

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO VIRGINIA R. SAUNDERS' 60 YEARS OF FEDERAL SERVICE

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to Virginia Saunders, Program Operations and Evaluation Specialist for Congressional Documents, in the Office of Congressional Publishing Services at the Government Printing Office, as she approaches her 60th anniversary of dedicated Federal service, May 26, 2005.

Mr. Speaker, this is becoming a habit: Ten years ago, on the occasion of Ms. Saunders' 50th anniversary of Federal service, I rose to recognize Ms. Saunders' achievements, and I expect to do so again ten years from now. Born Virginia R. Frisbie in Darlington, Maryland, on October 11, 1926, Ms. Saunders spent her entire career in service to her fellow Americans. After working briefly at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, she came to the Government Printing Office on February 4, 1946, as a war service junior clerk-typist in the division of public documents, stock section. Two years later, she was promoted to the division of public documents reference section. In February 1951, Ms. Saunders was promoted to indexing clerk and earned subsequent promotions in the same classification. In July 1958, she was promoted to library technician. Becoming a congressional documents specialist in April 1970, she was then promoted to supervisor of the congressional documents section in July 1974. In October 1983, Ms. Saunders assumed the position of congressional documents specialist in the congressional printing management division, customer services, and in September 2004 she was promoted to her current position.

As I pointed out ten years ago, although one may not yet recognize the name of this outstanding GPO employee, the end product of her dedicated efforts is certainly familiar. Ms. Saunders has primary responsibility for the Congressional Serial Set, which is a compilation of all the House and Senate documents and reports issued for each session of Congress. Dummy volumes establishing the format for each edition are prepared and assigned a serial number following each session of Congress. The actual books are produced by GPO's binding division, often as many as 100 volumes per set for each session of Congress. As a chronicle of work of the Congress over the years, the Congressional Serial Set is rivaled only by the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. While the Serial Set records behind-the-scenes legislative activities for the United States, the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD reflects the "in-session" proceedings. Distributed to the House and Senate libraries, the Archives, the Library of Congress, and depository libraries,

the Congressional Serial Set joins the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in offering students and historians a rich insight into the American system of government. Virginia Saunders makes all that possible.

In late 1989, Ms. Saunders recognized the importance of the depository library program in informing the Nation, and drew upon her then-43 years of GPO experience to submit an employee suggestion regarding the appendix to the Iran-Contra Report to Congress. She suggested that this 40-volume publication, which was printed as both a Senate and House report, be bound only once for the serial set volumes of House and Senate reports that are sent to depository libraries. She further suggested that the Schedule of Volumes, a listing of the bound volumes, contain a notation explaining the missing serial number volumes. The implementation of this suggestion resulted in a reduction of 13,740 book volumes to be bound, saving the Federal Government over \$600,000. In recognition of these efforts, she received GPO's top monetary Suggestion Award for that year. In ceremonies held on January 9, 1991, Ms. Saunders received a Presidential letter of commendation under the Quality and Management Improvement Award Program. In his letter to Ms. Saunders, President George H.W. Bush noted, "You have demonstrated an exceptional degree my belief that Federal employees have the knowledge, ability, and desire to make a difference." As one with the privilege of representing tens of thousands of Marylanders in Federal service, I know this to be true.

In tribute to her work on the Congressional Serial Set, in 1999 Ms. Saunders received the James Bennett Childs Award from the Government Documents Roundtable of the American Library Association. The ALA honored Ms. Saunders' "distinguished contribution to documents librarianship," and paid "grateful recognition" of a lifetime of exceptional achievements in this important field of endeavor.

I know my colleagues and Ms. Saunders' family, friends, and co-workers join me in congratulating her on 60 years of exemplary Federal service. See you in 10 years, Virginia!

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS
OF UNITED INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD MEMBER
PAT CAMPOS

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important achievements of United Independent School District Board Member Pat Campos in Laredo, TX in my Congressional District.

Pat Campos was elected to the United I.S.D. Board of Trustees, District 3 seat in May

2003. Campos is the Case Management Director at the Webb County Juvenile Department. She has worked with children and young adults for nearly 25 years.

Campos says her main reason for running for the U.I.S.D. Board of Trustees is to ensure safety in our schools. "As a member of the law enforcement community specializing in juvenile law, I deal on a daily basis with the troubled youth of our community, many of whom come from U.I.S.D. It is time to seriously address violence in our schools," says Campos.

Campos says she hopes to ensure that all students receive the best quality education to prepare them for the future. She says this can only happen when schools are fully staffed with well-qualified and motivated teachers, "I am working to see that teachers and staff have the facilities, supplies, and administrative support necessary to do their job."

Campos says she will use her numerous years of juvenile justice expertise to "promote an environment that is free of drugs, violence, and gang activity in our schools." She adds, "I do not want today's youth to become my clients tomorrow."

In 1982, Campos was named Detention Officer of the Year and in 1990, the Webb County Juvenile Board honored her with a resolution for introducing the first "Operation Kick-It" program to schools in United and Laredo Independent School Districts.

Pat Campos is a member of the Texas Gang Investigators Association, Texas Probation Association, Juvenile Justice Association of Texas, Texas Corrections Association, National Association of Female Executives, and the American Association of University Women, Community Action Agency Board, National Association of Latino Elected Officials, and Webb County Appraisal District Board of Directors, one of two representatives from U.I.S.D. Campos also serves on the school district's Student Expulsion Appeals Committee and is chairperson of the U.I.S.D. Instructional Committee.

Her community service activities include serving as a member of the U.I.S.D. Blue Ribbon Committee, a member of the U.I.S.D. Communications Advisory Committee, a member of the Laredo Safe School Coalition and a member of the Laredo Job Corps Advisory Board.

In years past, Campos has served as a Daisy Girl Scout Leader, Brownie Girl Scout Assistant Leader, and Youth Minister. She has also performed missionary work in Mexico and has served as a Board Member of the Diocese of Laredo Catholic Social Services.

Campos has a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Laredo State University and a Paralegal Certificate from Texas A & M International University.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize contributions of United Independent School District Board Member Pat Campos.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

NATIONAL PEACE CORPS WEEK

HON. MELISSA L. BEAN

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Ms. BEAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, during National Peace Corps Week, in recognition of the Peace Corps on the 44th anniversary of its founding and of the thousands of volunteers who have done invaluable humanitarian service in countries throughout the world.

The 7,700 volunteers in the field today have left their families and friends in the United States to serve as teachers, business advisors, information technology consultants, health and HIV/AIDS educators, and youth and agriculture workers.

Leaving your comfort zone behind and plunging into work in another country and another culture is a great challenge. I would like to take this time to congratulate the current Peace Corps Volunteers from the Eighth Congressional District of Illinois. Shayne Bell, Heather Breneisen, Brehan Doud, Nina Elisseou, Joshua Friedman, Ryan Giordano, Stacy Greco, Kelly Henshaw, Peter Hicks, Lucie Howe, Kate McCracken, James Norris, Stephenie Park, Kevin Rieder, Diane Sears, John Sears, Debra Stanislawski and Scott Wilhelm are serving in seventeen countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America.

These eighteen of my constituents have joined the Peace Corps in support of three goals. The first two goals are to help provide interested countries with trained men and women and to promote a better understanding of Americans by people of other countries. In a time when the United States is taking an ever greater role in the international community, Peace Corps Volunteers present the best of what America can offer to the rest of the world.

When their time in the Peace Corps is complete, I look forward to those volunteers' return to the United States and Illinois' Eighth district to begin work on what could be the Peace Corps' most important goal: to promote a better understanding of other people and cultures by Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me today to acknowledge the thousands of Americans who serve and have served as Peace Corps Volunteers. They are a great credit to our country, and we should applaud them.

HONORING CONESTOGA HIGH SCHOOL ON ITS 75TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Conestoga High School of Berwyn, Pennsylvania on the occasion of its 50th Anniversary.

On March 5, 1954, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for a new senior high school in the Paoli Area High School System. This event was significant because the new and modern high school would be accommodating students from six different communities in

Chester County, Pennsylvania and merging them into one, unified school. In an effort to involve the community in the creation of the new school, the school board decided to hold a local competition to name the school. In the end, a ninth grade student suggested the name "Conestoga" because the Old Conestoga Road passes through each of the six communities served by the school. Conestoga became its name to symbolize the connection of these communities.

Construction on the school continued throughout the summer and into the next year. On September 9, 1955, the Conestoga High School opened with a student enrollment of 549 and a faculty of 35. As the school continued to grow and flourish, along came the need for additional space to accommodate the students. In 1959, just four years after the original school was completed, 19 rooms were added to the building. After the completion of the new wing, student enrollment was at an all-time high of 1036.

During the next forty years, Conestoga High School would undergo many changes. In 1967, 20 additional rooms were added to the main building and, in 1981, the school's library was enlarged and named for Karl Zettelmoyer in recognition of his years as principal from 1957 to 1971. Conestoga continued this tradition of recognizing those who had served the school when a new gymnasium was constructed and named for Principal John C. Rittenmeyer.

Just recently, Conestoga has added fourteen general all-purpose classrooms and ten new science labs. The cafeteria was enlarged and modernized to meet the needs of the student body and the entire music area was reconfigured to house the growing interest in the Conestoga High School choir. In the family and consumer sciences lab, the kitchens were completely renovated and reconfigured and a new welcoming and spacious main lobby was built.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Conestoga High School. Throughout the past 50 years, the school has provided an invaluable exemplary educational service to its students and has contributed greatly to the community. Conestoga High School should be commended for its exceptional record of positive development of the moral, physical, and emotional well-being of the young men and women who have attended the school over the past 50 years.

HUNGARIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO COALITION EFFORTS IN IRAQ

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues an excellent letter that I recently received from his Excellency András Simonyi, Ambassador of Hungary to the United States, which provides specific detail of his country's support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Hungary has been particularly supportive of U.S. military efforts in Iraq in implementing training programs for Iraqis and donating millions of dollars in necessary supplies. Such efforts have furthered U.S. objectives in Iraq, and contributed to efforts to bring peace and stability to the region.

Hungary was among the first countries to support Coalition efforts in Iraq, including the training of Free Iraqi Forces (FIF) in Taszár, Hungary in Fall 2002 and the deployment of a transportation battalion of 300 troops to Iraq.

More recently, the Hungarian Government has decided to send 165 troops to the NATO Training and Implementation Mission in Iraq and donate 77 T72 tanks to the Iraqi army. These actions represent the broader goal of the Hungarian Government to support American efforts in Iraq. I urge all my colleagues to read this excellent and informative letter written from Ambassador Simonyi.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to pay tribute to my dear friend András Simonyi. He has been an outstanding representative of Hungary in the United States and has personally made an important contribution to the relations between our two countries.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the letter of Ambassador Simonyi be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to read it.

THE AMBASSADOR OF HUNGARY,
Washington, March 1, 2005.

Hon. TOM LANTOS,
*Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN LANTOS: As I am sure that you might be interested, allow me summarize for you to the extent possible Hungary's contribution to the Iraqi stabilization process so far. As you well know, Hungary was among the first to support Coalition efforts in Iraq, including by training the Free Iraqi Forces (FIP) in Taszár, Hungary in Fall 2002 and by deploying a 300-strong transportation battalion to Iraq who served in Al-Hillah. Recently the Hungarian Government decided to send 165 troops to the NATO Training and Implementation Mission in Iraq. Hungary donated 77 T72 tanks to the Iraqi Army. 14 high ranking officers are in Iraq to train Iraqi officers in command and control.

In March 2004 the Hungarian Government sent an aid supply of medical equipment to Basra, total value of appx. 300,000.00 USD.

Donation of 80 cardio-equipment to the Iraqi Ministry of Health in March 2004 for a total value of 1,000,000.00 USD and a training program for experts in 2005.

In October 2004 training of 20 experts in drink-water purification, waste-water and waste management.

Training program for the Iraqi Police for 2004-2005 for a value of 500,000.00 USD.

Training program for 25 Iraqi diplomats starting from March 2005 at Corvinus University.

Training program for Iraqi conductors starting from the first quarter of 2005 to form experts in the well-known Hungarian method to help the development of handicapped children.

Training program for 20 civil servants in Hungary for a period of 10 days in the field of privatization, small business promotion, and banking system in the first quarter of 2005.

50 day training program in Hungary for 20 Iraqi experts in the field of fresh-water fish-breeding.

Four-week training program for 10 Iraqi veterinaries in Hungary starting in the first semester of 2005.

Water management training for 10 Iraqi expert starting from the first semester of 2005.

Financial aid for the Iraqi elections.

Sincerely yours,

ANDRÁS SIMONYI.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CORY ZEBIAN FOR BEING SELECTED AS CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SEA CADET CORPS

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Cadet Cory Zebian, a Colleyville, Texas, resident, for his appointment to Chief Petty Officer of the United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps. This honor follows years of work and dedication to this youth program, including the completion of regulation U.S. Navy courses, from Basic Military Regulations through Chief Petty Officer. CPO Zebian has shown superior qualities of leadership, patriotism, and expertise that have allowed him to achieve this accomplishment, which is awarded to less than 1/2 of 1% of the approximately 10,000 Naval Sea Cadets. I congratulate CPO Zebian on his significant feat.

CHINA'S ANTISECESSION LAW

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, it is expected that the People's Republic of China will enact its "anti-secession" law this March. Aimed at eventual reunification with Taiwan, this law will give China a legal basis to invade Taiwan. Clearly, this is a highly provocative law and will change the status quo in the Taiwan Strait.

With the enactment of this law China claims jurisdiction over Taiwan and threatens to use force against Taiwan if Taiwan is found not actively working toward eventual unification with China. China will be Taiwan's sole arbitrator of any dispute between the two.

Mr. Speaker, by enacting this law, China is also challenging the letter and spirit of the Taiwan Relations Act, which says that "any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means" is "of grave concern to the United States." Indeed, any unilateral effort by the PRC to determine the future of Taiwan challenges America's will to defend the Taiwan Relations Act. We must let the Chinese know that our commitment to the Taiwan Relations Act is total and unwavering. We will not allow China to change the status quo in the Taiwan Strait.

By imposing its form of government on the 23 million people of Taiwan, China tramples on the Taiwanese people's human rights and democratic ideals. Once again, we must not allow this to happen. In the Taiwan Relations Act we read, the "preservation and enhancement of the human rights of all the people on Taiwan are . . . reaffirmed as objectives of the United States." We must let China know that we take human rights and democratic ideals seriously.

It is vitally important that the Bush administration, the U.S. Congress and the international community voice opposition to China's proposed "anti-secession" law. It is a vi-

cious law that will adversely affect Taiwan and the Pacific region. It will upset peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait and bring economic ruin to the whole area.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in voicing my strong opposition to China's proposed "anti-secession" law.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF UNITED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD MEMBER RICARDO MOLINA

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important contributions of United Independent School District Board Member Ricardo Molina in Laredo, TX, in my Congressional District.

Ricardo Molina is a Laredo native and Parliamentarian of the United I.S.D. Board of Trustees. He believes serving on the Board involves keeping in mind the interests of the people in the community. "You have to look out for the taxpayers, students, and the people you serve." Molina's district is composed of the communities of Rio Bravo and El Cenizo.

Molina identifies with students of modest means who struggle for success. In his younger days, Molina was a member of his high school's chapter of the Distributive Education Club of America. "I know what hard work is. To succeed you have to make the best of your situation." Throughout his life Molina has worked in a variety of jobs. He has labored in oil fields, machine shops, and as a field hand picking cotton. Molina is the Director of the Rio Bravo and El Cenizo Community Centers.

As a Trustee, Molina helped initiate the district's dropout recovery program. The program allows students who have left school to pursue a General Equivalency Diploma. Molina also knows the importance of providing educational opportunities for adults. He worked for the establishment of GED and adult education programs in his community.

