Sierra Nevada have improved greatly. His contributions have not only helped in Yosemite, but across the country, with his work on fuels dynamics, fire prescriptions, remote sensing and the application of geographic information systems to fire management. The techniques developed through van Wagtendonk's work have been used in the wildernesses of national forests in Oregon, North Carolina and California. Dr. David Parsons nominated van Wagtendonk for this because "his dedication to providing sound science to the challenging dilemmas facing wilderness managers in Yosemite and across the country is unparalleled."

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Dr. Jan van Wagtendonk for his significant and steadfast efforts to preserve and manage the wilderness of the United States.

SUPPORTING THE EFFORTS OF
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ADVOCATES

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 25, 2003

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to show my support for the efforts of

public transportation advocates around the country.

Today, the National Alliance of Public Transportation Advocates (NAPTA) is distributing a letter to the Hill, which asks Congress to double the investment in public transportation to \$14 billion by FY2009 when it reauthorizes the federal surface transportation program.

Providing increased, guaranteed transit funding is critical to improving the livability of our communities. In Portland, we have been proud to be leaders in understanding the connection between land use and transportation. Our light rail system has not only provided additional choices to our residents, it has also helped with environmental problems.

Portland's transit system, Tri-Met, has the 13th largest ridership in the nation, despite being only the 29th largest transit district. Rider totals increased 65 percent the last decade. This growth is a reflection of the increased transit investment provided by the federal, state and local levels. In my community, transit truly is making a difference in the quality of life for our citizens.

NAPTA also points to the strong success of such existing programs as the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), Enhancements, and Transportation and Community and System Pilot Preservation Program (TCSP).

Communities nationwide are experiencing the flexibility and freedom of having more public transportation choices. For every federal dollar invested in public transportation as many as \$6 are returned in congestion reduction, safety benefits and access to economic opportunity. At the same time, 47,500 jobs are created for each \$1 billion invested. Increasing guaranteed federal funding in public transportation can bring these benefits to people across the country.

TRIBUTE TO THE EMPLOYEES OF
WYETH-PHARMACEUTICALS IN
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 25, 2003

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, the breakthroughs in medicine now occurring on a daily basis were unimaginable 40 years ago when Medicare was established. Seniors lead better lives due to these research breakthroughs and new prescription drugs; however, these medical breakthroughs are meaningless if seniors cannot access these lifesaving medications prescribed by their doctor.

Last year a constituent of mine from Bumpass, Virginia wrote me because she could not afford her mother's private assisted living care. She was paying over \$550 a month for her mother's prescription drugs, and those huge costs severely limited the care available for her mother. I can only imagine how heartbreaking a decision this must have been for a daughter and her mother—choosing medicine over assisted living care.

That is why I want to recognize the 1,465 Richmond-based employees of Wyeth-Pharmaceuticals, a world-class pharmaceutical research company. These employees participate in charitable company program that offers patients lifesaving medications, free of charge.