

course of his remarkable career, Mr. Gebhard has remained focused on maintaining impeccable customer relations while serving area residents.

Upon his 50th anniversary of Federal service, his wife Leigh Gebhard, and both those he has helped serve and those he has worked with, appreciate and respect the work he has accomplished over the years. I feel confident in saying that Mr. Gebhard truly has an impact in the lives of those around him.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my sincere and heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Harold L. Gebhard on his 50th anniversary in serving the public. For the past 50 years, he has dedicated himself towards helping the residents of Northwest Florida and for that we will be forever grateful. Mr. Speaker, on this such occasion, we honor one of America's greatest public servants.

DR. JOSE LUIS GARCIA PANEQUE—
CUBAN SURGEON, HUMAN
RIGHTS ADVOCATE, AND POLITICAL PRISONER

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I come today to the floor of the House to speak about Cuban political prisoner Dr. Jose Luis Garcia Paneque, Surely few of my colleagues are aware of the case of Dr. Jose Luis Garcia Paneque, but that does not make his imprisonment by the Castro dictatorship any less brutal and inhumane, or any less deserving of our attention.

Mr. Speaker, more of my colleagues need to know the names of Cuba's many political prisoners.

Dr. Garcia Paneque is 38 years old, married, with four young children. He is a talented medical professional with an entire life and future ahead of him. However, he was born after the Castro dictatorship's take-over and into the totalitarian nightmare that some Castro sycophants say has improved the lives of the Cuban people. Dr. Garcia Paneque does not see it that way, because he is not free. He is a young doctor in jail because of his belief in freedom.

Dr. Garcia Paneque was arrested, along with more than 100 others, in the March 2003 crackdown, on the internal opposition. What was his crime? He provided free medical care independent of the government, opened a private library, defended human rights, and worked with the independent media.

Imagine, Mr. Speaker, there are Members of Congress who have dined with Castro and actually point to the dictatorship's health care system as a model, yet I am sure they do not even know the name of this man who was arrested because he was the leader of a regional branch of the unofficial Independent Medical Association. Dr. Garcia Paneque gave medical treatment to Cubans who were denied that treatment by the system run by the dictatorship.

You see, Mr. Speaker, the Castro dictatorship uses access to medical treatment, food, education, and other things we take for granted, as a tool of political control. Dr. Garcia Paneque's association of medical profes-

sionals is nothing more than a group independent of the government controlled medical association. On Capitol Hill, we meet with dozens of associations representing medical professionals, but under the Castro dictatorship, there can only be one medical association in Cuba and it is controlled by the dictatorship.

Dr. Garcia Paneque was detained March 18, sentenced on April 4 to 24 years in prison, and transferred on May 17 to Villa Clara Provincial Prison with his hands and feet tied behind his back. It was a 7-hour ride by truck. According to what his wife has been told by his jailers, he was transferred to a prison 300 miles from where she lives to deny her and their four children regular visitation.

Dr. Garcia Paneque's wife, Yamile Llanez, is a lawyer and also a member of the opposition movement. Because of her activities in support of human rights, she has been stripped of her job and her food ration card. She and her children are dependent on charity to survive.

Dr. Garcia Paneque has lost 30 pounds since he was detained on March 18. He is currently held in something worse than solitary confinement: a dark 2.5 by 5 foot punishment cell. In his cell, he cannot move or exercise, and there are absolutely no sanitary facilities. He suffers from currently untreated asthma, allergies, and skin fungus.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to know Mr. Garcia Paneque's name. And know the name of his wife, Yamile Llanez. I ask Members to learn the names of the other political prisoners I have spoken about from the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives: Ibarra, Rivero, Leyva, Antunez, Espinosa, Roque. I ask Members who visit with Castro to also raise the names of these brave political prisoners, to demand to visit them, and to demand their release.

Mr. Speaker, I ask for my colleagues to believe what Dr. Garcia Paneque believes: that Cuba should be free.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING UNITED NATIONS MEMBERSHIP FOR TAIWAN

HON. MARILYN N. MUSGRAVE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution calling for Taiwan to become a member of the United Nations.

The resolution states that it is the sense of Congress that "(1) Taiwan and its 23 million people deserve full and equal membership in the United Nations and other international organizations; and (2) the United States should take a leading role in gaining international support for Taiwan's participation in these organizations."