Molina says he joined the Board because he wanted to do something for the community. "We on the Board are like a family. We look out for the best opportunities for kids." Molina says United ISD has seen numerous changes in the last few years. "We've seen better curriculum, an improvement in our bilingual education program, and lower dropout and teen pregnancy rates." Molina says the schools in his area are good facilities that are well built. "We've been able to add new wings and cafeterias to our many schools." He adds, "UISD is doing a great job of educating our children." He is particularly proud of the many accomplishments made by the schools in the south, especially all the great things happening at United South Magnet School. Molina says, "I will continue to work for the children and taxpayers of United ISD. Nothing is too good for the kids. I wish I could do more."

Molina, working with other board members, has been able to implement many positive changes for the benefit of children, parents, and taxpayers. These changes include increased security at elementary campuses and fighting the increase of gang involvement at schools. Gang Intervention Facilitators have

been placed in high schools and their respective feeder campuses. Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors have been hired to fight drug use by students. Zero tolerance policies and the establishment of k-9 patrols help keep schools drug free.

In addition, one-third of the UISD school bus fleet has been replaced with new school busses. Two-thirds of the school bus fleet has been retrofitted with air conditioning. The second phase of construction has been started at L.B. Johnson High School. There will be additions to Alexander and United South High Schools. A replacement building for United High School will be built and a new middle school will be constructed to relieve overcrowding at Los Obispos Middle School.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize United Independent School District Board Member Ricardo Molina.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ADVANCE DEMOCRACY ACT OF 2005

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, my good friend and co-chairman of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, FRANK WOLF, introduced the Advance Democratic Values, Address Nondemocratic Countries, and Enhance (ADVANCE) Democracy Act of 2005. I am delighted to be the principal Democratic cosponsor of this bill. This landmark legislation, which we have been working on for more than a year, was developed in response to ideas that have emerged from outside the government, especially the thoughts and writings of Mark Palmer, who was the U.S. Ambassador to Hungary from 1986 to 1989 during that country's amazingly swift transition from totalitarianism to freedom.

Mr. Speaker, Hungary, where I was born, faced the twin scourges of fascism and communism in the 20th century. Somehow I survived both of these soul-killing political systems and came to the United States, which was then a beacon of hope for those of us living in the darkness of Stalinist-controlled Central Europe.

As a Member of Congress in the intervening years, and as founding co-chair of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, I have dedicated myself to the cause of human rights, working to eliminate the threats posed by the vestiges of fascism and the encroachment of totalitarianism in this world. It has been my privilege to help promote democracy around the globe—a tradition started by President Wilson at the beginning of the last century and enshrined as a central tenet of U.S. foreign policy since the Carter administration.

In the last few years, we have seen all too clearly how the lack of democracy can create safe havens for nihilistic forces that do not value human life, and this lack of democracy can help extremism flourish.

But recently we also have been given fresh reason for optimism. Who would have predicted in the summer of 2004 that the rule of law would prevail in Ukraine and an "Orange Revolution" would force the creeping influence of authoritarianism to retreat to the East? And just last month, who would have predicted that

Syria would begin to lose its grip so quickly on the people of Lebanon?

We must do more to show that the United States is on the side of those who want peaceful change toward democracy and fundamental freedoms, and we must devise new ways to work with our friends around the globe to fan the embers of freedom.

That is what our new bill seeks to do. We are starting by proposing reforms to the State Department and other parts of the U.S. Government so that promoting democracy is a fundamental and central component of our foreign policy. This legislation:

Declares that it is the policy of the United States to promote freedom and democracy as a fundamental component of U.S. foreign policy, to see an end to dictatorial and other non-democratic forms of government, and to strengthen alliances with other democratic countries to better promote and defend shared values and ideals.

Establishes in statute the Under Secretary for Global Affairs with a strong mandate to promote democracy and fundamental freedoms; expands the duties of the Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor to specifically include democracy promotion; and enhances the Human Rights and Democracy Fund controlled by that Bureau.

Establishes a new Office of Democracy Movements and Transitions and separate Regional Democracy Hubs to be points of contact for democracy movements and to promote democratic transitions and democratic consolidation, and creates a Democracy Promotion Advisory Board to provide outside expertise to the Department of State on democracy promotion and to conduct a study on the efficiency and effectiveness of current U.S. democracy assistance.

Requires the Secretary of State to prepare an annual report on democracy that will include a specific action plan, developed in consultation with local organizations, individuals and movements, to promote and achieve transition to democracy in non-democratic countries.

Provides for U.S. embassies to be "islands of freedom" and encourages U.S. ambassadors to promote democracy in non-democratic countries, including by meeting with representatives of democracy movements and speaking out on democracy and human rights in such countries, particularly at universities.

Provides training for State Department personnel on democracy promotion and links promotion and performance awards to effective advocacy and promotion of democracy, particularly in non-democratic countries.

Establishes a Congressional Democracy Award for U.S. government officials who have made an extraordinary effort to promote democracy.

Provides for increased efforts to work with other democratic countries to promote democracy including bilaterally, with the UN and related organizations, the Community of Democracies, and the new Democracy Transition Center being established by European countries in Hungary.

Requires translation of the annual report on democracy, the country reports on human rights practices, the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom, and the annual Trafficking in Persons Report, and requires the creation of a democracy and human rights Internet web site collecting these and other

materials related to the promotion of democracy and human rights.

Let me be clear—there are many fine members of the Foreign Service at the Department of State and many dedicated civil servants that are relentless on issues of promoting democracy and protecting human rights, but we can do better. We hope that this legislation will change the Department's culture into one that focuses on freedom, not feel good relationships, and will give a framework and direction to our diplomats as they pursue the promotion of democracy around the world.

Mr. Speaker, in 1956, Hungary was in the midst of a national uprising. The Hungarian people had a real hope of freedom from the yoke of Soviet-installed communism. Then the West stood by while the Soviet Union invaded and extinguished the sparks of revolution in one aggressive wave.

In 1989, we did not make that mistake. The United States and our democratic friends and allies stood with the Hungarian people and helped them and others confront their communist masters and achieve freedom.

The central question of today is whether we will stand with the reformers, as we did in 1989, or stand by as the oppressors take action against them. This legislation will help ensure that we make the right choice and stand with the reformers.

Make no mistake, the achievement of universal democracy is not an easy task, and we have no illusions about that. But as the only remaining superpower and the beacon of hope for so many people around the globe even now, the United States must find a way to promote democracy in this complex world. It in our own interest, it is consistent with our principles and our history, and it is the right thing to do.

“RAILROAD MAN” RETIRES

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and wish well in retirement Warren Weber of Sacramento, California. Mr. Weber served with the California Department of Transportation for over forty years, and eight as the Chief of Caltrans Division of Rail.

Warren graduated from California State University, Los Angeles, and pursued his Master's Degree in Public Administration at California State University, Sacramento. He began his career in the Urban Planning Department, at the Division of Highways. He moved through the ranks at the California Department of Transportation and served as a Supervising Transportation System Analyst, Chief of Rail Planning and Corridor Studies, Assistant Director of Legislative and local government affairs, and finally Chief of the Division of Rail.

Throughout the years Warren was responsible for various activities. Before he became chief of Caltrans Rail, he served for over five years as Caltrans' Assistant Director for Legislative and Local Government Affairs where he was responsible for development of Caltrans' State legislative program. As the chief of the California Department of Transportation's Division of Rail he is responsible for the program management, administration, and marketing of State-supported Amtrak service in California.

To enhance his busy career, Warren also serves on various committees. He is a member of the Transportation Research Board Committee, Local and Regional Rail Freight Transport; Transportation Research Board Committee, Intercity Rail Passenger Systems; National Research Council Committee, Assessment of Federal High-Speed Ground Transportation R & D; and the Board of Directors for the California State Railroad Museum Foundation.

In conjunction with being an active member of several Transportation Research Board committees, Warren has received the AASHTO's President's Modal Award for Rail Transportation and a special recognition award from the American Short Line Railroad Association. He also received the finalist award for State Employee of the Year from the California Film Commission.

Ever the busy character, Warren has authored several papers on multi-modal transportation improvements for intercity corridors.

His time and dedication to the development and implementation of rail programs are to be lauded. Warren has truly been an instrumental player in the transportation sector, and while his retirement will be celebrated, he will also be missed by his many colleagues.

PEACE CORPS CELEBRATES 44TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, on March 1st, the Peace Corps celebrated its 44th anniversary. It is especially fitting in these troubled times that we recognize the quiet dedication of the men and women of the Peace Corps. Since the inception of the Peace Corps in 1961, more than 178,000 Peace Corps volunteers have served in 138 countries, promoting the Peace Corps' mission of world peace and friendship. Today, the program remains phenomenally successful. The Peace Corps has 7,700 volunteers currently in the field, the highest number in 29 years; 5 of those hard working volunteers hail from our 9th District of Ohio.

The Peace Corps is a cross section of our population; recent college graduates work next to retired citizens. Individuals of all races and ethnicities devote their time and dedication, giving of themselves to help people who are less fortunate.

The Peace Corps operates in 72 countries. Just recently Peace Corps volunteers volunteered in Mexico for the first time, and another 20 countries have expressed interest in working with the Peace Corps. Peace Corps volunteers serve as teachers, business advisors, information technology consultants, health and HIV/AIDS educators and youth and agriculture workers. These volunteers serve as ambassadors to the world, promoting international understanding.

During National Peace Corps Week we honor all the volunteers past and present who have brought help and hope to people in need. Peace Corps volunteers serve from Belize to Ghana, Armenia, Mongolia, East Timor and beyond. We honor their service and compassion. I especially would like to thank

the volunteers from the 9th District: Gwenna Corvez, Michael Heydt, Lenore Johnsen, Bethany Tebbe and Sarah Wilson, who are serving in Uzbekistan, Dominican Republic, Ukraine, Togo, and Moldova. You bring honor to all of us.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL PEACE
CORPS WEEK FEBRUARY 28 TO
MARCH 6, 2004

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, the Peace Corps is celebrating its 44th anniversary on March 1st, and its work has never been more relevant than it is today. Since its inception in 1961, over 178,000 Peace Corps volunteers have served in 138 countries to promote the Peace Corps' mission of world peace and friendship.

There are over 7,700 volunteers now serving in 72 countries around the world—this is the highest number of volunteers in the field in 29 years. Our Peace Corps volunteers work as teachers, business advisors, information technology consultants, health, youth and agriculture workers. With the spread of HIV/AIDS ravaging many countries, more than 3,100 volunteers are working directly or indirectly on HIV/AIDS prevention and education activities throughout the world. In short, Peace Corps volunteers provide valuable knowledge and life-changing skills to people all over the world in all aspects of daily living, altering countless lives in a positive way.

We are a generous nation and pride ourselves in giving, not only monetarily, but of ourselves. As a nation, we recognize the importance of humanitarian service, and host countries are eager for our volunteers because we give with sincerity of cause and commitment to service. Our volunteers spread goodwill and embody America's strength and pride.

During National Peace Corps Week, I would like to salute and honor our men and women who serve abroad as Peace Corps volunteers. I would especially like to mention my constituents who are currently serving in countries ranging from Albania to Swaziland: Anna Gutierrez, Nicole M. Hendrix, Meldy Hernandez, Cliff Okada, Erica Smith and Samrong So.

Thank you for your service. And thanks to the Peace Corps for continuing to encourage and inspire Americans to give so willingly of themselves.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SAN MARCOS MAYOR
SUSAN NARVAIZ

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize all the efforts the San Marcos Mayor Susan Narvaiz has made to her community. Since she moved to San Marcos in 1995 she has worked for the strengthening of the community in a countless number of ways.

Susan Narvaiz has been very involved in the advancement of the workforce in San Marcos starting with her first major accomplishment to the community through her business Core Strategies, Inc. which provides employment and training to the people along Interstate 35. In 2000 she launched a similar business Sedona Staffing Industrial Development Center which offers free-of-charge training to citizens so they can find work. Both of these services helped a countless number of people receive the necessary training to successfully compete in the modern work force.

Mayor Narvaiz's presence extends for beyond the employment issues she has tackled; she is also an active participant in such organizations as the American Cancer Society and United Way of Hays County. It is also not out of the ordinary to find her supporting the San Marcos High School Basketball and Baseball Boosters Club at a high school function.

There is one role that San Marcos Mayor Susan Narvaiz plays in the community that trumps everything; she is married to Mr. Mike Narvaiz and the mother to six beautiful children. For all the ways she serves San Marcos, I would like to thank Mayor Narvaiz for committing her time and energy to the better of San Marcos.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DETENTION OF ENEMY COMBATANTS ACT

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, today I am reintroducing the Detention of Enemy Combatants Act. This legislation authorizes the detention of "enemy combatants" in the war on terrorism while guaranteeing that they are granted timely access to legal counsel and judicial review.

Earlier this week, a federal judge in South Carolina ruled that the Administration lacks statutory and constitutional authority to indefinitely imprison without criminal charges a U.S. citizen designated as an "enemy combatant." Last month, another federal judge ruled that holding individuals indefinitely as "enemy combatants" unconstitutionally violates their right to due process and that some foreign terror suspects held in Guantanamo Bay can challenge their confinement in U.S. courts. That ruling came some eight months after the U.S. Supreme Court held in Hamdi that while the President has the authority to detain "enemy combatants" captured in the battlefield, detainees are entitled to lawyers and the chance to challenge their imprisonment.

The Court, however, left a host of unanswered questions that Congress should seek to resolve. Justice Scalia, in his dissent, called on Congress to act, noting: "I frankly do not know whether these tools are sufficient to meet the Government's security needs, including the need to obtain intelligence through interrogation. It is far beyond my competence, or the Court's competence, to determine that. But it is not beyond Congress's."

The Supreme Court also side-stepped the case of Jose Padilla and will likely be forced to speak again on these issues should a vacuum still exist due to congressional inaction.

Until then, enemy combatant law will continue to be written in a piecemeal fashion through a series of conflicting lower court decisions.

I believe that the federal government must have the authority to detain terrorists as "enemy combatants" to protect the public, gather intelligence and safeguard national security. But we must also ensure that the accused are afforded the due-process rights guaranteed under the Constitution. I am particularly concerned with the detention of U.S. citizens and lawful residents.

In the last Congress, I introduced the Detention of Enemy Combatants Act to authorize the government to detain suspected members or associates of al Qaeda, but requiring that U.S. citizen detainees be granted access to legal counsel and due-process hearings. The bill called for standards to be set for such detentions that distinguish these cases from other Americans held for trial on criminal charges.

While we must grant broad latitude to our armed forces when it comes to protecting national security, American citizens should not be held indefinitely upon the sole determination of one branch of government without access to counsel or proper judicial review of those determinations.

These same concerns have even been echoed by Michael Chertoff, the newly-confirmed Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security and former head of the Criminal Division at the Department of Justice, who has suggested that policymakers now "may need to think more systematically and universally about the issue of combatants" and to "debate a long-term and sustainable architecture for the process of determining when, why, and for how long someone may be detained as an enemy combatant, and what judicial review should be available."

In addition, Viet Dinh, former head of the Justice Department's Office of Legal Policy has called "unsustainable" the government's current insistence on detentions without meaningful oversight or any sort of due process.

I am currently examining ways to heed this invitation for congressional action and hope to introduce a piece of legislation in the near future that establishes specific standards and procedures under which terrorism suspects may be detained as enemy combatants and provided due process.

In the interim, I am reintroducing this piece of legislation in the hope that Congress and the Administration will finally work together to create a workable framework to deal with these matters of significant constitutional import. In addition, I have renewed my call for congressional hearings to examine proposals for congressional action in this area. After the shameful internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, we must be vigilant to protect against the government's decision to detain, perhaps indefinitely, any American without adequate review of the basis of its decision.

TRIBUTE TO YOLANDA GARCIA

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sympathy that I rise today to give a final farewell to an outstanding woman and a dear

friend. Ms. Yolanda Garcia passed away on February 17, 2005 at the age of 53. She was an inspiring person who gave so much of herself for the benefit of others. Words can't explain how much she will be missed by all who knew her.

This daughter of the Bronx accomplished so much in her lifetime that it would be impossible for me to sum it all up here today, however; I would like to take a moment to highlight the great contributions she made to the people of my community.

