

and Gloria Flores, who for over fifty years have provided a valued service to their Salt Creek, Colorado, community. The Flores are the proud owners of Flores Grocery and Gift Shop, a business they started in the late 1950's that is well known for providing authentic Mexican products in their region.

The Flores invested their entire life savings to start their Mexican-style grocery, with the hope that the profits from the business would one day send their four sons to college. Due to their hard work, the store has grown into a thriving business and is considered a staple of the local business community. Today, people drive from all over the region to purchase authentic Mexican products and sample Gloria's delicious baked goods.

Mr. Speaker, Gloria and Baudelio Flores are two wonderful people living the American Dream. Through their business acumen, hard work, and dedication to excellence, all four of the Flores children were provided the opportunity to graduate from college and today enjoy successful careers. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Gloria and Baudelio for their service to their community and congratulate them on remaining dedicated to achieving their goals and dreams. Their efforts have enriched the lives of their children and the Salt Creek community.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CIVIL AIR PATROL

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 2004

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support and appreciation for the Civil Air Patrol. In December 1, 1941, just before the attack on Pearl Harbor, in the great tradition of American volunteering and patriotism, civilian aviators and watchers organized the Civil Air Patrol to help protect our borders. During World War II, they attacked 57 submarines and sunk 2 in addition to diligent reporting of suspicious sightings. In recognition of their contribution to the war effort, President Roosevelt declared the Civil Air Patrol an auxiliary of the Air Force.

The Civil Air Patrol represents what is great about America. Volunteers come together to assist each other in defending our homeland. The government did not direct them, but they cooperated with the government to help all Americans.

The Civil Air Patrol has three missions. It assists with Emergency Response throughout the country. The Michigan Wing flew more mission hours than any other Great Lakes wing. Second, it works with students to teach aerospace science and aviation. The Michigan Wing was given an award by the National Civil Air Patrol headquarters for the best aerospace education program in the Great Lakes.

And third, it trains Cadets. Today, I met with Lt. Col. Tim Neill and three Michigan Cadets, Cadet Lt. Sean Croff, Cadet 2nd Lt. Holly Growe, and Cadet Captain Teresa Olson, who impressed me with their intelligence and dedication. Like many young people they have a desire to serve their country and understand how they can contribute to our country and to our armed services. And they are learning about aerospace science and aviation. Addi-

tionally, learning discipline and hands on technical experience is excellent.

I applaud these young men and women, and I understand their contributions. When I was in graduate school in Delaware, I was the squadron Commander in the Civil Air Patrol. As one of the pilots, I flew search and rescue missions and understand the real contribution that Civil Air Patrol makes to our "Homeland Security".

Mr. Speaker, we all thank the leaders and students that give their time for the Civil Air Patrol. They represent the best traditions of America.

NATIONAL PEACE CORPS WEEK

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 2004

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize National Peace Corps Week which is being celebrated March 1-7 around the country. National Peace Corps Week recognizes the important role the Peace Corps has played over the last 43 years and reaffirms our country's commitment to the mission of the Peace Corps, as vital today as it was over 40 years ago.

The first Peace Corps volunteers were sent to Ghana in 1961. Since then, over 170,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have served in 137 countries to promote the Peace Corps' mission of world peace and friendship.

Last year, the number of individuals applying to serve in the Peace Corps rose by 10 percent. These Americans are eager to serve their nation by acting as teachers, business advisors, information technology consultants, and youth and agriculture workers. These Volunteers transfer life-changing knowledge and skills that are valued by the people of other nations.

Currently, more than 7,500 Volunteers are serving in 71 countries around the world—this is the highest number of Volunteers in the field in 28 years. Today's Peace Corps is more vital than ever, stepping into new countries like East Timor, working in emerging and essential areas and committing more than 1,000 new Volunteers as a part of President Bush's HIV/AIDS Act of 2003. Peace Corps Volunteers continue to help countless individuals who want to build a better life for themselves, their children, and their communities.

National Peace Corps Week recognizes all Peace Corps Volunteers, past and present. I would specifically like to recognize the forty volunteers from my congressional district who are currently serving around the globe. These people and all Peace Corps Volunteers have my gratitude for committing two years of their life to their country and to the spread of democracy through the goals of the Peace Corps.

FREEDOM IN HONG KONG

HON. CHRISTOPHER COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 2004

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, the House Policy Committee met today with a distinguished del-

egation of Hong Kong legislators and advocates of democracy. I would like to briefly report on this meeting.

Last year, the Policy Committee met twice with representatives from Hong Kong:

First, on January 28, 2003, we met with Hong Kong representatives, including journalists, who briefed us on the PRC's efforts to restrict media and intellectual freedoms. Second, on June 5, 2003, we met with a delegation of legislators and human rights advocates. Today's was our third meeting on Hong Kong in the 108th Congress.

The Policy Committee has held approximately 30 meetings in the 108th Congress. The policy-setting organization for the House Majority has devoted fully 10 percent of our meeting time to the cause of freedom for seven million people on the other side of the earth for several reasons:

First, we are the policy-setting organization for the Republican majority. Our party was founded 150 years ago—more accurately, 149 years, 11 months, and two weeks ago—on the simple idea of individual freedom. Republican presidents helped secure freedom for millions of Americans in the Civil War and for millions more around the world in the Cold War. Today, President Bush has naturally made freedom around the world the primary means of securing victory in the war on terrorism. The basis of our party is freedom, and Hong Kong, today, is on freedom's frontier.

Second, the seven million people of Hong Kong represent the best hope for more than a billion others in Asia. It is vitally important to the world that China becomes more like Hong Kong, and not the other way around. Accomplishing that goal would be in the interests of the people of Hong Kong and all of China, and it would be in the interests of the United States and the rest of the world, as a free, democratic, and prosperous China would be a more stable and friendly neighbor and member of the international community.

One month after our previous meeting, the Hong Kong legislature was scheduled to vote on a PRC-backed law to severely limit free speech and civil liberties in Hong Kong, in the name of punishing "subversion." We and the House International Relations Committee proposed, and the House approved, a resolution in support of freedom in Hong Kong, and against the proposed anti-subversion law. Unprecedented demonstrations by over one-half million people in Hong Kong followed a few days later. The PRC withdrew the so-called anti-subversion legislation it was backing.

While the withdrawal of the so-called anti-subversion bill was good news, the more recent PRC freeze on the consultative process to provide for the popular election of Hong Kong's chief executive in 2007, and of its legislature in 2008, is of grave concern. It is vital to commence this process immediately. China will host the Olympics in 2008. Will the world discover that China has broken its promise? Only if the free world holds China to its commitment, and elections are held in 2007 and 2008, will this global shame be avoided.

Likewise, all the people of Hong Kong—including those who speak out for democracy—must be allowed the freedom to return to travel within China. The refusal of Beijing to grant permission for Chinese patriots in Hong Kong, including many who were born on the mainland, to travel to Beijing is an affront to freedom and to the Olympic spirit.