

encourage individual nonprofit leaders to see themselves as part of the greater nonprofit private sector.

Nonprofit organizations throughout Colorado serve as responsible stewards of charitable dollars. Over 16,000 charitable nonprofit organizations operate in Colorado. In 2001 nonprofit expenditures totaled more than \$9 billion in Colorado for the 5,400 largest nonprofits and \$822 billion in the U.S. for the nearly 267,000 largest nonprofits.

These organizations subscribe to a number of missions and values. I strongly commend their efforts to invest in the potential of all citizens through education, employment, recreation, arts, and culture.

The nonprofit sector throughout Colorado has a proud history of service, innovation, and the accomplishments of the sector deserve acknowledgement, affirmation, and celebration.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I ask my colleagues to join me to commend the efforts of nonprofit organizations, not only throughout Colorado, but also the entire Nation.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING
CARRIE MYTINGER

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 2, 2004

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker:

Whereas, Carrie Mytinger was presented the 2003 Rookie of the Year Award by the Chillicothe Jaycees; and

Whereas, Carrie Mytinger must be commended for her work with the Chillicothe community; and

Whereas, Carrie Mytinger has demonstrated a commitment to community service through her work with various organizations, meeting challenges with enthusiasm and confidence;

Therefore, I join with the residents of the entire 18th Congressional District in congratulating Carrie Mytinger for her outstanding accomplishment.

HOUSE COMMISSION FOR ASSISTING
DEMOCRATIC PARLIAMENTS
RESOLUTION: A PRICE-BEREUTER-
DREIER-FROST INITIATIVE

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 2, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member wishes to thank his friend the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. PRICE, for working with me and introducing a resolution to establish the House Commission for Assisting Democratic Parliaments. This Member is proud to be an original cosponsor of this measure, along with the chairman and the ranking Democratic member of the Committee on Rules. Having been involved in the Frost-Solomon Task Force, which undertook a similar effort a decade ago, this Member is enthused to offer this new initiative.

The spread of parliamentary democracy in Central and Eastern Europe is one of the great success stories in recent history. Of course, the efforts by those nations to over-

throw their communist dictatorships in some cases traces back several decades, but the rapid downfall of those regimes began after the events of 1989 and accelerated in the early 1990s.

Sadly, some countries that gained independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia simply traded communist dictatorships for new dictatorships of nationalists and former apparatchiks. But most of these countries moved quickly to establish new democracies, holding free and fair elections and transforming their parliaments from rubber-stamp facades into independent legislatures. However, this task proved easier on paper than in practice.

As we well know in this Congress, our ability to legislate independently of the executive depends on our access to independent information and analysis. We are fortunate to have our own staffs and support agencies to which we can turn to research an issue and provide alternative points of view. Recognizing the importance of this, the Congress has created agencies like the General Accounting Office, Congressional Research Service and Congressional Budget Office to provide Members with independent views and oversight.

In the newly democratic parliaments, this capacity and expertise was lacking. Recognizing its importance for legislative autonomy, in 1990 the distinguished gentleman from Texas, Mr. FROST, established a task force through the Speaker's office to help them develop the needed capabilities. In cooperation with the late gentleman from New York, Mr. Solomon, the gentleman from Texas developed a program that allowed the House of Representatives to share the expertise of Members and staff, especially from the Congressional Research Service, with the newly democratic parliaments. The task force provided modest donations of information technology-related office equipment and reference materials for parliamentary libraries, thereby facilitating the establishment of independent research services.

The task force also helped those parliaments develop parliamentary procedures and the means to inform Members and the general public about parliamentary activities in a timely and open fashion. At a modest cost, we were able to help these parliaments become effective legislatures and play their part in a democratic system.

The Frost-Solomon Task Force was terminated in 1996. While most of those countries that received aid have indeed become full-fledged democracies, others still need a helping hand. The Price-Bereuter Resolution aims to provide that assistance.

The resolution that has been introduced would create a House Commission for Assisting Democratic Parliaments, comprised of eight House Members—four Republicans and four Democrats—and it would have a small staff to coordinate its activities and help Members determine which parliaments would most benefit from such assistance.

Much of the expertise that these parliaments require can be found in the House and its support agencies, so the resolution would allow congressional offices to detail employees to the Commission. Recognizing that many of those who worked on the initial Frost-Solomon Task Force have retired or are about to retire from congressional employment, the resolution allows the Commission to use those retirees

as consultants, so that parliaments can benefit from their years of expertise.

In addition to providing expert advice from Members and staff, the resolution envisions a modest assistance program to provide parliaments with information, technology-related equipment and with reference materials so that they could establish a research service and better disseminate legislative information. When the Commission identified needs in selected parliaments, it could recommend that the Agency for International Development provide certain equipment, materials or technical assistance to enable those parliaments to become more efficient and transparent.

The first task of this Commission should be to finish the work that was begun in Central and Eastern Europe, but the resolution does not limit the Commission's scope to that region. Once this program is established, it could expand to assist parliaments in other countries, as appropriate, like those in the Caucasus and Central Asian regions and perhaps in other parts of the world. For example, the United States is committed to help create representative democracies in Afghanistan and Iraq. It would be worthwhile if the House were to work with the new parliaments in those nations to help them develop as autonomous institutions in a democratic society.

Mr. Speaker, this Member was pleased to play a small part in the Frost-Solomon Task Force in the 1990s by participating in Frost-Solomon congressional delegations that reviewed the accomplishments of the assistance that had been given. Today, we have an opportunity to further assist in the emergence of democratic parliaments by enabling this House to share its expertise and to work with AID in providing the necessary assistance. This Member urges his colleagues to become cosponsors of the Price-Bereuter-Dreier-Frost resolution to create the House Commission for Assisting Democratic Parliaments.

MELHA SHRINERS—CELEBRATING
50 YEARS OF FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 2, 2004

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Melha Shrine Circus of Springfield. For 50 years the Melha Shriners have proudly presented this show as a great and historic form of family entertainment.

The Shriners have done this for the past half of a century in order to raise money to fund their marching units and other community activities in western Massachusetts. These events are meant to maintain their visibility and presence in the community so that they can continue to support their main message about their hospital work.

Beyond merely putting on a circus to entertain families across western Massachusetts, these philanthropists also always perform what they like to call "The Community Service Show." For this event they donate all of the almost 5,000 tickets to the circus to various community service groups who deal with children, adults, and families in need of aid. By bringing a little extra light into the lives of people down on their luck the Melha Shriners simply show that they are willing to take the extra