Yolanda was a co-founder of "We Stay/Nos Quedamos" Committee, Inc., a community based organization located in the South Bronx. "Nos Quedamos" was founded as a response to New York City's Melrose Commons Urban Renewal plan which would have displaced some 6,000 people from their residences and businesses. In order to save not only her own home and business but those of her neighbors as well, Yolanda organized tenants, homeowners, property owners, local non-profits, and business people to deliver the message "We Stay/Nos Quedamos". The group won the right to become equal partners with the city of New York in planning for the community's redevelopment. Through "Nos Quedamos", Yolanda coordinated a collaborative, community-based planning process resulting in the creation of a more environmentally friendly plan that created new affordable housing without displacing people from the community.

Yolanda, who lost a son to asthma, struggled mightily to ensure that other families would not have to suffer such a tragedy. She became a strong leader in the South Bronx environmental movement which has blossomed in recent years. Her organization joined the Organization of Waterfront Neighborhoods to fight the expansion and proliferation of waste transfer stations in the South Bronx and teamed up with the South Bronx Clean Air Coalition to shut down a medical waste incinerator that had fouled the air for ten years. In 2000, as a tireless leader in the fight to keep New York City's children safe from asthma, Yolanda established a multi-year partnership with New York University and local nonprofits to conduct research and community education about the causes of the asthma crisis.

No city, state or nation could exist without individuals willing to give all of themselves for the good of the greater population. These individuals often possess qualities that enable them to uplift and inspire their peers. Yolanda Garcia was indeed one of these individuals. After the loss of her son to asthma, Yolanda did not pack her bags and leave the Bronx. She stayed and fought to improve the air quality to ensure that no other mother would have to endure the pain of losing a child. If everyone possessed such love in their hearts we would undoubtedly be able to enjoy heaven here on earth.

As a result of Yolanda's courage to stand up and say: "Nos Quedamos/We Stay", countless children will breathe a little easier and countless residents will be able to live in affordable housing. Although she has passed on, her good works will continue to benefit many generations to come. Surely, that is the mark of a great life.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful that I had the opportunity to know this selfless, kindhearted gallant woman and as she is laid to rest on this the 3rd day of March 2005 I ask that my

colleagues join me in paying tribute to my friend.

HONORING THE UCSB GAUCHO
MEN'S SOCCER TEAM

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to the UCSB Men's soccer team, following a spectacular 2004 season where they placed 2nd in the NCAA.

The Gaucho Men's soccer team finished their remarkable season with a 21-3-1 record. In addition, four players were honored on the 2004 NCAA Men's Soccer College Cup All-Tournament Team. Their season, as well as their performance in the NCAA Championship match, gives all UCSB students, faculty and Alumni something to be very proud of. During the final home matches, community members and students alike flocked to UCSB to support the Gaucho men. The talent of this team has certainly brought UCSB to the forefront of Men's soccer, proving again that UCSB should be known not only for its academics and physical beauty, but also for its many outstanding athletic programs.

Mr. Speaker, raw talent and the ability to beat virtually any opponent are not the only attributes of this team, however. The Gaucho Men are also community volunteers, setting a positive example for their peers and for younger players in the Santa Barbara community. They recently participated in a fitness day at Santa Barbara City College, aimed at encouraging kids and adults alike to maintain healthy lifestyles. Many young people in the Santa Barbara community love to play soccer and being able to interact with the UCSB players is a wonderful opportunity. As a nurse, I understand firsthand the importance of encouraging our youth to get physically active. The Gaucho Men help to achieve this goal by mentoring young players and leading by positive example.

I am so proud to represent the UCSB campus, and the Gaucho Men's soccer team has given me one more reason to boast to my colleagues that Santa Barbara truly is paradise.

INTRODUCTION OF PITKIN COUNTY
LAND EXCHANGE LEGISLATION

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am today introducing a bill to provide for completion of a land exchange that involves Pitkin County, Colorado, on one hand and two federal agencies—the Forest Service and BLM—on the other.

The bill would direct a land exchange under which the county would transfer two items to the Forest Service: A 35-acre tract (known as the "Ryan property") near the ghost town of Ashcroft; and 18.2 acres (patented mining claims) on Smuggler Mountain near Aspen, Colorado.

In return, the Federal government would transfer to the county 3 items: A 5.5 acre tract

south of Aspen known as the "Wildwood" parcel, which the county will reconvey to private ownership after reserving a permanent public easement for a trail; 5.92 acres in 12 scattered locations on Smuggler Mountain that abut or are near lands now owned by the county; a 40-acre tract of BLM land along the Crystal River, which will be subject to a permanent conservation easement limiting future use to recreational, fish and wildlife, and open space purposes.

The bill requires standard appraisals of all properties involved. If the lands going to the county are worth less than what the county is giving to the federal government, the county will waive additional payment. On the other hand, if the lands provided by the county are worth less than those the county is to receive, the county will either pay cash to equalize or will convey an additional tract (160 acres in the Sellers' Meadow area near Hagerman Pass) to make up the difference.

The bill is fair, balanced, and not controversial. A similar measure (S. 100) has been introduced by Colorado's senior Senator, WAYNE ALLARD, with the cosponsorship of Senator KEN SALAZAR.

For the information of our colleagues, here is a summary of the legislation and a list of groups that have expressed their support for its enactment.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED PITKIN COUNTY (RYAN
PROPERTY) LAND EXCHANGE
UNITED STATES GETS

35 acre Ryan Property in the White River National Forest near Ashcroft and Aspen, Colorado. Forest Service acquisition of property will complete the Ashcroft Preservation Project, which was initiated by the Forest Service in 1980 to consolidate National Forest land ownership in and around the historic Ashcroft Townsite. The Ryan Property and surrounding lands are: (1) an extremely popular sightseeing and recreation destination; (2) heavily used for nordic skiing on public and private trails associated with the Ashcroft touring center; (3) about the popular Cathedral Lake Trail and Trailhead; and (4) contain historic structures associated with the World War II 10th Mountain Division.

18.2 acre Grand Turk and Pontiac patented mining claims on Smuggler Mountain directly above Aspen. Smuggler Mountain is a heavily used recreational area where the Forest Service is trying to consolidate its ownership, where feasible.

PITKIN COUNTY GETS

5.5 acre "Wildwood" parcel south of Aspen, which will re-conveyed by the County into private ownership. Conveyance will be subject to a permanent public easement for the East of Aspen Trail.

5.92 acres in 12 scattered mining claim remnants on Smuggler Mountain. The 12 parcels (ranging from 1.5 to 0.02 acres in size) abut or are near existing County owned lands.

40 acre BLM parcel (Parcel 79) along the Crystal River near Carbondale, Colorado. Pitkin County must grant BLM a permanent conservation easement on the parcel for continued public access, and limiting future use to recreational, fish and wildlife and open space purposes only. Easement requirement will not reduce parcel's exchange value.

ADDITIONAL EXCHANGE PROVISIONS

Exchange values will be deemed equal if Forest Service appraiser determines approximate equal value. If the appraiser determines value is owed by Pitkin County, the County will additionally convey to the Forest Service the 160 acre Sellar Park property,

a Forest inholding currently owned and managed by Pitkin County as open space.

Endorsements: As of September 7, 2004 proposed the exchange has been endorsed by: Aspen Valley Land Trust; Aspen Historical Society; Ashcroft Ski Touring; The Conservation Fund; Crystal River Caucus; Friends of Ashcroft; Wilderness Workshop; Aspen Center for Environmental Studies; Aspen Skiing Company; Board of County Commissioners, Pitkin County; City of Aspen; Crystal Valley Environmental Protection Assn.; Roaring Fork Conservancy; Crystal-Maroon Caucus.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF
UNITED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
DISTRICT BOARD MEMBER FRAN-
CISCO GONZALEZ

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important contribution of United Independent School District Board Member Francisco Gonzalez in Laredo, TX in my Congressional District.

Francisco "Pancho" Gonzalez works for Webb County as the Center Director for the Larga Vista Community Center. Besides overseeing the center's operations, a large part of Gonzalez's job consists of meeting with the people in the community he serves and helping them solve a variety of problems. Gonzalez regularly intervenes on behalf of families having difficulties paying their utility bills, or buying food for their families. He is a man who goes out of his way to help others.

Gonzalez says, being on the United ISD Board gives him the chance to help the district move in a positive direction. Gonzalez likens the Board to an eight member team that must work together to realize its full potential. He also realizes that not all ideas come from the top. Gonzalez likes to listen to people's concerns and ideas. "I'm open minded to suggestions. I don't mind giving credit where credit is due."

Gonzalez, a Laredo native, earned a Bachelor in Business Administration degree from Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas. Despite his early business training, Gonzalez says he has always been attracted to social work. "I'm going on 20 years in the social services field," Gonzalez said.

He has worked for the Housing Authority of Laredo as a Drug Elimination Program coordinator. In that position, he organized drug prevention workshops and anti-drug activities for housing development residents. He has helped prisoners get their G.E.D.s when he worked with Laredo Junior College while stationed at the Corrections Corporation of America. As an employee with the Laredo-Webb County Health Department, he counseled people and referred them to agencies that could help them with their transportation and medical needs. Gonzalez has worked for the Texas Department of Human Resources, and the Texas Employment Commission. He has also spent time in the private sector, purchasing materials and parts for his father's auto painting business.

He says he enjoys doing community service work. "If it's for a good cause, I'll do it." He was a previous board member with the Gate-

way Community Health Center where he served as president of the finance committee. He serves as a board member for the Salvation Army and is a court appointed special advocate-CASA. He has also donated time to Cancer Patient Services, United I.S.D.'s anti-drug program, and the Bringing Everyone Special Together organization. Gonzalez says one of the best ways to put his knowledge to good use is to help others in need. "One of my goals is to continue helping people. When I get tired, I seek guidance from the Lord."

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize the contributions of United Independent School District Board Member Francisco Gonzalez.

STANLEY WARREN REMEMBERED

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to mourn the loss of a tremendous community leader in San Francisco, Mr. Stanley E. Warren. Stan Warren sadly lost his battle against a brain tumor on January 31, 2005. He led our community with great distinction as the Secretary-Treasurer of the San Francisco Building and Construction Trades Council.

Stan Warren dedicated his professional career to helping his fellow workers build a better life for themselves, their families, and their communities. Born in Fresno, Stan moved to the Bay Area where he attended Sequoia High School and Canada College in Redwood City. At 18, he became an apprentice with the Roofers and Waterproofers Union, Local 40, in San Francisco and worked his way up to Journeyman. Dedicating his efforts to union affairs, Stan was elected business manager for Local 40 in 1994. In 2000, he was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the San Francisco Building and Construction Trades Council with 30 affiliated union locals.

We were all stunned when Stan was diagnosed with a life threatening brain tumor a few years ago. He fought back valiantly and we were encouraged by the improvement he showed. Yet, in recent months the struggle overcame him.

Stan was a powerful advocate for labor in the Bay Area and worked in Washington as an effective voice in support of worker safety, better health care, protecting pensions and the Davis Bacon Act ensuring prevailing wages in federal contracts.

I have always been proud to represent working people in the Bay Area and have worked closely with organized labor. My job has been made easier because I have had the privilege of representing and working with dedicated citizens and leaders like Stan Warren.

Many friends and neighbors recently shared our loss at a memorial service for Stan in Redwood City, CA. Stan's wife Geri, their three sons, Tren, Spencer, and Gage and Stan's parents Troy and Maria Warren proudly know him as a wonderful husband, father, and son. I was proud to know him as a friend. I extend to his family and friends our deepest condolences and ask my colleagues to join me in this expression of sympathy.

HONORING DON DEMERS

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Don DeMers of Fresno, California. Mr. DeMers, Fresno County Transportation Authority Executive Director, recently lost his battle against cancer.

Mr. DeMers had a long list of work experience in various places. Prior to becoming Administrator of the Fresno County Transportation Authority, Don was the Manager of Transportation Planning and Implementation in Anchorage, Alaska. He served as the Executive Director of the Bi-State Planning Agency in Minnesota, and as a stockbroker for Shearson Lehman in Minnesota. Don even spent time in Washington, DC, as a law clerk to a U.S. Attorney.

He was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of University of North Dakota. Don holds a PhD in Political Science, and a Master's in Political Science/Public Administration. After his education in North Dakota, he attended Georgetown Law School in Washington, DC and the New York Institute of Finance in New York.

Mr. DeMers is survived by his wife, Deborah; sons Robert and wife Dawn, and Tony and wife Teena; daughters Barbarah and husband Michael Livorsi and Tressa and Crystal DeMers; his "pride and joys," eight grandchildren, Nicholas, Alexas, Brogen, Tyler, Lauren, Destany, Kaitlyn and one on the way; and his brothers Jim, Denny and Mike.

Don had a zest for life and a smile and sense of humor that made everybody laugh. He liked skiing, dancing, reading and biking, but most of all, golf with Deborah. All who knew and loved him will miss Don greatly.

RECOGNIZING 150 YEARS OF SERVICE BY ST. VINCENT MERCY
MEDICAL CENTER

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize an historic anniversary in my district in Northern Ohio. St. Vincent Mercy Medical Center celebrates 150 years of service. On Wednesday, February 23, 2005, the hospital will mark this sesquicentennial with a dedication and blessing of its Historic Donor Wall and Marguerite d'Youville Sanctuary.

In 1737 Marguerite d'Youville and three friends dedicated their lives to serving the poor. They established a Hospital General, a hostel for the destitute. Because the hospital only admitted men at first, Marguerite took poor women into her home. In 1747, Marguerite and her companions took over the administration of the Hospital General, restored the buildings and provided a combination veteran's hospital, nursing home, orphanage, mental asylum, VD clinic, reformatory for prostitutes, and overflow ward in case of epidemics. The religious order Marguerite thus established was the Grey Nuns. Their successors continue her work.

In 1855 four courageous and idealistic Grey Nuns took their lead from their foundress and

traveled from Montreal with a mission to care for the sick and needy in Toledo, Ohio. St. Vincent's hospital was summarily established. The nuns' mission was soon broadened to include the education of health care professionals, patients and families. One hundred and fifty years later, St. Vincent Mercy Medical Center still holds fast to the ideals of Sr. Marguerite d'Youville in its unwavering mission to provide dignified and quality medical care to those in need.

Today, St. Vincent's is a member of the Mercy Health Partners system, a faith-based consortium of six hospitals in Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan. St. Vincent's is a Level I certified trauma center, Life Flight air ambulance base, home of the Mercy Children's Hospital and state of the art acute care hospital. With 3,500 employees including almost 1,000 physicians on staff, it is one of our region's primary employers. Nearly 500 volunteers augment the staff.

St. Vincent's has not only taken its hospital mission to heart, but also its role as a community leader. The hospital has transformed the near-downtown corridor on which it is located and maintains an influential and benevolent partnership with the neighborhood in which it is situated.

St. Vincent Mercy Medical Center celebrates 150 years caring for the poor and sick by living Christ's teaching that "Whatever you do to the least among you, that you do unto Me," as the recent photo of Sister Lucius in the hospital atrium, and the scholarship foundation in her name, attest. Onward!

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS VULNERABILITY AND REDUCTION ACT OF 2005

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, March 3, 2005

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Public Transportation Systems Vulnerability and Reduction Act of 2005.

Securing our Nation's public transportation system has been a top priority of mine.

For years, governments around the world have recognized that public transportation is a major terrorist target. Until 9/11 the United States has been largely spared the kinds of terrorist campaigns waged against public surface transportation. However, we cannot wait for a tragedy to happen before we address our vulnerabilities.

An October 2001 study released by the Mineta Institute, Protecting Public Surface Transportation Against Terrorism and Serious Crime: An Executive Overview cites that between 1920 and 2000 there have been approximately 900 terrorist attacks and other significant criminal incidents involving public surface transportation systems.

However, all but 14 of these attacks occurred after 1970, the year that marks the beginning of modern terrorism.

Attacks against transportation and transportation infrastructures accounted for 42 percent of all international terrorist attacks, according to the most recent statistics provided by the USDOT Office of Intelligence and Security in 1998.

These statistics play out before our eyes on CNN. Last year alone, we witnessed attacks on public transportation systems in Madrid and Moscow, not to mention the ongoing attacks in the Middle East.