Taiwan, a strong advocate of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and a bastion of economic strength, deserves the same privileges as all other thriving democracies. With the election of its President, Mr. Chen Shui-bian, in a free and fair election in March 2000, Taiwan continues to strengthen its democracy by improving safeguards for human rights and contributing to the international community.

Taiwan was driven out of the United Nations in 1971 and, since then, has continually tried

to regain admission. The People's Republic of China (PRC) has blocked those efforts. The PRC, one of the five permanent Security Council members, which determines new UN membership, continually pressures other nations not to support Taiwan's membership.

The 23 million people of Taiwan have much to contribute, both intellectually and financially, to many international organizations, including the UN. Clearly, the people of Taiwan should also benefit from any positive work these organizations engage in as well.

It is unreasonable for the people of Taiwan to be excluded from full participation in international institutions. Denying Taiwan membership in the United Nations and other international organizations, such as the World Health Organization, is unacceptable.

For the past several years, both Houses of the U.S. Congress have consistently introduced and passed legislation supporting Taiwan's meaningful participation and membership into the United Nations and the World Health Organization. This important legislation restates our support and our commitment to the progress of Taiwan's democracy.

I believe that Taiwan's full and equal membership in the United Nations and other international organizations is long overdue. Now is the time to right the wrong committed in 1971, by granting Taiwan the status it deserves.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STRENGTHENING SCIENCE AT THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY ACT

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce legislation that will strengthen the role that science plays within the Environmental Protection Agency. This legislation is precisely the same bill that passed the House in April of last year (H.R. 64 in the 107th Congress).

I introduce this today on the heels of the Administration's renewed interest in passing legislation that would promote EPA to a cabinet-level department. I still support efforts to elevate EPA without significant structural changes, yet I strongly believe that the scientific and regulatory arms of the Agency should be more integrated. The Administration has recently shown a new willingness to accept some restructuring proposals as part of legislation to elevate EPA. In fact, during a recent congressional hearing the acting EPA Administrator testified that, "the time has come to establish EPA as a permanent member of the Cabinet, modernizing its structure in a straightforward way to ensure it can respond effectively to future environmental challenges."

If restructuring proposals are included in elevation legislation, then the most fundamental and straightforward reform needed at the EPA is to strengthen the role that science plays in the Agency's regulatory decision-making process. Science must infuse this process. Too often it is used as a cudgel to win a legal battle, or as an afterthought to the regulatory process, rather than as the foundation of a regulatory decision.

The need to strengthen science at the EPA is well-documented. The most recent report, issued by the National Research Council, made two major recommendations. First, that the EPA create a new Deputy Administrator for Science and Technology to serve as an advocate for and reviewer of science at the most senior levels of the Agency. Second, that EPA set a fixed term for the Assistant Administrator of the Office of Research and Development. These changes would help elevate the role of science in the decision-making process at the Agency, as well as provide more stability to existing research efforts inside of the Agency. The legislation I am introducing today captures both of these ideas and will help ensure that science informs and infuses the regulatory work of the EPA.

I urge the Administration not to go too far down the road of "structural changes" and to tightly adhere to their goal of accepting only straightforward ones. This legislation is one of the simplest, straightforward, and yet most effective structural changes Congress can make. It will truly improve the decision-making process at EPA. Additionally, this proposal has already passed the House and garnered the support organizations from the scientific and business community. I look forward to working with the Administration on this legislation and urge my colleagues to support it.

THRIFT SAVINGS IMPROVEMENT
ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Thrift Savings Fund Improvement Act. This legislation to expand the investment options available to congressional and other federal employees by creating a precious metals investment fund in the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Adding a precious metals fund to the TSP will enhance the plan's ability to offer congressional employees a wide range of investment options that can provide financial security even during difficult economic conditions.

All of us recognize the importance of maintaining a professional congressional staff and promoting longevity of service in order to enhance stability in the operations of Congress. This is why we have recently enacted legislation authorizing new benefits, such as a student loan forgiveness program, and have taken other measures to improve staff compensation and benefits.

The Thrift Savings Plan is one of the most important benefits offered to congressional employees. A strong TSP can obviously play a key role in attracting and retaining talented individuals to serve in the legislative branch. However, the three stock index funds in the Thrift Savings Plan have not recently performed well, especially when measured against inflation. In 2002, for example, losses from these funds were greater than three, four, and five percent, respectively, in the month of December and, more than 15, 18, and 22 percent, respectively, for the entire year!

