

I am proud to join more than 100 of my colleagues in cosponsoring H. Res. 193, which emphasizes the importance of remembering and learning from past crimes against humanity. We must demand that the United States officially acknowledge the forced exile and annihilation of 1.5 million people as genocide.

Denying the horrors of those years merely condones the behavior in other places as was evidenced in Rwanda, Indonesia, Burundi, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Iraq. Silence may have been the signal to perpetrators of these atrocities that they could commit genocide, deny it, and get away with it.

As Americans, the reminder of targeted violence and mass slaughter is still raw. We lost nearly 3,000 people on September 11. I cannot imagine the world trying to say that this did not occur. The loss of 1.5 million people is a global tragedy.

A peaceful and stable South Caucasus region is clearly in the U.S. national interest. Recognizing the genocide must be a strategy for this goal in an increasingly uncertain region. One of the most important ways in which we honor the memory of the Armenian victims of the past is to help modern Armenia build a secure and prosperous future.

The United States has a unique history of aid to Armenia, being among the first to recognize that need, and the first to help. I am pleased with the U.S. involvement in the emphasis of private sector development, regionally focused programs, people-to-people linkages and the development of a civil society.

I recently joined many of my colleagues in requesting funding for Armenia including for Foreign Military Financing, for Economic Support Funds, and for assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Armenia has made impressive progress in rebuilding a society and a nation in the face of dramatic obstacles. I will continue to take a strong stand in support of Armenia's commitment to democracy, the rule of law, and a market economy—I am proud to stand with Armenia in doing so. But there is more to be done. Conflict persists in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Congress has provided funding for confidence building in that region, and I will continue my support of that funding and the move toward a brighter future for Armenia. But in building our future, we must not forget our past. That is why I strongly support the efforts of the Armenian community in the construction of the Armenian Genocide Memorial and Museum. Because so many Armenians have spoken of the destruction, they have made certain that we remember.

Nothing we can do or say will bring those who perished back to life, but we can imbue their memories with everlasting meaning by teaching the lessons of the Armenian genocide to the next generation and help Armenia build its future.

IN RECOGNITION OF KIDS DAY
AMERICA/INTERNATIONAL

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the "Kids Day

America" event in Anniston, AL, to be held this year on May 15, 2004. "Kids Day America" is in its 10th year and is a special day set aside across the nation to address health, safety, and environmental issues that affect us as individuals and as a community. Wade Clinic of Chiropractic of Anniston is the official chiropractic office representing the event.

This year in Anniston, "Kids Day America" will benefit the Wellness Education Foundation, a national nonprofit organization formed for the purpose of educating communities across the country about wellness issues. The Anniston Police Department is bringing McGruff, the Crime Dog; the Calhoun County Sheriff's Department will be present to fingerprint ID children; the Calhoun County LINC Program will be presenting parenting workshops; the Health Department will be distributing information; and the Alabama Power Company will be presenting their "SafetyOpolus."

More than 1500 communities have participated in "Kids Day America." With the help and support of thousands of local police departments, county sheriff offices, dentists, and photographers who volunteer, the children who attend will be able to complete their own Child Safety ID cards.

I salute "Kids Day America" for the service it provides and commend Wade Clinic of Chiropractic of Anniston, Alabama, for its sponsorship of this event on May 15, 2004.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ISRAEL ON
ITS NATIONAL DAY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the people of Israel who celebrate their Independence Day today in accordance with the Hebrew calendar. Fifty-six years ago, on May 14 1948, the Jewish people proclaimed the establishment of their own state and Israel was born. After hundreds of years of diaspora and persecution and three years after the full terrors of the holocaust were disclosed to the world, the Jewish people were finally able to return to the land of their biblical roots.

The Israeli and the American people have had a special relationship ever since 1948. President Harry S Truman was the first head of state to recognize the new country. He had always seen the extraordinary connection of the American people and the Jewish population in the Middle East. In his memoirs he stressed that both the Americans and the Jews in the Near East were pioneers who turned unexploited lands into powerful engines of growth. Under the hard working hands and the sweat of the Jewish people, the bleak desert started to bloom and within years of its existence the state of Israel became an economical developed country which attracted immigrants from all over the world.

Even before the state of Israel was established, President Truman foresaw that the Jewish state would be a stable democracy with values similar to those of the United States. Truman admired Israel's first President Chaim Weizmann as a great statesman and the relationship of these two men was one of mutual understanding and respect. These sen-

timents are still dominant between Americans and Israelis today.

Israel has had to fight against external foes from the very beginning of its existence. With great bravery, the Israeli people have been defending their country for 56 years and have lost more than 21,700 soldiers and thousands of civilians in this struggle. Yesterday, the Israeli people observed a special annual day of remembrance for the victims of this fight. I want to express my sympathy to the people of Israel for their human losses in the past and in the present. The American people are deeply concerned about the ongoing conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis and hope that these two people will soon find a way to live together in peace.

I wish the Israeli people a peaceful and cheerful Independence Day. They have every reason to be proud of their country.

ON THE LOSS OF LANCE
CORPORAL MATTHEW K. SERIO

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sorrow that I rise to recognize the death of Lance Corporal Matthew K. Serio, a brave Marine who served with dignity and honor in Iraq. I join his family and the people of Rhode Island in mourning this great loss.

On Monday, April 5, Lance Corporal Serio was killed by enemy fire during combat operations near Fallujah, Iraq. A member of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, Lance Corporal Serio was serving his second tour of duty in Iraq. He graduated from North Providence High School in 2001, where he distinguished himself as a member of the football team. After graduation, he pursued a lifelong dream and immediately enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps.

I extend my deepest condolences to his parents Anthony and Sharon, his younger brother Chris, and his older brother A.J., who serves in the Navy. The people of North Providence and Rhode Island have demonstrated their love and appreciation for Matthew's sacrifice and have spoken highly of his contributions to their lives. Those who knew him well recalled his friendliness and compassion, as well as his patriotism and love of service.

His loss causes us to reflect on the bravery demonstrated by our men and women in uniform as they carry out their obligations in the face of danger. When their nation called them to duty to preserve freedom, liberty and the security of their neighbors, they answered without hesitation. We remember those who have fallen not only as soldiers, but also as patriots who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. May we keep their loved ones in our thoughts and prayers as they struggle to endure this difficult period and mourn the heroes America has lost.

We will continue to hope for the safe and speedy return of all of our troops serving throughout the world.