My legislation, The Public Transportation Systems Vulnerability and Reduction Act of 2005 will provide our Nation's transportation systems and workers with the training and funding to help protect our homeland. This legislation will provide funding for:

Ongoing vulnerability assessments which will build continuously on information collected, allowing for easier implementation of new technologies that will assist in averting terrorist attacks on all modes of public transportation.

Training programs for frontline transit employees, ensuring that employees, who are the eyes and ears of transportation systems, are prepared to respond to emergency situations.

Development and implementation of local and regional emergency preparedness plans that fully utilize a community's transportation resources.

Provides \$25 million a year, \$100 million over 4 years for emergency preparedness and response training.

I ask my colleagues to join me in working to provide our Nation's transportation systems and employees the resources to protect our communities.

I urge you to support the Public Transportation Systems Vulnerability and Reduction Act of 2005.

AMERICA'S MISLEADING GAS MILEAGE STICKERS

HON. NANCY L. JOHNSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that should trouble America's consumers. Seventeen million new cars were sold in 2004 and not one had accurate gas mileage rates posted on the window stickers.

Unbeknownst to America's drivers, the gas mileage stickers on their cars are wrong, inflating fuel economy figures by up to 300 percent. Worse, the EPA has known their tests are to blame. The tests used by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to measure fuel economy are 30 years old and are based on car technology from the late 1970s and 1980s.

The bogus tests results mislead consumers into thinking they are getting better mileage on the road—and a better deal at the gas pump—than they really are. This year alone, American consumers will spend about \$20 billion more on gasoline than they expect because of the misleading gas mileage stickers. Talk about a pocket-book issue.

Because changing these tests requires a change in the law, I am proud to introduce the "Fuel Efficiency Truth-in-Advertising Act" with my colleague Congressman RUSH HOLT. My legislation requires the EPA to update its fuel economy testing procedures to reflect today's "real life" circumstances and the use of "real world" gasoline. If this legislation is enacted, when it says 35 miles-per-gallon on the sticker, drivers will get 35 miles-per-gallon on the road.

An example of a flaw in EPA's current method is underestimating highway speeds. The EPA highway cycle assumes an average speed of 48 mph and a top speed of 60 mph. Many State highway speed limits are set at or above 65 mph and government data indicates that fuel economy can drop by 17 percent for modern vehicles that drive at 70 mph instead of 55 mph.

Another flaw is in the type of fuel used for engine certification. Fuels used for engine certification tests are artificial. The EPA uses highly refined fuel, not what we consume in our cars every day. Using these artificial fuels may be fine from a laboratory standpoint, but they don't help drivers when they overstate actual fuel economy.

There's more. The tests assume acceleration and braking rates that don't match reality. They overstate trip lengths. They understate increased idling and stop-and-go traffic in our expanding urban areas. They keep the air-conditioner off, while flipping on the A/C reduces gas mileage by 2.5 miles-per-gallon.

We would not tolerate 30-year-old tests for anything—so why do we allow it for gas mileage? Make no mistake, this is a pocketbook issue for Americans who are pinched by the high price of gasoline. The easy and common-sense steps this bill calls for will give every future car owner the truth—the truth about how their cars will perform, and the truth about how much they're going to spend on gasoline every year.

AAA, the Nation's largest auto club with 47 million members, supports this bill. So does the Union of Concerned Scientists, the Sierra Club and a host of consumer, scientific, and environmental groups.

This broad-based and diverse coalition believes, as I do, that Americans deserve better than the results of a 30-year-old test. We recognize that buying a car is a huge investment in most Americans' lives, and the government should be helping consumers make smart choices, not misleading them.

And so I ask my colleagues to join with me in supporting the Fuel Efficiency Truth in Advertising Act. Do it for the hundreds of thousands of car owners in your districts who deserve the truth—not bogus test results.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTION OF INQUIRY REGARDING "JEFF GANNON"

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I introduce this resolution to inquire whether the Justice and Homeland Security Departments were abused in favoring Mr. Guckert, a fake reporter from a fake news organization. I had hoped that the half dozen congressional and Senate requests for information would have been sufficient. However, to date, they have not even merited a response from the White House or its agencies.

For nearly 3 years, the White House has been granting Mr. Guckert, a right-wing activist with no press credentials, access to the White House briefing room and presidential press conferences. This appears to violate long standing practices of carefully screening contacts with the President.

This special access not only raises security concerns, but calls into question the fundamental fairness of the White House press corps. In fact, the favoritism bestowed on this fake reporter may have violated federal law. Mr. Guckert's efforts as a mouthpiece for the White House likely violated statutes banning the Administration from using appropriated money for propaganda purposes.

Finally, Mr. Guckert has claimed that he had access to a classified Central Intelligence Agency document that revealed the undercover status of Ambassador Joseph Wilson's wife. It's now been over a year and a half since Valerie Plame was maliciously outed, and we appear to be no closer to finding out who in the Administration played with her life for political purposes. I hope this resolution may shed some light on whether Mr. Guckert, the White House's go-to propagandist, also received classified information and from who.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF UNITED INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD MEM-
BER WILLIAM JOHNSON

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important contribution of United Independent School District Board Member William (Bill) Johnson of my Congressional District.

The experience of being on a school board has taught Bill Johnson several things. "Everyone runs with the idea that 'I' can make a difference. But if you're only one vote out of seven it's not going to work. Being on the board has to be a team effort." Johnson says each board member brings a different view of education. "A successful board can harness its members and get them to pull in one direction."

Johnson has always been interested in education. He has taught banking and finance courses at the Laredo Community College and, for the last 10 years, he has taught business through Junior Achievement at United High School. "I like being around educators and kids," Johnson said. In addition, he has served as a little league coach since 1981. "It's a tough job, but I enjoy it."

Johnson, a native of Laredo, has a wife and three children. He graduated from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor's degree in political science. He is a first vice-president at Laredo National Bank.

Overall, Johnson says his experience on the board has been positive. "It's been a good opportunity. You have to work with a lot of different people but it has taught me a lot." One of the lessons Johnson has learned is that being on the board takes a lot of preparation. With the thousands of pages of memos and reports that need to be looked at, Johnson says the board has to make time to study. "When I first joined the board I figured all I had to do was go to about 24 meetings a year." In his first year Johnson had to attend 172 meetings.

"You quickly learn that you need at least four votes to get anything done." According to Johnson, the current United ISD school board may not always agree on everything, but they know how to work well together. The district has several Exemplary and Recognized campuses, whereas before there were none. The district also earned praise from former comptroller John Sharp for saving taxpayers millions of dollars.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize the dedication of United Independent School District Board Member William Johnson.

CHINA'S ANTI-SECESSION LAW

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I was disappointed to learn that China is drafting an anti-secession law, aimed at annexing Taiwan. The Taiwanese people are very concerned with China's action and understandably so.

China has long presumed that it and Taiwan are unified. However, the reality is, since 1949, they have been two nations existing side by side with neither having control over the other.

The proposed law also assumes that the only outcome of cross-strait negotiation is annexation of Taiwan by China. This would deny the 23 million people of Taiwan the right to decide their own future and would go against the intentions of the Taiwan Relations Act.

Many believe, if enacted, the law would be used to justify the legal basis for the Chinese government to punish anyone speaking or acting against the reunification of Taiwan and China. Moreover, Chinese leaders might that this law permits the use of force against Taiwan if China considers Taiwanese leaders to be engaging in separatist activities.

Clearly, China is seeking to unilaterally change the status quo in the Taiwan Strait. If enacted, this law would destroy any good feelings the Taiwanese people might have gained for China through increasing economic interdependence. It would also make them less willing to sit down and discuss their future with China.

In the end, military tension in the Taiwan Strait will rise, affecting regional peace and stability. This is not in the best interests of either Country.

Mr. Speaker, we should all speak out against China's proposed law. It is a bad law with potentially serious consequences.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE UNITY ACT
OF 2005

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I have introduced legislation to make English the official language of the United States Government.

The English language is the carrier of liberty and freedom throughout history and the world. For centuries, our common tongue, English, has been the uniting force in this great nation, knocking down ethnic and religious barriers to make us truly one nation. Today, as we rally for unity and patriotism a common means of communication propels us toward our goal.

The English Language Unity Act declares English the language of the United States. Like its predecessors, it does not affect the teaching and study of other languages. It does not deter the use of other languages in the home, community, church, or elsewhere. The Act includes commonsense exceptions to the policy, for international relations, national security, teaching of languages, and preservation of Native Alaskan or Native American languages.

A common language has enabled generations of Americans to realize the dream of American opportunity and freedom. Studies continue to prove those who know English get better jobs, earn more money and receive better health care than those who cannot speak the language. As a result, an emphasis on English decreases reliance on the federal government.

The need for official English appears in our newspapers every day—injuries in the workplace, mistranslations at hospitals, people who are unable to support themselves and their families—all because they could not speak English.

Recognizing a common language is neither racist nor exclusionary. It is a principle enacted by 177 countries worldwide to allow for the transmission of ideas and customs and to allow people of multiple cultures to come together. This bill does not inhibit people from speaking other languages, nor does it attempt to place any limits on culture, religion or customs.

The Unity Act gives newcomers an opportunity to succeed in the United States. It bonds the newcomer with his fellow Americans, allowing both to reach for the highest rung on the economic ladder and provide for a family.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, those with limited English proficiency are less likely to be employed, less likely to be employed continuously, tend to work in the least desirable sectors and earn less than those who speak English. Annual earnings by limited English proficient adults were approximately half of the earnings of the total population surveyed.

Few doubt this reality. In a 1995 poll by the Luntz Research firm, more than 80 percent of immigrants supported making English the official language of the United States. They are joined by 86 percent of all Americans who agree with English as the official language of the United States.

Similar English legislation in the 104th Congress (H.R. 123) drew 197 bipartisan House cosponsors and won a bipartisan vote on August 1, 1996. That spirited effort, led by our late colleague Bill Emerson, is unfinished business that we must attend to for the benefit of all Americans.

I urge my colleagues to co-sponsor The English Language Unity Act of 2005 in the 109th Congress so that we can ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to attain the American dream.

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL KIDNEY
MONTH

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, as co-Chairman of the Congressional Kidney Caucus, I would like to recognize that March is National Kidney Month. The Kidney Caucus partners with groups such as the National Kidney Foundation to increase public awareness of risk factors for chronic kidney disease and emphasize the importance of early detection. Anyone with high blood pressure, diabetes or a family history of kidney disease is at risk.

This March, the National Kidney Foundation is urging all those at risk to undergo a kidney screening. Simple urine and blood tests during a routine doctor's visit can show the earliest signs of kidney damage. According to the National Kidney Foundation, more than 20 million Americans—that's one in nine adults—have chronic kidney disease. More than 20 million more are at increased risk for developing the disease. Nearly half of all Americans with chronic kidney disease are unaware of their condition.

Early detection and intervention can halt the progression of the disease before it reaches kidney failure, at which point there are no other alternatives but dialysis or transplantation. Catching kidney disease at an early stage saves patient's lives and saves the taxpayer tremendous sums otherwise spent on costly dialysis and transplant procedures. Please help me honor National Kidney Month by urging those at risk for kidney disease to take this threat seriously and undergo a screening.

LETTER FROM THE MENTAL
HEALTH LIAISON GROUP

HON. TED STRICKLAND

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following letter for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES STRICKLAND AND MURPHY: The undersigned organizations in the Mental Health Liaison Group, representing patients, health professionals and family members, are pleased to support your legislation, the Medicare Mental Health Copayment Equity Act. Under your legislation, Medicare's historic discriminatory 50 percent coinsurance for outpatient mental health care would be reduced over six years to 20 percent, bringing the coinsurance into line with that required of Medicare beneficiaries for other Part B services.

Simply put, current law discriminates against Medicare beneficiaries who seek treatment for mental illness. This affects elderly and non-elderly Medicare beneficiaries alike when they seek mental health care. According to the 1999 U.S. Surgeon General's report on mental health, almost 20 percent of elderly individuals have some type of mental disorder uncommon in typical aging. In addition, elderly individuals have the highest rate of suicide in the U.S., often the result of depression. The Surgeon General's report states, "Late-life depression is particularly

costly because of the excess disability that it causes and its deleterious interaction with physical health. Older primary care patients with depression visit the doctor and emergency rooms more often, use more medication, incur higher outpatient charges, and stay longer at the hospital."

The 50 percent coinsurance requirement also is unfair to the non-elderly disabled Medicare population. Because many of these individuals have severe mental illnesses combined with low incomes and high medical expenses, a 50 percent coinsurance obligation is a serious patient burden. For elderly and non-elderly Medicare beneficiaries alike, Medicare is a critical source of care. Your legislation to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries needing mental health care incur only the same cost-sharing obligations as required of all other Medicare patients would end the statutory discrimination against Medicare beneficiaries seeking treatment for mental disorders.

Thank you for your leadership in addressing this important issue for the nation's 40 million Medicare patients.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Children and Families.
American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry.

American Association of Children's Residential Centers.

American Association of Pastoral Counselors.

American Association of Practicing Psychiatrists.

American Group Psychotherapy Association.

American Mental Health Counselors Association.

American Occupational Therapy Association.

American Psychiatric Association.

American Psychiatric Nurses Association.

American Psychoanalytic Association.

American Psychological Association.

American Psychotherapy Association.

Anxiety Disorders Association of America.

Association for the Advancement of Psychology.

Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare.

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law.

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.

Clinical Social Work Federation.

Clinical Social Work Guild.

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance.

Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy & Action.

Ensuring Solutions to Alcohol Problems.

International Society of Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurses.

NAADAC, The Association for Addiction Professionals.

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

National Association for Children's Behavioral Health.

National Association for Rural Mental Health.

National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders (ANAD).

National Association of Mental Health Planning & Advisory Councils.

National Association of Protection and Advocacy Systems.

National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems.

National Mental Health Association.

Suicide Prevention Action Network USA.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday March 2, 2005, I was unable to cast my vote on H.R. 27, the Job Training Improvement Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall 46, the Scott of Virginia amendment and "nay" on rollcall 48, the final passage of H.R. 27. I also would have voted "yea" on rollcall 43, 44, 45, and 47 and "nay" on rollcall 42.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF
WEBB COUNTY COMMISSIONER
JUDITH GUTIERREZ

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important achievements of Judith G. Gutierrez in Laredo, TX in my Congressional District.

Judith G. Gutierrez (Pct.2) was elected in 1986, she held the office for two consecutive terms. Re-elected in 1999 and again in 2002, she will begin her fourth term of office in January 2003. Throughout her tenure, Gutierrez has taken a hands-on approach to colonia issues.

Former Attorney General Dan Morales appointed Commissioner Gutierrez to the state's Colonia Task Force. Former Governor Ann Richards selected Gutierrez to chair the Regional Review Committee for scoring federally funded projects such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and colonia set-aside funds. She served in this capacity for four years.

Commissioner Gutierrez worked with State legislators in 1989 to pass Senate Bill 2, which created the first colonia legislation, implementing rules to limit unscrupulous development. Senate Bill 2 also authorized the mechanism needed to provide funding for water and sewer improvements. To ensure regulatory enforcement at the local level, she created the Webb County's first Planning Department. This department has been recognized by the Texas Attorney General's office under Generals Morales and Cornyn as the model for colonia regulation and enforcement.

Total grant funds for projects initiated in Webb County during Gutierrez' term in office exceeds \$100 million. Since 1992, Commissioner Gutierrez has secured more than \$25 million in colonia improvement funds for her precinct alone. Projects have ranged from infrastructure—water, storm drainage, and community centers to educational and health initiatives.

In 1994, Commissioner Gutierrez was Governor Ann Richards' appointee to the South Texas Regional Prosperity Plan and also served on the Environmental Transition Team organized to consolidate the Texas Air Quality Control Board, the Water Commission and selected divisions of the Texas Health Department. In 2003 Governor Rick Perry appointed Commissioner Judith Gutierrez to the South Texas Regional Review Committee.

She is a past President of the South Texas County Judges and Commissioners Association and currently serves as trustee for the Texas Association of Counties Health and Employees Benefits Pool. She has the distinction of being the only commissioner from Webb County to have ever served on the Intergovernmental Relations Steering Committee for the National Association of Counties, based in Washington, D.C.