In contrast, increases in gold spot prices more than offset the losses experienced by

even the worst performing stock-indexed fund in the Thrift Savings Plan in 2002, with the price of gold increasing by nearly 25 percent in the year and by more than nine percent in December!

Recent gains aside, precious metals have a number of features that make them a sound part of a prudent investment strategy. In particular, inflation does not erode the value of precious metals is not eroded over time. Thus, precious metals can serve as a valuable "inflation hedge." Precious metals also maintain, or even increase, their value during times of stock market instability, such as what the country is currently experiencing. Thus, investments in precious metals can help ensure that an investment portfolio maintains its value during times of economic instability.

Federal employees could greatly benefit from the protection against inflation and economic downturns provided by prudent investments in precious metals. I, therefore, once again urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Thrift Savings Fund Improvement Act.

COMMEMORATING THE RETIRE-
MENT OF ANNE S. KIEHLE, PH.D,
SUPERINTENDENT OF FORT SAM
HOUSTON ISD

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Dr. Anne S. Kiehle, Superintendent of Fort Sam Houston Independent School District (ISD). Dr. Kiehle's many contributions to education over her distinguished 36 year career has been recognized by her fellow educators. She has served as president of the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TESPA) as well as an active member of numerous educational organizations including the National Association of Federally Impacted School (NAFIS), Military Impacted Schools Association, and American Association of School Administrators (AASA). Additionally, she participates in the National Center for Educational Research and Technology (NCERT), the Association of Supervisors and Curriculum Development (ASCD), and the Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA).

Dr. Kiehle, who assumed top leadership role at Fort Sam Houston ISD in May 1996, has guided the school district to its current "Exemplary" status as designed by the Texas Education Agency which rate student performance, drop-out rates, and attendance.

Dr. Kiehle is also responsible for Fort Sam Houston ISD's involvement in the Military Child Education Coalition, an international organization whose mission is to establish partnerships and provide networking of schools and military installations regarding educational issues related to the military child. She has worked with MCEC officials on local arrangements for a Department of Defense Roundtable Discussion for education of military students.

Technology has been one of Dr. Kiehle's major initiatives beginning with networking of the school district, providing district personnel and students with computer hardware and software for instruction, record keeping, and

increased communication with families both here and overseas. Distance learning capabilities have been added for student and district personnel.

Fort Sam Houston ISD schools have experienced major facility renovations and new construction as part of the Long-Range Facility Plan developed under Dr. Kiehle's leadership. Early in her administration, a new JROTC Building was built on the Cole campus, with the existing building renovated into a multipurpose Professional Development Center.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to commend Dr. Anne S. Kiehle for her hard work and dedication to Fort Sam ISD. It is the perseverance and dedication of women like her that have made Fort Sam Houston ISD a great institution for students to attend.

IN MEMORY OF ANDREA MARTIN

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the inspirational life and work of Andrea Martin, who died peacefully at her home on August 6. A loving wife, devoted mother, and treasured friend, Andrea was a woman of incomparable courage. A champion in the fight against breast cancer both locally and nationally, she used her resources and creativity to expose a national health crisis and fight a critical battle. She fought for all of us by advocating for safer and earlier detection, less toxic treatments and research into environmental causes. Andrea's memory will be cherished by her friends and loved ones and by those countless women whose lives she touched through her relentless advocacy.

Born in New York City and raised in Memphis, Tennessee, Andrea graduated from Tulane University and received her master's degree in French while on a fellowship at Tufts University. She moved to San Francisco in 1969, where she taught French at a local high school. Six years later, Andrea earned a law degree from Hastings College at a time when few women had the opportunity to attend law school. Five years after she joined the law firm of Crosby, Heafey, Roach, and May, Andrea left the practice to open Hog Heaven, a Memphis-style barbeque restaurant.

In 1989, Andrea was diagnosed with breast cancer and told that she had little chance of survival. Andrea's determination and strength of character motivated her to overcome this challenge. After a difficult year of treatment, she joined DIANNE FEINSTEIN's gubernatorial campaign in California and became a top fundraiser for Senator FEINSTEIN.

After being diagnosed with breast cancer for a second time in 1991, Andrea chose to take the offensive. She founded the Breast Cancer Fund in the living room of her San Francisco apartment. Through her dedication and hard work, she transformed the Fund into one of the most influential breast cancer research advocacy group in the nation.

For the rest of her life, she would be an important national leader in the fight against breast cancer. Andrea was a relentless advocate who helped convince elected officials, health officials, and scientists to spend more