

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating and thanking Ira and Kathy Gribin for their many outstanding contributions and to wish them continued success.

RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING  
THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS  
OF ALTHEA GIBSON, H. RES. 386

**HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 2, 2003*

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a profound sense of pride that I rise today in support of the Resolution, sponsored by Representative JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD, commemorating the life and achievements of the great African American tennis legend, Althea Gibson. This trailblazer died on Sunday, September 28, 2003 at the age of 76. I stand here today to pay tribute to her fighting spirit.

Mr. Speaker, long before there was a Venus or Serena Williams there was Althea Gibson. As we celebrate the impressive records accumulated by these two tennis stars we often forget that it was just a little over 50 years ago that tennis was an all-white sport.

Born on August 25, 1927 in Silver, South Carolina, this 5-foot-11 black woman boldly challenged the conventional wisdom of the day. Overcoming the depths of racism and adversity, Althea Gibson's pioneering efforts to integrate the sport paved the way for the likes of Arthur Ashe, Venus and Serena Williams, Tiger Woods, and future generations of aspiring African American athletes. America owes her a tremendous debt.

Her list of accomplishments is impressive. Breaking the color barrier in the 1950s, Althea Gibson became the first African American woman to compete at and win the Wimbledon and U.S. national tennis titles. She was also the first African American player on the Ladies Professional Golfers Association Tour. Between 1956 and 1958, Althea Gibson captured the Wimbledon and United States championships and won the French Open and three Wimbledon doubles titles. In 1957, she was the first African American to be voted by the Associated Press as its Female Athlete of the Year. She won that honor again in 1958.

Ms. Gibson attended Florida A&M University where she was initiated as a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. She died as a "golden soror" of this elite organization after being a member of the sorority for over 50 years.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I leave you with words that are attributed to this great first lady of tennis— ". . . here stands before you a Negro woman, raised in Harlem, who went on to become a tennis player . . . and finally wound up being a world champion, in fact the first black woman champion of the world."

Mr. Speaker, again it is my honor and privilege to lend my wholehearted support to this important resolution—which honors and commemorates the life and achievements of this great African American woman. I urge all of my colleagues to support the Resolution, H. Res. 386, which honors the indomitable spirit of Althea Gibson.

SUPPORTING GOALS OF IMMIGRANT  
WORKERS FREEDOM  
RIDE

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 2, 2003*

Mr. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, hundreds of immigrant workers all over the country converged in Washington on their way to New York City as part of the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. They are here to raise awareness about the plight of immigrant workers.

Over the years, the United States has been called a nation of immigrants. The fact that we are a melting pot for so many different cultures, races and religions makes us unique in the world. It has helped mold our national character. For more than 300 years, various ethnic, cultural, and social groups have come to our shores to reunite with their loved ones, to seek economic opportunity, and to find a haven from religious and political persecution. They bring their hopes and dreams and in turn, contribute, enrich and energize America.

In my home state of Minnesota, immigrants have worked hard to establish a rich culture and strong economy.

Many immigrants in my state become American citizens. In 2002, over 5,400 immigrants became American citizens in Minnesota. Sixty-five percent of immigrants in my state who are eligible for naturalization become citizens.

These new Americans work hard, pay taxes and make indispensable contributions to our economy. Through their tax payments, they help finance the costs of schools, health care, roads, welfare payments, Social Security, and the nation's defense.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of a resolution introduced by my colleagues Representatives HILDA SOLIS and MIKE HONDA supporting the goals of the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride: to create a clear road to citizenship for all immigrant workers, allow workers to reunite their families, ensure immigrants' civil rights and liberties, and protect the rights of immigrants in the workplace.

Our country was founded on the strength of our immigrant communities. A strong immigration system is a sign of a confident and successful nation, and we should welcome those who, in that spirit, seek to make the United States their home.

IN HONOR OF DR. JOAN PATON  
ACOSTA

**HON. XAVIER BECERRA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 2, 2003*

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, it is with utmost pleasure and privilege that I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to Dr. Joan Paton Acosta, an outstanding educator, a passionate advocate for our youth, and a wonderful friend and confidant. Dr. Acosta will retire this Thursday, October 2, 2003, after 38 years of exceptional service to the students and families of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD).

A Los Angeles native, Joan is a product of the very school district to which she committed

her professional career. She is a proud alumna of 68th Elementary, Audubon Junior High, and Dorsey High School. Her public education served her well on the path toward achieving a masters from California State University at Los Angeles in 1968, and a doctorate from Claremont Graduate University in 1978.

Joan has become such an indispensable asset at LAUSD, with so many accomplishments, that her curriculum vitae is not stored on its computer database, but within the veteran microfiche files. She began her career with the school district on February 1, 1965, as a third grade teacher at Ford Boulevard Elementary School. Since that initial teaching position, Joan has worked as a special education teacher, an advisor and administrative coordinator at the Office of Legislation and Government Affairs, an administrator at the Office of Chief Advisor, and as an administrator in legislation and grants for the Division of Special Education. In 1984, Joan received the prestigious Theodore Bass Memorial Teacher in Politics Award, for her political activism and contribution to education.

Los Angeles families are forever indebted to Dr. Acosta for her instrumental role in the pursuit of an accurate Census for the year 2000. Her work organizing LAUSD's "We Count" outreach campaign targeting typically undercounted and highly mobile minority families ensured that thousands of Angelenos were counted, many for the first time.

Mr. Speaker, most of us wake up in the morning and, after subduing the regular aches and pains of life, move on to enjoy another day. We take for granted that simplicity of life. Joan Acosta understood how precious and complex living each and every "next day" could be, especially for our children. Joan leaves her work in Los Angeles and our nation's capitol, Washington D.C., as a true champion for disabled students. I am personal witness to—and willing victim of—her tenacious advocacy for increased funding for special education programs and reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities and Education Act.

In addition to her hard work and dedication to the students of LAUSD, Joan has also fought for the teachers of the Los Angeles Unified School District. Joan was one of the initial organizers of United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), which today represents the 44,000 teachers, counselors, psychologists, and nurses in LAUSD. Widely recognized by the teaching community as a leader, Joan has been elected by her fellow educators to represent them on the Board of Directors of UTLA, all the way to the 2.7 million strong National Education Association (NEA), where she served as the alternate to the NEA Board of Directors from California, and as a member of the body's Resolutions Committee.

Regardless of what department or position Joan has served, she has always left a lasting mark, thanks to her professional demeanor, devotion to education, and cheerful disposition. Her smile is infectious, and I have never known her to start a day without it. Joan has rightfully earned her reputation as a dedicated public servant, committed educator, and advocate for the rights of all students and employees of the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Joan's retirement marks the final chapter in a distinguished career in education that began and ends in Los Angeles. I wish her much luck and leisure in the days to come when she