She is the Secretary for the Texas Council Board of Directors and serves on the board of the Texas Council of Community Mental Health Retardation Centers, Inc. (MHMR). She chairs the County's Villa Antigua Committee, a historical preservation project, as well as the Committee to create the new Webb County Morgue. She was appointed by Judge Mercurio Martinez to serve on the Purchasing Board and to chair an Art Committee for the New Administration Building. She has also been elected in the year 2002 to be President of the Webb County HFC. Commissioner Gutierrez also serves on the Board of Texas Association of Counties 2003 and on the Texas Association of Counties Health and Employee Benefits Pool since 2001. She was recognized as one of the 2003 Tiger Legends for Martin High School. She was recently asked to join the Mercy Health Center Advisory Board for 2003 as well as the Border Area Nutrition Council.

Judith G. Gutierrez was born in Laredo, Texas to Sabino and Olga Garza. She attended Laredo schools and holds an Associate of Arts degree from Laredo Junior College. A successful businesswoman, for more than a decade Gutierrez owned and operated La Hacienda Mexican Restaurant. Commissioner Gutierrez has her Real Estate license and is in the process of securing a Real Estate Brokers license. She is the mother of four and has two grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize Webb County Commissioner Judith Gutierrez.

REINTRODUCING "HOLLY'S LAW"

HON. ROSCOE G. BARTLETT

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, today, I am reintroducing "Holly's Law"—a bill that would suspend FDA approval of the drug RU-486. This bill has been introduced with 48 cosponsors. Senator JIM DEMINT has reintroduced Holly's Law in the Senate.

Holly's Law is named in memory of Holly Patterson, an 18-year-old Californian who died after taking the drug in 2003. When I tell people that the FDA approved a drug to treat a life-threatening illness that has killed three pregnant women and seriously injured dozens of other pregnant women in the United States, they're shocked. They want to know why the FDA and Congress would allow a drug that kills and injures young women to stay on the market. RU-486 is a drug that always kills babies and sometimes kills and seriously injures healthy young women.

I urge my colleagues to support Holly's Law to take the dangerous and unsafe drug RU-486 off the market.

TRIBUTE TO AM 1490 WBBM, SOUTH FLORIDA'S FIRST BLACK-OWNED AND OPERATED RADIO STATION—NEW BIRTH BROADCASTING CORPORATION CELEBRATES 10 YEARS IN RADIO

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my congratulations to Bishop Victor T. Curry, D.D., Min, President and CEO, and to everyone at the New Birth Broadcasting Corporation as they celebrate their 10th year in radio.

Celebratory events will begin with a community worship service at 7 p.m. on March 9th and will feature Pastor Jeffrey A. Johnson, Sr. of the Eastern Star Church of Indianapolis, Indiana.

Since the purchase of AM 1490 WBBM, the landscape of gospel radio has changed dramatically. WBBM has received local as well as national recognition for its contribution to our local community, for it not only plays the best in gospel music, but it also provides its listeners with late-breaking news and inspirational, life-changing programming. WBBM, the first black-owned and operated station in South Florida, is one of the first radio stations to stream its broadcast via the internet. WBBM also publishes a quarterly nationally distributed magazine and an annual directory of black-owned and supported businesses.

I want to extend my warmest congratulations to Bishop Curry and his staff for doing such an important job so well, and my best wishes for another outstanding decade in broadcasting.

JOB TRAINING IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT C. SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 2, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, had under consideration the bill (H.R. 27) to enhance the workforce investment system of the Nation by strengthening one-stop career centers, providing for more effective governance arrangements, promoting access to a more comprehensive array of employment, training, and related services, establishing a targeted approach to serving youth, and improving performance accountability, and for other purposes:

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I submit the following information regarding H.R. 27 for the RECORD.

MARCH 2, 2005.

THE REAL DEMOCRATIC RECORD ON CHARITABLE CHOICE,

DEAR COLLEAGUE: I wanted to be sure you had a copy of the Real Democratic Record on Charitable Choice. I hope this is helpful as we debate H.R. 27, containing a vast expansion of Charitable Choice to federally-funded job training programs for the first time since 1965.

THE 2004 DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM

"We honor the central place of faith in the lives of our people. Like our Founders, we

believe that our nation, our communities, and our lives are made vastly stronger and richer by faith and the countless acts of justice and mercy it inspires. We will strengthen the role of faith-based organizations in meeting challenges like homelessness, youth violence, and other social problems. At the same time, we will honor First Amendment protections and not allow public funds to be used to proselytize or discriminate. Throughout history, communities of faith have brought comfort to the afflicted and shaped great movements for justice. We know they will continue to do so, and we will always protect all Americans' freedom to worship."

THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION RECORD ON CHARITABLE CHOICE

1996—The Clinton Administration submitted amendments as part of its technical corrections package to Congress regarding concerns over the constitutionality of Charitable Choice provisions contained in welfare reform. They filed the following comments with the amendment: "[P]rovisions of sec. 104 and its legislative history could be read to be inconsistent with the constitutional limits. . . . We recommend amending sec. 104 to clarify that it does not compel or allow States to provide TANF benefits through pervasively sectarian organizations, either directly or through vouchers redeemable with these organizations." Congress did not act on those amendments.

1998—The Clinton Administration issued a signing statement placing limitations on the Charitable Choice provisions contained in the Community Services Block Grant: "The Department of Justice advises, however, that the provision that allows religiously affiliated organizations to be providers under CSBG would be unconstitutional if and to the extent it were construed to permit governmental funding of "pervasively sectarian" organizations, as that term has been defined by the courts. Accordingly, I construe the Act as forbidding the funding of pervasively sectarian organizations and as permitting Federal, State, and local governments involved in disbursing CSBG funds to take into account the structure and operations of a religious organization in determining whether such an organization is pervasively sectarian."

2000—The Clinton Administration issued a signing statement placing limitations on the Charitable Choice provisions contained in the reauthorization of the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Act (SAMHSA): "The Department of Justice advises, however, that this provision would be unconstitutional to the extent that it were construed to permit governmental funding of organizations that do not or cannot separate their religious activities from their substance abuse treatment and prevention activities that are supported by SAMHSA aid. Accordingly, I construe the Act as forbidding the funding of such organizations and as permitting Federal, State, and local governments involved in disbursing SAMHSA funds to take into account the structure and operations of a religious organization in determining whether such an organization is constitutionally and statutorily eligible to receive funding."

Very truly yours,

ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT,
Member of Congress.

FEBRUARY 28, 2005.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The undersigned organizations are writing to urge you to vote against H.R. 27, the Job Training Improvement Act, unless it is modified to address the concerns outlined in this letter, and to oppose any effort to expand the block grant authority in the bill along the lines of the Administration's "WIA Plus" proposal.

H.R. 27 fails to make meaningful improvements to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) that would enhance the training and career opportunities of unemployed workers. Instead, the legislation would eliminate the dislocated worker training program, undermine state rapid response systems, end the federal-state labor exchange system, roll back protections against religious discrimination in hiring by job training providers, and potentially undermine the stability of other important programs.

In particular, we are concerned about the following provisions in H.R. 27:

NEW BLOCK GRANT

H.R. 27 consolidates into a single block grant the WIA adult and dislocated worker programs with the Wagner-Peyser employment service program and reemployment services for unemployment insurance recipients. In doing so, it will eliminate job training assistance specifically targeted to workers dislocated by off shoring and other economic changes, pit different types of workers against each other, and lead to future funding reductions. The block grant also eliminates the statewide job service, which provides a uniform statewide system for matching employers and jobseekers, replacing it with a multiplicity of localized programs that would have no incentive or ability to cooperate and function as a comprehensive labor exchange system. Eliminating the employment service, which is financed with revenue from the unemployment insurance (UI) trust fund, breaks the connection between the unemployment insurance program and undermines the UI "work test," which ensures that UI recipients return to work as quickly as possible.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND CORE SERVICES FUNDING

A principal criticism of WIA has been the substantial decline in actual training compared to its predecessor, the Job Training Partnership Act. While there are various reasons for the reduction in training, including the sequence of services requirement in current law, the use of WIA resources by local boards and operators to build new one-stop facilities and bureaucracies, without any limitation, has contributed substantially to the decline in training. This is despite the fact that many WIA partner programs also contribute operating funds to one-stop operations.

H.R. 27 gives governors even broader discretion to transfer additional resources from the WIA partner programs to pay for WIA infrastructure and core services costs—without any assurance that more training would result. These programs include the vocational rehabilitation program, veterans employment programs, adult education, the Perkins post secondary career and technical education programs, unemployment insurance, trade adjustment assistance, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and, if they are partners, employment and training programs under the food stamp and housing programs, programs for individuals with disabilities carried out by state agencies, including state Medicaid agencies, and even child support enforcement. By relying on funding transfers from these programs to guarantee resources for WIA infrastructure and core services, H.R. 27 will disrupt and weaken services provided by these non-WIA programs, which also will face substantial pressures for funding reductions in the next few years.

The infrastructure and related provisions start the commingling of funds from these non-WIA programs. In doing so, they transform the original one-stop idea of a better-coordinated workforce system into a mechanism for reducing resources for and block granting these programs in the future. A

more effective and simple solution to ensuring adequate training services would be to require that a certain percentage of WIA funds be used for training as provided in previous job training programs and to create a separate WIA funding stream for one-stop operations, if necessary.

PERSONAL REEMPLOYMENT ACCOUNTS

H.R. 27 includes permanent and unlimited authority for the Secretary to conduct "personal reemployment account" (PRA) demonstrations even though the Department of Labor recently initiated a PRA demonstration without strong interest among the states. Although nine states could have participated, only seven are doing so.

Since this demonstration already is in process, we see no justification for this provision and can only surmise that it is an attempt to implement PRAs more broadly, despite a lack of Congressional support for a full-scale program in the past.

Unlike current WIA training programs, the PRAs would limit the cost of training that an unemployment insurance recipient can receive and would bar that individual from WIA training services for a year after the PRA account is established. This is the wrong way to go. With longterm unemployment at historically high levels, there is a much greater need for continued unemployment benefits for the long-term unemployed who have found it so difficult to become re-employed.

RELIGIOUS-BASED EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

H.R. 27 repeals longstanding civil rights protections that prohibit religious-based employment discrimination by job training providers. These protections have been included in job training programs, which received bipartisan support, since 1982. At no time have the civil rights provisions prohibited religious organizations from effective participation in federal job training programs. This rollback of civil rights protections is especially incongruous in a program designed to provide employment and career opportunities in an evenhanded manner and should be rejected.

WIA PLUS PROPOSAL

The Administration has proposed giving Governors authority to merge five additional programs into the WIA block grant. The proposal would eliminate specialized assistance to unemployed, disabled and homeless veterans, critical job training services for workers under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act whose jobs have been outsourced or lost to foreign competition, and specialized counseling and customized help for people with disabilities through state vocational rehabilitation agencies. These individuals would have to compete with each other for a declining share of resources without the protections and requirements under current law. Furthermore, the proposal abrogates accountability for the expenditure of federal taxpayer dollars by eliminating program reporting requirements. We strongly urge you to oppose any effort to adopt this misguided plan.

In summary, H.R. 27 strays far from the appropriate mission for federal job training programs of enhancing training opportunities for workers and providing skilled workers for employers. We strongly urge you to oppose this legislation unless amendments are adopted to delete the block grant, PRA demonstration and religious-based discrimination provisions and to modify the infrastructure provisions as recommended.

American Association of People with Disabilities.

American Civil Liberties Union.
American Counseling Association.

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE).

American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO).

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

American Humanist Association.

American Jewish Congress.

American Psychological Association.

American RehabACTion Network.

Americans for Democratic Action (ADA).

Americans for Religious Liberty.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AU).

Association for Career and Technical Education.

Baptist Joint Committee.

Brain Injury Association of America.

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainman.

Campaign for America's Future.

Center for Community Change.

Communications Workers of America (CWA).

Council of State Administrators for Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR).

Easter Seals.

Equal Partners in Faith.

Goodwill Industries.

Institute for America's Future.

Interfaith Alliance.

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers.

International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

International Union of Painters and Allied Trades.

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd.

National Alliance For Partnerships in Equity.

National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium.

National Association of State Head Injury Administrators.

National Council of Jewish Women.

National Education Association.

National Employment Law Project.

National Head Start Association.

National Immigration Law Center.

National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty.

National League of Cities.

National Organization for Women.

National Rehabilitation Association (NRA).

National WIC Association.

National Women's Law Center.

NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby.

OMB Watch.

Paralyzed Veterans of America.

Patient Alliance for Neuroendocrine-immune Disorders; Organization for Research and Advocacy.

Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Union.

Professional Employees Department, AFL-CIO.

Protestants for the Common Good.

Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

The Arc of the U.S.

United Cerebral Palsy.

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee.

United Auto Workers (UAW).

United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries.

United Mineworkers of America.

United Steelworkers of America.

USAction.

Welfare Law Center.

Wider Opportunities for Women.

Women Employed.

Women Work! The National Network for Women's Employment.

YWCA USA.

9to5, National Association of Working Women.

AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION,

Washington, DC, February 25, 2005.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the American Humanist Association, the oldest and largest Humanist organization in the nation, I write in opposition to the Job Training Improvement Act (H.R. 27). The Act is included in legislation reauthorizing the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the main job training program in the United States.

The Job Training Improvement Act eliminates the protection against employment discrimination in federally funded job training programs. If passed the measure would erode civil rights protections in these programs that have been in place since President Ronald Reagan signed the Job Training Partnership Act into law in 1982.

While the AHA supports job training, we urge you to oppose this Act because it would further entrench a constitutionally questionable faith-based initiative and would legally sanction discrimination.

An amendment to reinstate civil rights protections will be offered on the floor by Representative Bobby Scott. We ask you to support this amendment because it would alleviate the civil rights rollback included in the bill.

As Humanists we strive for religious freedom and equal treatment regardless of one's beliefs or lack thereof. As it's written, this legislation gives the freedom for faith-based organizations funded with taxpayer dollars to hire on the basis of religious beliefs, opening the door to religious and ideological employment criteria. Along with other religious, civil rights, labor, education, health, and advocacy organizations, the American Humanist Association opposes H.R. 27.

Sincerely,

TONY HILEMAN,
Executive Director.

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE,

Washington, DC, February 25, 2005.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: I write on behalf of the American Jewish Committee, the nation's oldest human relations organization; with more than 150,000 members and supporters represented by 33 chapters nationwide, to urge you to support, if offered, the Scott-Van Hollen-Woolsey amendment to H.R. 27, the Job Training Improvement Act of 2005. We further urge that, absent the amendment, you vote to oppose H.R. 27; without the amendment, the bill would repeal longstanding civil rights protections designed to protect workers in federally-funded job training programs from religious discrimination.

Beginning with the inception of the federal job-training programs encompassed by the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982, religion-based employment discrimination has been prohibited in federally funded job-training programs, including programs operated by religious institutions. The bipartisan Job Training Partnership Act, which included the provision prohibiting religious discrimination that H.R. 27 would now make inapplicable to religious organizations, was originally sponsored by Senator Dan Quayle (R-IN), reported out of the Senate HELP Committee under Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. In 1998, the provision once again received strong bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate when the Workforce Investment Act combined earlier job-training programs and recodified the original nondiscrimination provision included in the 1982 law.

The nondiscrimination provision that the Scott-Van Hollen-Woolsey amendment would reinstate has, over the past 23 years, allowed religious organizations to participate in federally funded job-training programs while

protecting religious liberty and maintaining fundamental civil rights standards. We are committed to maintaining and respecting the autonomy of religious organizations, including their right to look to religious standards when making employment decisions for positions funded with private resources. But preserving the autonomy of those institutions must not entail the wholesale repeal of longstanding civil rights safeguards that protect workers from religious discrimination in federally-funded positions.

Respectfully,

RICHARD T. FOLTIN,
Legislative Director and Counsel.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN,

Washington, DC, February 23, 2005.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 90,000 members and supporters of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), I am writing to you regarding the Job Training and Improvement Act (H.R. 27) introduced by Rep. Howard McKeon (R-CA). This legislation includes dangerous language that would repeal longstanding civil rights protections designed to protect against religious discrimination in employment in federally funded job training programs. I urge you to support an amendment that would strike this provision, or oppose the bill if such an amendment is not included.

Current federal law prohibits discrimination based on religion in federally funded programs. This twenty-three year old provision has worked well, allowing religious organizations to provide essential government services while maintaining their own sectarian identity and America's core commitment to protecting both civil rights and religious liberties. The language in H.R. 27 would remove these existing civil rights protections and allow faith-based groups to discriminate based on religion in their hiring practices. While such discrimination may be appropriate in some situations, such as hiring a rabbi, priest or imam, it has no place in the hiring of providers of secular services funded by taxpayer dollars. Faith-based organizations receiving government funding must be held to the same civil rights standards as other social service providers and doing so has not prevented these groups from partnering with the government to provide important services.

NCJW joins scores of religious leaders, denominational offices, and faith-based organizations in opposition to this divisive and unnecessary legislation. I urge you to oppose the Job Training and Improvement Act and uphold our nation's commitment to eradicating employment discrimination.

For over a century, NCJW has been at the forefront of social change, raising its voice on important issues of public policy. Inspired by our Jewish values, NCJW has been, and continues to be, an advocate for the needs of women, children, and families and a strong supporter of equal rights and protections for everyone.

Sincerely,

MARSHA ATKIND,
President.

OMB WATCH,

Washington, DC, February 25, 2005.

VOTE "NO" ON WIA REAUTHORIZATION UNLESS SCOTT AMENDMENT PASSES! PROTECT CIVIL RIGHTS—STOP FEDERALLY FUNDED RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION

Re Scott Amendment to H.R. 27, the Jobs Training Improvement Act.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: OMB Watch strongly urges you to support the Scott Amendment to H.R. 27, the Jobs Training Improvement Act of 2005. The Scott Amendment will restore civil rights protections to people

wishing to be employed by religious organizations participating in federally funded programs.

The need for the Scott Amendment is underscored by a decision made by the Supreme Court in Chief Justice Rehnquist's majority opinion in *Bowen v. Kendrick*, 487 U.S. 589 (1988). The Court stated that although the Constitution does not bar religious organizations from participating in federal programs, it requires (1) that no one participating in a federal program can "discriminate on the basis of religion" and (2) that all federal programs must be carried out in a "lawful, secular manner." *Id.* at 609, 612.

H.R. 27 seeks to codify discrimination in hiring for federally funded positions by religious organizations. The bill repeals longstanding civil rights protections designed to protect workers against this kind of religious discrimination. Since their inception in 1982, these job training programs have included important civil rights protections against employment discrimination based on religious beliefs in programs that receive federal funding.

The Scott Amendment will make H.R. 27 consistent with *Bowen v. Kendrick* and President Reagan's original intent when he signed the first Workforce Investment Act in 1988. This twenty-one year old provision has been successfully implemented since the inception of the job training program, allowing religious organizations to provide essential government services while maintaining a commitment to protecting civil rights and religious liberty.

VOTE "YES" ON THE SCOTT AMENDMENT; VOTE "NO" ON FINAL PASSAGE IF THE SCOTT AMENDMENT FAILS

Although religious employers have the right under Title VII to apply religious tests to employees, the Constitution requires that the direct receipt and administration of federal funds remove that exemption. In addition, the federal government has constitutional obligations reinforced by *Bowen v. Kendrick* to refrain from religious discrimination. The Scott Amendment will restore the civil rights provisions into H.R. 27.

For these reasons, OMB Watch encourages you to vote "YES" on the Scott Amendment and "NO" on final passage if the Scott Amendment fails. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Lowe at 202-234-8494. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

GARY BASS,
Executive Director.

PEOPLE FOR THE AMERICAN WAY,

Washington, DC, February 24, 2005.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: On behalf of the over 675,000 members and supporters of People For the American Way, we are writing to voice our opposition to the Job Training Improvement Act (H.R. 27) as it would repeal longstanding civil rights protections designed to protect workers against religious discrimination in federally-funded job training programs. We urge you to eliminate the civil rights of thousands of Americans by exempting religious organizations from anti-discrimination requirements established over twenty years ago. These critical requirements were signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in 1982 under the Job Training Partnership Act and were reaffirmed in 1998 during the passage of the re-titled Workforce Investment Act (WIA). We ask that you support the Scott amendment which would restore this necessary protection. If Congress were to do otherwise, it would be allowing direct federal funding of discrimination. This is unacceptable.

Maintaining the separation between church and state is fundamental to maintaining the religious freedoms of all Americans. However, this can not be accomplished when organizations receiving federal funds are allowed to deny employment opportunities based upon an individual's religious beliefs.

There is no need to exempt religious organizations from anti-discrimination laws in order to protect the religious identity of that organization. Provisions already exist that allow an organization that is the recipient of federal funds to separate its religious content from the provision of services through the creation an independent 501(c)(3) organization. This allows the religious organization to maintain its religious identity without government interference, while also providing needed services in the community.

Any exemption for religious organizations receiving federal funds should not be permitted for it would undermine a half century of public policy aimed at protecting individuals from discrimination in the workplace, and further erode the fundamental protections against discrimination based on one's religion that are absolutely central to our democracy.

We ask that you uphold the religious liberties of all Americans and not allow federal funding of employment discrimination under H.R. 27. Therefore, we strongly urge you to support the Scott amendment, which may be offered on the floor, to restore current law and continue to protect critical civil rights protections within the Job Training Improvement Act. Furthermore, we ask that you vote no on the final passage of H.R. 27 if this amendment is not adopted. Thank you.

Sincerely,

RALPH G. NEAS,

President.

TANYA CLAY,
Deputy Director of Public Policy.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA),
Washington, DC, March 1, 2005.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: As you consider H.R. 27 and the issue of Faith-Based Hiring, I would like to alert you that the official policy of the Presbyterian Church (USA) is to oppose the kind of discrimination that could arise in the name of religion through the passage of this bill. Religious freedom and liberty has been a key component of the beliefs held by members of this historic denomination.

On Charitable Choice/Faith Based Initiatives—The 1988 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) "has recognized for many years that, apart from question of constitutionality, the church faces serious issues related to its own liberty of faith and action when it receives government funds. The 1969 General Assembly noted the distinction between "church-controlled" and "church-related" and urged that "temporary or permanent community agencies qualified to receive public funds be established at church initiative to maintain such programs;" and, "if church control was temporarily necessary for start up or experimental programs, that any permanent program resulting . . . be removed from church control and put under the control of independent community-based bodies." Holding that "in the conduct of social services church agencies should accept necessary and proper governmental regulation and supervision . . ." (Minutes, 1988, p. 559).

Also, General Assembly policy has consistently and clearly stated that government has the primary responsibility for caring for the poor, along with the private sector: The

1997 General Assembly stated (and the 1999 General Assembly reaffirmed), "that while the church, voluntary organizations, business, and government must work cooperatively to address the needs of poor persons and communities, the government must assume the primary role for providing direct assistance for the poor" (Minutes, 1997, pp. 553). The General Assembly has noted that the private sector is incapable of caring for the needy on its own. The 1996 General Assembly asserted that "churches and charities, including many Presbyterian congregations and related organizations, have responded generously to growing hunger but do not have the capacity to replace public programs" (Minutes, 1996, p. 784).

As with all institutions and organizations, there will be those who may hold a differing view from that of the parent body. Congress may receive letters from organizations that may cause confusion about where the official policy of the Church is on this issue.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church is the highest governing body of the 216 year denomination. There are approximately 11,500 congregations with 2.5 million members. Please contact me if you have further questions.

Rev. ELENORA GIDDINGS IVORY,
Director, Washington Office.

RELIGIOUS ACTION CENTER
OF REFORM JUDAISM,
Washington, DC, February 24, 2005.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the Union for Reform Judaism, whose 900 congregations across North America encompass 1.5 million Reform Jews, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) whose membership includes over 1800 Reform rabbis, I strongly urge you to oppose the Job Training and Improvement Act of 2005 (H.R. 27). H.R. 27 does not meet the job training needs of either job seekers or employers and would repeal civil rights laws by permitting government-funded faith-based job training programs to practice religious discrimination in employment.

H.R. 27 fails to make meaningful improvements to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and would weaken the federal government's job training programs. H.R. 27 consolidates several worker training programs into a single block grant and gives states broad discretion in their use of funds. Experience with block grants suggests that this wider discretionary power is a precursor to federal funding cuts. Under WIA, states and local governments have also been allowed more discretion in the use of job training funding, and states have used this discretion to fund new job training facilities rather than focus on providing new services.

The Job Training and Investment Act would also appeal civil rights law by permitting government funded faith-based job training programs to engage in religious discrimination when making employment decisions. While the interrelated issues of whether the Constitution permits federally funded religious entities to discriminate in hiring on the basis of religion and the legitimate need to recognize the religious autonomy of churches, synagogues, and houses of worship are complex, government-funded discrimination is deeply problematic on a policy level. The notion that a job notice could be placed in the newspaper seeking employees for a government-funded social service program run by a Protestant church that reads "Jews, Catholics, Muslims need not apply" or "No unmarried mothers will be hired" is profoundly troubling. According to an April 2001 Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life

poll, 78 percent of Americans oppose allowing government-funded religious organizations to hire only those who share their religious beliefs.

Religious institution can, and do, play a vital role in helping provide employment services. However, the government must ensure that religious organizations that accept government funding are prohibited from practicing religious discrimination.

We urge you to address the real and distinct needs of different types or workers and job seekers and to protect longstanding civil rights by opposing the Job Training and Improvement Act of 2005 (H.R. 27).

Yours sincerely,

Rabbi DAVID SAPERSTEIN,
Director and Counsel.

THE INTERFAITH ALLIANCE,
Washington, DC, February 28, 2005.

DEAR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: I write to you today as the president of The Interfaith Alliance, a nonpartisan, national grassroots organization dedicated to promoting the positive and healing role of religion in public life, to urge you to support the amendment, offered by Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA), to the Job Training Improvement Act/H.R. 27 that would restore civil rights protections. If an amendment like this fails, I urge you to oppose the Job Training Improvement Act/H.R. 27 because it is an unjustified assault on religious liberty and civil rights protections.

Section 127, entitled "Non-Discrimination" exempts religious organizations that receive Federal funds from the prohibition of discrimination that is standard practice for all other organizations that contract with the federal government. Specifically, under the subsections entitled "Prohibition of Discrimination Regarding Participation, Benefits and Employment," and "Exemption for Religious Organizations," the bill states, that standard nondiscrimination policies "shall not apply to a recipient of financial assistance under this title that is a religious corporation, association, educational institution, or society, with respect to the employment of individuals of a particular religion . . ."

This provision represents a dramatic shift in government policy towards religion as it repeals longstanding civil rights protections which have traditionally protected people of faith and goodwill from religious employment discrimination in federally funded job-training programs.

Since its inception in 1982, when it was called the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), this program has been the largest Federal employment training program in the nation, serving dislocated workers, homeless individuals, economically disadvantaged adults, youths and older workers. When signed into law by President Ronald Reagan, this program contained the very language protecting against religious discrimination that H.R. 27 seeks to repeal.

As an organization comprised of 150,000 people of faith and goodwill spanning over 70 faith traditions, I urge you to support the Scott amendment to the Job Training Improvement Act/H.R. 27 that would restore civil rights protections. If an amendment like this fails, I urge you to oppose the Job Training Improvement Act/H.R. 27 because it is an unjustified assault on religious liberty and civil rights protections.

America's unemployed citizens and those who wish to train them should not be subjected to a religious test under a Federal program. If you need further information on our position on this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Kim Baldwin, Director of

Public Policy and Voter Education, at 202-639-6370.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. C. WELTON GADDA,
President, *The Interfaith Alliance.*

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS, WASHINGTON OFFICE FOR ADVOCACY,
Washington, DC.

To: Members of the House of Representatives.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: I write on behalf of over 1,000 congregations that make up the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA). Unitarian Universalists have a long and proud history of opposing the convergence of religion and state in ways that compromise both entities. I write today to urge you to oppose provisions in H.R. 27, The Job Training Improvement Act that would do just that.

We ask you to oppose religious discrimination in employment procedures included in Section 128 of H.R. 27. If Section 128 were included as written, The Jobs Improvement Act would allow religious organizations receiving government funds to discriminate on the basis of religion when hiring employees for taxpayer-funded positions. This would jeopardize both civil rights and religious freedom. We urge you to support the amendment offered on the floor by Representative SCOTT that would restore protections contained in current law that guard the freedom of religious belief and expression to all people seeking employment of federally funded positions.

While The Unitarian Universalist Association affirms the critical role of faith as a source of healing in our society, we strongly believe that all legally qualified social service providers should be considered for employment without the imposition of religious tests or proscription. By accepting government funds, houses of worship are—and should remain subject to government oversight, as well as government regulation, including compliance reviews, audits, and upholding the protections against civil rights violations such as religious discrimination.

If an amendment restoring current law by requiring federally funded religious organizations to comply with civil rights protections is not passed on the floor, we urge you to oppose H.R. 27, the Job Training Improvement Act as written. The protection of the religious expression of people of all faiths is the responsibility all Americans, including religious organizations such as ours and legislators such as yourself. We ask for your vote against religious discrimination in the workplace in order to protect the civil rights and religious freedom of all people and remain true to one of the core principles of our nation's commitment to liberty for all.

Sincerely,

ROB KEITHAN,
Director.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE,
WASHINGTON BUREAU,
Washington, DC, February 25, 2005.

MEMBERS,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Re Support the Scott Amendment to H.R. 27, the Job Training Improvement Act of 2005, which would restore protections against discrimination in current law.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the nation's oldest, largest and most widely recognized grassroots civil rights organization, I urge you, in the strongest terms possible to support the

amendment being offered by Congressman Bobby Scott to H.R. 27 that would retain the civil rights protections when using federal funds in the current law. If the bill's existing language becomes law, civil rights protections that have been in place for decades will be eliminated and the result will be federally funded discrimination. Given the importance of this issue to the NAACP and our membership, I would also urge you to vote against final passage of the bill should the Scott amendment fail.

Because of our Nation's sorry history of bigotry, for decades it has been illegal to discriminate in employment and make hiring decisions based on race or religion. The only exception is faith-based organizations that are exempted from anti-discrimination provisions in programs using their own money; although until now they had to adhere to basic civil rights laws when using federal monies to support a program.

There should be no question that Faith Based institutions should, like all other recipients of federal funds, adhere to basic civil rights laws when using federal funds. It is a fundamental American principle that no citizen should have to pass someone else's racial, ethnic or religious test to qualify for a taxpayer-funded job and has been the law since 1982 when our federally-funded national job training programs were consolidated under the Job Training Partnership Act. H.R. 27 would eliminate the protections and advancements in the current law, provisions which have never been controversial.

Congressman Scott's amendment would restore protections against religious discrimination in hiring for jobs funded through the Job Training Improvement Act. This amendment is consistent with the civil rights laws passed of the mid-1960's and with the basic principles of our Constitution and would reassert traditional and well-established employment rights, civil rights and anti-discrimination protections.

Make no mistake; enactment of this provision will not make it easier for faith-based organizations to get federal contracts; they still need to apply, compete, and are subject to audit. Any program that can get funded under this bill can get funded anyway; Faith based organizations must simply comply with decades-old civil rights laws; they must not discriminate in hiring.

While there can be no question as to the invaluable role that faith-based organizations have played and continue to play in meeting many of the needs facing our nation today, it is also true that there are a few organizations which may, unfortunately, use religious discrimination as a shield for racial or gender discrimination. Thus I urge you, again in the strongest terms possible, to support Congressman Scott's amendment and ensure that tax dollars are not being used to support discrimination in any form.

Should you have any questions or comments on the NAACP position, I hope that you will feel free to contact me at (202) 463-2940. The NAACP considers this to be a very important civil rights vote, and your position will be relayed to our national membership.

Sincerely,

HILARY SHELTON,
Director.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE,
COUNTY, AND MUNICIPAL
EMPLOYEES,
AFL-CIO,

Washington, DC, February 25, 2005.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: I am writing on behalf of the 1.4 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) to urge you to vote against H.R. 27, the "Job Training Im-

provement Act of 2005" and to oppose any effort to expand the block grant authority in the bill along the lines of the Administration's "WIA Plus" proposal.

H.R. 27 fails to make improvements necessary to enhance the training and career opportunities of unemployed workers. Instead, the legislation completely eliminates the dislocated worker training program, undermines state rapid response systems, ends the federal-state labor exchange system, rolls back protections against religious discrimination in hiring by job training providers, and potentially undermines the stability of other important related programs. It also threatens the unemployment insurance-employment service partnership that has served the nation well for over 70 years.

We are especially concerned that H.R. 27 terminates the U.S. Employment Service (ES) system by folding it into a block grant with the WIA dislocated worker and adult training programs. Funded from the federal Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund, the ES has been a key part of the unemployment insurance (UI) system since its inception. Through state employment service agencies, the ES has administered the UI "work test" to determine whether UI claimants are actively seeking work in order to be eligible for UI benefits.

It is highly doubtful that local one-stop centers with multiple mandates could address the reemployment needs of UI claimants and the mandates of the UI law effectively. In addition, shifting the UI work test to one-stop centers, which private companies can operate, would privatize an important eligibility function for the UI program and set the stage for privatizing the administration of UI benefits. This is especially troubling in light of the importance of preserving the confidentiality of employer wage records.

Eliminating the Employment Service also advances a major objective of the Administration: the devolution of the federal unemployment insurance to the states, in effect ending this critical countercyclical program as a national system. Legislation to reduce the Federal Unemployment Tax (FUTA) by 75% over several years and turn the financing of UI operations back to the states has languished in Congress. H.R. 27 accomplishes one phase of this larger plan.

Block granting the dislocated and adult worker training programs with the ES eliminates the distinct objectives of each of these programs. Specifically, it ends targeted job training assistance for workers dislocated by off-shoring and other economic changes, pits different types of workers against each other, and it will lead to future funding reductions. It also replaces the current uniform statewide job service that matches employers and job seekers with a multiplicity of local programs that will have no incentive or ability to cooperate as a comprehensive labor exchange system.

AFSCME also strongly opposes provisions in H.R. 27 that give governors broad discretion to transfer resources from the WIA "partner programs" to pay for WIA infrastructure and core services costs.

By relying on funding transfers from these programs to guarantee resources for WIA infrastructure and core services, H.R. 27 will disrupt and weaken services provided by these non-WIA programs, which also will face substantial pressures for funding reductions in the next few years.

The infrastructure and related provisions begin the commingling of funds from these non-WIA programs and lay the foundation for future block granting of these programs. Any doubts that this is the long term objective should be dispelled by the Administration's current request to modify H.R. 27 to give governors authority to add up to five additional "partner programs" to the block

grant created in the legislation ("WIA Plus"). These programs include vocational rehabilitation, trade adjustment assistance, veterans employment and training programs, adult education and food stamp employment and training programs.

In addition to the block grant strategy in the legislation, H.R. 27 includes new demonstration authority for the Department of Labor to operate "personal reemployment account" (PRA) demonstrations. The PRAs would cap the cost of training that unemployment insurance recipients can receive and bar them from receiving free WIA services for a year after the PRA account is established. They represent a further contraction in the assistance the federal government provides workers, and, since the Labor Department already is running an experiment in seven states, they are entirely unnecessary.

Finally, the proposed PRAs or vouchers are complemented by the repeal of longstanding civil rights protections that prohibit religious-based employment discrimination by job training providers. This rollback of civil rights protections, designed to advance direct government funding of pervasively religious institutions, overturns decades of consensus on the need for non-discriminatory treatment in job training programs and should be rejected. We understand that Rep. Bobby Scott intends to offer an amendment that would restore to the bill the existing civil rights protections. We urge you to support this amendment.

In summary, H.R. 27 is a radical and partisan departure from previous workforce policy. It transforms the original one-stop idea of a better-coordinated workforce system into a mechanism for reducing resources and block granting programs in the future. It would undermine the role of Congress in national workforce policy, erode accountability for the expenditure of workforce funds, and retreat from important civil rights protections that have enjoyed bipartisan support for over 25 years. AFSCME strongly urges you to vote against H.R. 27.

Sincerely,

CHARLES M. LOVELESS,
Director of Legislation.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS,

Washington, DC, February 17, 2005.

Honorable JOHN BOEHNER,
Chairman, House Committee on Education and the Workforce, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BOEHNER: On Thursday, February 17, the House Education and Workforce Committee will consider H.R. 27 to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act. The AFL-CIO urges you to vote against this legislation, because it is a step backward in securing needed training and employment programs for our nation's unemployed and disadvantaged workers.

Good jobs that support families are the foundation of a strong economy and a strong nation, and creating and sustaining good jobs is the number one priority for Americans. Effective and meaningful job training programs and income support for jobless workers combined with job search assistance are key components of a comprehensive jobs strategy. H.R. 27 does nothing to create and sustain good jobs in America. At the same time it consolidates, block grants and cuts the funding for Workforce Investment Act programs designed to help unemployed workers and disadvantaged adults.

In particular, we are concerned about the following provisions in H.R. 27:

ELIMINATION OF THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

The AFL-CIO opposes repeal of the Wagner-Peyser Act, called for under H.R. 27. Re-

pealing the Wagner-Peyser Act eliminates the 60-year-old United States Employment Service (ES), a federal-state partnership that maintains a nationwide, free, publicly administered labor exchange matching job seekers and employers. It is also the first step toward dismantling the critical and historic federal role in the nation's unemployment insurance (UI) system, turning it over entirely to the states. Repealing the Wagner-Peyser Act and block granting ES funds will reduce, privatize and voucherize free public labor exchange programs.

WIA BLOCK GRANT

H.R. 27 consolidates into a single block grant the WIA adult and dislocated worker programs with the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program and reemployment services for unemployment insurance recipients. In doing so, it destroys both the dislocated worker program, which has provided assistance to experienced workers permanently dislocated from their jobs, and the statewide job service, which provides a uniform statewide system for matching employers and jobseekers. The block grant will pit different types of workers against each other for assistance and lead to future funding reductions.

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

H.R. 27 gives Governors broad discretion to transfer additional resources from the WIA partner programs to pay for WIA infrastructure and WIA core services costs—without any assurance that more training would result. By relying on funding transfers from these programs, H.R. 27, guarantees WIA one-stop funding at the expense of disrupting and weakening services provided by these non-WIA programs. A more effective and simple solution to ensuring adequate training services would be to require that a certain percentage of WIA funds be used for training as provided in previous job training programs and to create a separate WIA funding stream for one-stop operations, if necessary.

PERSONAL REEMPLOYMENT ACCOUNTS

H.R. 27 includes a demonstration program for the Secretary to conduct "Personal Reemployment Account" (PRA) demonstrations even though the Department of Labor recently initiated a PRA demonstration without strong interest among the states. Unlike current WIA training programs, the PRAs would limit the cost of training that an unemployment insurance recipient can receive and would bar that individual from WIA training services for a year after the PRA account is established. This is the wrong way to go. With long-term unemployment at historically high levels, there is a much greater need for continued unemployment benefits for the long-term unemployed who have found it so difficult to become reemployed.

RELIGIOUS-BASED EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

We are particularly concerned that this legislation would remove key civil rights protections against religious discrimination in publicly-funded programs. H.R. 27 repeals longstanding civil rights protections that prohibit religious-based employment discrimination by job training providers.

FUNDING

Since taking office, President Bush has made real cuts in job training and assistance programs to help unemployed and underemployed workers, including Workforce Investment Act programs for adults and dislocated workers and the Employment Service. In inflation-adjusted dollars, these proposed cuts total almost \$1.9 billion.

If implemented, the Bush WIA block grant proposals will cut \$284 million in real dollars

from WIA and Employment Service programs. If implemented, the new "WIA Plus" block grant proposal will cut \$354 million in real dollars from current TAA, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, Veterans Training and Food Stamp Employment and Training Programs. The Bush block grant proposals will mean a total of \$638 million in real cuts for existing programs.

"WIA PLUS" PROPOSALS

Though not part of HR 27, at present, the Bush Administration has proposed a "WIA Plus" initiative that would allow Governors to merge five additional programs into the WIA block grant: Trade Adjustment Assistance; Vocational Rehabilitation; Food Stamps Employment and Training Programs; Adult Education and Veterans Employment and Training Programs.

The legislation allows the Governor to: Ignore the requirements of each statute authorizing these programs. Treat individuals in different parts of the state differently. Consolidate reporting so that no information or tracking is provided on the nature and extent of services to special groups.

The "WIA Plus" proposal should be opposed because it: Bypasses existing public administration requirements permitting these programs to be contracted out. Eliminates the obligation to provide long-term training and income support to workers whose jobs have been outsourced or lost to foreign trade. Eliminates job training and other workforce assistance to unemployed, disabled and homeless veterans and eliminates state veterans employment specialists and disabled veterans employment specialists. Eliminates the specialized counseling and customized help for the disabled provided through state vocational rehabilitation agencies. Forces those in need to compete for a declining share of resources. Contains no assurance that individuals will receive the same quality of service.

For all of these reasons the AFL-CIO urges you to vote against H.R. 27 and oppose any amendments that would implement the Bush Administration's "WIA Plus" program.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM SAMUEL,
Director, Department of Legislation.

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN,
Washington, DC, March 2, 2005.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the more than 600,000 members of The Human Rights Campaign, we urge support for the Scott Amendment to the Job Training Improvement Act (HR 27) in order to protect workers against religious discrimination in federally-funded job training programs. This Amendment would restore current law and continue to protect critical civil rights protections thus preventing the alteration of a non discrimination policy that has been in place since it was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. Passing this bill without such amendment will result in religious organizations being able to use Federal money to discriminate based on religion under this Act even when engaging in purely secular job training endeavors.

Absent the adoption of a civil rights amendment on the House floor, we urge you to vote "No" on final passage of H.R. 27.

The 1998 Workforce Investment Act consolidated earlier job-training programs and simply recodified the nondiscrimination provision included in the original Job Training Partnership Act of 1982. The 1998 legislation, which included this nondiscrimination provision, received strong bipartisan support from both the House and Senate at the time of its passage in the 105th Congress. Since its inclusion in the 1982 JTPA, it has enjoyed bipartisan support. This twenty-one year old

provision has worked well since the inception of this program, allowing religious organizations to provide government-funded services while maintaining America's bedrock commitment to protecting both civil rights and religious liberty.

In general, we do not object to faith-based organizations providing employment-related services or other social services provided that public funds are not used to discriminate. However as the Nation's largest gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender civil rights organization, we summarily oppose using Federal funds to discriminate on any basis, including religion, which we have witnessed used as a proxy for sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination.

We strongly urge you to support the Scott Amendment and oppose the unjustified rollback of civil rights protections currently found in H.R. 27. We believe that tax payers should never fund discrimination and urge your support in efforts to restore these important protections.

As always, should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Shelley Simpson at 202-216-1586.

Sincerely,

DAVID M. SMITH,
Vice President for Policy & Strategy.
CHRISTOPHER LABONTE,
Legislative Director.

THE COALITION AGAINST
RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION,

February 23, 2005.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: We, the undersigned religious, civil rights, labor, education, health and advocacy organizations are writing to urge you to support Scott amendment to restore critical civil rights protections to the Job Training Improvement Act (H.R. 27), in order to protect workers against religious discrimination in federally-funded job training programs. Since their inception in 1982, these job-training programs have included important civil rights protections against employment discrimination based on religion in programs that receive federal funds. Absent the adoption of a civil rights amendment on the House floor, we urge you to vote "No" on final passage of H.R. 27.

The 1998 Workforce Investment Act consolidated these earlier job-training programs and simply recodified the nondiscrimination provision included in the original Job Training Partnership Act of 1982. The 1998 legislation, which included this nondiscrimination provision, received strong bipartisan support from both the House and Senate at the time of its passage in the 105th Congress. Since its inclusion in the 1982 JTPA, it has enjoyed bipartisan support. The original Job Training Partnership Act was sponsored by then Senator Dan Quayle, and was reported out of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee then chaired by Senator Orrin Hatch. Finally, President Ronald Reagan signed into law the Job Training Partnership Act, which contains the very same civil rights provision that H.R. 27 now seeks to repeal as it applies to religious organizations. This 23 year old provision has worked well since the inception of this program, allowing religious organizations to provide government-funded services while maintaining America's bedrock commitment to protecting both civil rights and religious liberty.

We strongly urge you to support the Scott civil rights amendment to H.R. 27 to restore current civil rights law and to oppose the unjustified and unnecessary assault in H.R. 27 on our nation's commitment to eradicating employment discrimination in government-funded jobs.

Sincerely,
AFL-CIO.

American Association of University Women.

American Civil Liberties Union.
American Counseling Association.
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO.
American Federation of Teachers.
American Humanist Association.
American Jewish Committee.
American Jewish Congress.
Americans for Religious Liberty.
Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

Anti-Defamation League.
Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.
Central Conference of American Rabbis.
Episcopal Church, USA.
Equal Partners in Faith.
Frances Kissling, Catholics for a Free Choice.

General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church.

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America.

Human Rights Campaign.
Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.
Legal Momentum (formerly NOW Legal Defense).

NAACP.
National Association of Social Workers.
National Council of Jewish Women.
National Education Association.
National Head Start Association.
National PTA.
OMB Watch.
People For the American Way.
Presbyterian Church (USA), Washington Office.

Service Employees International Union SEIU, AFL-CIO.

Texas Faith Network.
Texas Freedom Network.
The Interfaith Alliance.
The Secular Coalition for America.
Union for Reform Judaism.
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations.

United Auto Workers.
United Church of Christ Justice & Witness Ministries.

Women of Reform Judaism.

BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE,
Washington, DC, February 25, 2005.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: This week you will be asked to consider the Job Training and Improvement Act (H.R. 27). We write to request your support for the Scott amendment to restore critical civil rights protections. Without the adoption of this amendment, we urge you to reject this legislation because it would allow religious employment discrimination in positions funded with federal dollars.

Some religious organizations qualify for an exemption to the ban on religious discrimination in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. We support Title VII's exemption for churches and other religious organizations. This exemption, when applied to privately funded activities and enterprises, appropriately protects the church's autonomy and its ability to perform its mission. Courts have interpreted this exemption not only to apply to clergy, but also to all of the religious organization's employees including support staff, and not only to religious affiliations, but also to religious beliefs and practices. While we support this exemption, we oppose its application in a publicly funded context.

Without the Scott civil rights amendment, H.R. 27 would allow tax-funded employment discrimination on the basis of religion. Allowing government to subsidize religious discrimination with tax dollars is arguably unconstitutional, and in any case, an unconscionable advancement of religion that si-

multaneously turns back the clock on civil rights.

Religion has flourished in this country since its founding precisely because the institutional spheres of church and state have operated separately. This type of legislation violates the separation of church and state and, therefore, threatens religion. We ask you to oppose H.R. 27 and provide protections from religious employment discrimination in federally funded job training programs.

Sincerely,

K. HOLLYN HOLLMAN.

AFRICAN AMERICAN MINISTERS,
Washington, DC, February 25, 2005.

House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: As pastors and leaders of predominately African American congregations across the country, we urge you to protect the civil rights and religious freedom of all Americans and oppose the discriminatory provisions in the Job Training Improvement Act (H.R. 27). African American religious leaders and activists have worked tirelessly over the past decades to ensure civil rights protections. However, this bill would repeal these longstanding civil rights protections designed to protect workers against religious discrimination in federally-funded job training programs.

We believe that maintaining the separation between church and state is fundamental to maintaining the religious freedoms of all Americans. Therefore, as leaders of our respective congregations, we cannot compromise our principles by supporting legislation that allows religiously-affiliated organizations, to discriminate with Federal taxpayers' dollars. The role of the church is to promote our religious teachings, and this should not be confused with religious intolerance or discrimination.

Since 1982, anti-discrimination requirements have been included in the Job Training Partnership Act, re-titled the Workforce Investment Act in 1998. It is important to recognize that religiously affiliated organizations have not requested an exemption. Furthermore, there is no need to exempt religious organizations from these anti-discrimination laws. Houses of worship can create independent 501(c)(3) organizations in order to separate religious content from the provision of services. This allows our religious organizations to maintain their religious identity without government interference, while also providing needed services in the community.

Not only is the exemption in H.R. 27 unnecessary, it is also detrimental to the fundamental protections against discrimination based on one's religion that are absolutely central to our democracy. The current language in H.R. 27 does not protect the civil rights cherished in our communities, but instead encourages federally-funded discrimination.

For these reasons, we ask that you prevent unnecessary and unacceptable religious discrimination and show your commitment to upholding critical civil rights protections within H.R. 27.

Sincerely,

Reverend TIMOTHY McDONALD.

BOARD MEMBERS

Rev. Wendell Anthony, Fellowship Chapel United Church of Christ, Detroit, MI.

Rev. Dr. FLOYD W. DAVIS, High Street Baptist Church, Roanoke, VA.

Elder Kevin A. Ford, St. Paul UCGC, Chicago, IL.

Rev. Julius C. Hope, New Grace Missionary Baptist Church, Highland Park, MI.

Rev. Dr. Arnold W. Howard, Enon Baptist Church, Baltimore, MD.

Rev. Leonard B. Jackson, First A.M.E. Church, Los Angeles, CA.

Rev. Dr. Clarence Pemberton, Jr., The New Hope Baptist Church, Philadelphia, PA.

Rev. James B. Sampson, First New Zion Missionary Baptist Church, Jacksonville, FL.

Rev. L. Charles Stovall, Camp Wisdom UMC, Dallas, TX.

Rev. Dr. Rolen Womack, Jr., Progressive Baptist Church, Milwaukee, WI.

Rev. Albert Love, Love In Action Ministries, 5410 Skyview Drive, SW., Atlanta, GA.

Rev. Robert Shine, Berachah Baptist Church, 2043 Eastburn Ave., Philadelphia, PA.

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION,

Washington, DC, February 25, 2005.

Re the Job Training Improvement Act (H.R. 27) Creates an Unconstitutional Loophole Allowing Government-Funded Religious Discrimination.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The American Civil Liberties Union strongly urges you to support the Scott amendment to the Job Training Improvement Act (H.R. 27) to restore current law and to continue to defend critical civil rights protections designed to protect employees against religious discrimination in federally-funded job training programs. Since their inception in 1982, these federally-funded job training programs have included important civil rights protections against employment discrimination. H.R. 27 will create an unconstitutional loophole to the enforcement of this longstanding prohibition against government-funded religious discrimination in Federal job training programs.

H.R. 27 CHANGES LONGSTANDING CIVIL RIGHTS LAW THAT WAS NEVER CONTROVERSIAL

H.R. 27 explicitly authorizes federally-funded religious organizations receiving funds from the Act's job training programs to discriminate against their employees based on religion. Current law prohibits participants in Federal job training programs from discriminating based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief. 29 U.S.C. 2938 (a)(2). H.R. 27 would allow taxpayer dollars to fund religious organizations that discriminate against their employees in the delivery of federally-funded services.

The civil rights provision barring federally-funded religious discrimination has never been controversial. In fact, the provision was first included in the Federal job training legislation that then-Senator Dan Quayle sponsored, which passed through a committee chaired by Senator Orrin Hatch, and was signed by President Ronald Reagan. Throughout its 21-year history, the civil rights provision has not been an obstacle to the participation of religiously-affiliated organizations in Federal job training programs. In fact, many religiously-affiliated organizations participate in the programs and comply with the same civil rights provision that apply to everyone else.

THERE IS LITTLE SUPPORT FOR THE ANTI-CIVIL RIGHTS PROVISION IN THE SENATE

In the 108th Congress, the Senate passed its version of the faith-based initiative after stripping out any provisions that could have created any special advantages for federally-funded religious organizations. The sponsors of the legislation realized that a majority of the Senate supported the eradication of religious discrimination in federally-funded employment positions—and did not want to roll-back any civil rights protections. The civil rights community joins a significant portion of the religious community in urging

the House to make the same decision to oppose Federal taxpayer support for religious discrimination by federally-funded employers.

H.R. 27 WOULD REVERSE THE GOVERNMENT'S LONG STANDING PROTECTION AGAINST FEDERALLY FUNDED DISCRIMINATION

H.R. 27 attacks the very core of civil rights protections historically supported by the federal government. More than 60 years ago, one of the first success of the modern civil rights movement was a decision by President Franklin Roosevelt to bar federal contractors from discriminating based on race, religion, or national origin. From that first presidential decision through the Supreme Court's decision allowing the Federal government to deny special tax advantages to Bob Jones University, which claimed a religious right to retain the tax benefits while pursuing racist practices, the Federal government has made the eradication of federally funded discrimination among its highest priorities.

In *Bob Jones Univ. v. United States*, 461 U.S. 574 (1983), the Supreme Court held that Federal government could deny a religiously-run university tax benefits because the university imposed a racially discriminatory anti-miscegenation policy. *Id.* at 605. The Court decided that the Federal government's compelling interest in eradicating racial discrimination in education superceded any burden on the university's religious exercise of enforcing a religiously-motivated ban on students interracial dating. *Id.* at 604.

H.R. 27 would allow a religious organization, such as Bob Jones University, that discriminates based on religion, to participate in Federal job training programs. In a disturbing result, Bob Jones University could be denied tax benefits because of its racist policies toward its students, but could receive Federal job training money under H.R. 27 to discriminate against employees working in the Federal job training program—simply because the employees do not meet Bob Jones University's religious tests. Moreover, in the many religious organizations in which most, if not all, of the adherents are of a single race, the result of federally-funded religious discrimination will effectively be federal funds going to the employment of persons of a single race.

The Federal government clearly has a compelling interest in applying the Workforce Investment Act's current civil rights provision to everyone receiving federal funds—including religious organizations seeking to discriminate on the basis of religion in hiring persons to work in Federal job training programs. H.R. 27 is inconsistent with the leading Supreme Court case on the use of federal funds by religious organizations that discriminate.

There is no meaningful difference between the government prohibiting tax benefits to organizations that discriminate based on race and the Workforce Investment Act's statutory prohibition on discrimination based on religion in Federal job training programs. In fact, the United States itself—during the current Administration—squarely rejected the proposition that intentional religious discrimination gets less protection under the Equal Protection Clause than intentional racial discrimination. In its October 26, 2001 brief defending the religion prong of Title VII from an Eleventh Amendment attack, the United States stated that “[c]ontrary to Defendant’s contention that the Supreme Court has ‘distinguished claims involving differential treatment on the basis of race and speech from those involving religion,’ there can be no doubt that the Equal Protection Clause subjects State governments engaging in intentional discrimina-

tion on the basis of religion to strict scrutiny.’” Brief of Intervenor United States in *Endres v. Indiana State Police* (N.D. Ind. Oct. 26, 2001) (brief is available on www.usdoj.gov). Congress should not now take the position that it cannot or will not enforce a civil rights ban on federal funds going to an organization claiming a right to discriminate based on religion when the Supreme Court specifically authorized the United States to enforce a civil rights ban on federal tax benefits going to an organization making a directly analogous religious exercise claim to discriminate based on race. Thus, the sponsors’ statement that the Congress has no duty to fully enforce the non-discrimination statute is contrary to law—and abandons one of the seminal decisions in civil rights, namely *Bob Jones Univ.*

H.R. 27 IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL

H.R. 27 abets unconstitutional employment discrimination based on religion. Its exemption of religious organizations from the prohibition on religious discrimination in the program is contrary to constitutional law and will open the door to government-funded discrimination.

Proponents of allowing religious organizations to use Federal funds to discriminate against their employees argue that their position is consistent with a provision in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that generally permits religious organizations to prefer members of their own religion when making employment decisions. However, that provision does not consider whether federally-funded religious groups can discriminate with federal taxpayer dollars. Moreover, although the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the religious organization exemption in *Title VII, Corporation of Presiding Bishop v. Amos*, 483 U.S. 327, 336-39 (1987), the Court has never considered whether it is unconstitutional for a religious organization to discriminate based on religion when making employment decisions in programs that the government finances to provide governmental services.

Several courts have considered whether a religious organization can retain its Title VII exemption after receipt of indirect Federal funds, *e.g.*, *Siegel v. Truett-McConnell College, Inc.*, 13 F. Supp.2d 1335, 1344 (N.D. Ga. 1994) (clarifying that its decision permitting a religious university to invoke the Title VII exemption is because the government aid is directed to the students rather than the employer), but only one federal court has decided the constitutionality of retaining the Title VII exemption after receipt of direct Federal funds, *Dodge v. Salvation Army*, 1989 WL 53857 (S.D. Miss. 1989). In that decision, the court held that the religious employer’s claim of its Title VII exemption for a position “substantially, if not exclusively” funded with government money was unconstitutional because it had “a primary effect of advancing religion and creating excessive government entanglement.” *Id.* The analysis applied by the court in *Dodge* should apply with equal force to the Workforce Investment Act programs that would provide direct Federal funds to religious organizations.

In addition to causing the Establishment Clause violation cited by the court in *Dodge*, H.R. 27 would also subject the government and any religious employer invoking the right to discriminate with Federal dollars to liability for violation of constitutional rights under the Free Exercise Clause and the Equal Protection Clause. Although mere receipt of government funds is insufficient to trigger constitutional obligations on private

persons, a close nexus between the government and the private person's activity can result in the courts treating the private person as a state actor. *Rendell-Baker v. Kohn*, 457 U.S. 830 (1982).

It is beyond question that the government itself cannot prefer members of a particular religion to work in a federally-funded program. The Equal Protection Clause subjects governments engaging in intentional discrimination on the basis of religion to strict scrutiny. *E.g.*, *United States v. Batchelder*, 442 U.S. 114, 125 n.9 (1979); *City of New Orleans v. Duke*, 427 U.S. 297, 303 (1976). No government could itself engage in the religious discrimination in employment accommodated and encouraged by the proposed rule's employment provision. Thus, the government would be in violation of the Free Exercise Clause and the Equal Protection Clause for knowingly funding religious discrimination.

Of course, a private organization is not subject to the requirements of the Free Exercise Clause and the Equal Protection Clause unless the organization is considered a state actor for a specific purpose. *West v. Atkins*, 487 U.S. 42, 52 (1988). The Supreme Court recently outlined the conditions necessary to establish that there is a sufficient nexus between the government and the private person to find that the private person is a state actor for purposes of compliance with constitutional requirements on certain decisions made by participants in the government program:

[S]tate action may be found if, though only if, there is such a 'close nexus between the State and the challenged action' that seemingly private behavior 'may be fairly treated as that of the State itself.' . . . We have, for example, held that a challenged activity may be state action when it results from the State's exercise of 'coercive power,' when the state provides 'significant encouragement, either overt or covert,' or when a private actor operates as a 'willful participant in joint activity with the State or its agents' . . .

Brentwood Academy v. Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, 121 S. Ct. 924, (2001) (citations omitted).

The extraordinary role that the current Administration—and the sponsors of H.R. 27—have taken in accommodating, fostering, and encouraging religious organizations to discriminate based on religion when hiring for federally-funded programs creates the nexus for constitutional duties to be imposed on the provider, in addition to the requirements already placed on government itself. The clear intent of the change in the civil rights provision in the Workforce Investment Act is to encourage certain providers receiving federal funds to discriminate based on religion.

The H.R. 27 provision allowing government-funded religious discrimination is part of a growing pattern of congressional, presidential, and regulatory actions taken specifically for the purpose of accommodating, fostering, and encouraging federally-funded private organizations to discriminate in ways that would unquestionably be unconstitutional if engaged in by the federal government itself. For example, in December of last year, President Bush signed Executive Order 13279, which amended an earlier executive order, which had provided more than 60 years of protection against discrimination based on religion by federal contractors. The Bush Order provides an exemption for religious organizations contracting with the government to discriminate in employment based on religion. In addition, the federal

government is simultaneously proposing regulations to allow religious organizations to discriminate based on religion in employment for federal programs involving substance abuse counseling, welfare reform, housing, and veterans benefits.

Although religious employers enjoy an exemption from Title VII allowing them to apply religious tests when hiring for positions funded with their own money, the Constitution requires that direct receipt and administration of federal funds removes that exemption. In addition, the federal government itself has constitutional obligations to refrain from religious discrimination or from establishing a religion. H.R. 27 fails to meet any of those constitutional mandates.

For these reasons, the ACLU strongly urges you to support the Scott amendment to H.R. 27. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and please do not hesitate to call Terri Schroeder at 202-675-2324 if you have any questions regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

LAURA W. MURPHY,
Director.

TERRI A. SCHROEDER,
Senior Lobbyist.

AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION
OF CHURCH AND STATE,
Washington, DC, February 24, 2005.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: Americans United for Separation of Church and State strongly urges you to support the Scott amendment to the Job Training Improvement Act (H.R. 27). The Scott amendment would restore longstanding civil rights protections in the Workforce Investment Act ("WIA"), which guards workers against discrimination in WIA-funded job training programs. Absent adoption of the Scott Amendment on the House floor, Americans United strongly urges you to vote "No" on final passage of H.R. 27.

Americans United represents more than 75,000 individual members throughout the fifty states, as well as cooperating houses of worship and other religious bodies committed to the preservation of religious liberty. The civil rights rollback contained in H.R. 27 would allow religious organizations operating government-funded programs under WIA to discriminate in employment on the basis of religion, religious practice, or religious beliefs. H.R. 27 thus has serious implications for the protection of civil rights and religious liberty, and must be opposed.

Section 128 of H.R. 27, entitled "Non-Discrimination," exempts religious organizations that receive Federal funds from the prohibition against discrimination on the basis of religion that is standard practice for all other organizations receiving funding under WIA. Since its inception in 1982, when it was called the Job Training Partnership Act ("JTPA"), this program has served as the largest federal employment training service in the nation, serving dislocated workers, homeless individuals, economically disadvantaged adults, youth and older workers. When signed into law by President Ronald Reagan, this program contained the very language protecting against religious discrimination that H.R. 27 seeks to repeal as to religious organizations.

The 1998 WIA consolidated these earlier job-training programs and simply recodified the nondiscrimination provision included in the original JTPA. The 1998 legislation, which included this nondiscrimination provision, received strong bipartisan support from both the House and Senate at the time of its passage in the 105th Congress. The original JTPA was sponsored by then-Senator Dan

Quayle, and was reported out of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee then chaired by Senator Orrin Hatch. Since its inclusion in the 1982 JTPA, it has enjoyed bipartisan support. This 23-year-old provision has worked well since the inception of this program, allowing religious organizations to provide government-funded services while maintaining America's bedrock commitment to protecting both civil rights and religious liberty.

Americans United strongly urges you to support the Scott amendment and to oppose the unjustified and unnecessary assault in H.R. 27 on our nation's longstanding commitment to eradicating employment discrimination in government-funded jobs. If you have any questions about H.R. 27 or would like further information on any other issue of importance to Americans United, please do not hesitate to contact Aaron D. Schuham, Legislative Director, at (202) 466-3234, extension 240.

Sincerely,

Rev. BARRY W. LYNN,
Executive Director.

TAIWAN STRAIT RELATIONS

HON. FRANK D. LUCAS

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, On December 29 of last year, the Standing Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress took a highly provocative action when it voted to submit an "Anti-Secession Law" to the full Congress which convenes on March 5.

The text of this proposed law was not made public, but there can be no doubt about its intent. It is intended to create in China's national law the legal justification for a military attack against Taiwan.

The law would spell out a range of activities which, if taken by the Taiwanese people and their democratically elected leaders, would legally constitute secession. Many of these activities, such as Constitutional reform and popular referenda, are the mainstay of any democracy. Yet the Chinese would use them as a legal excuse for a military attack.

Mr. Speaker, this proposed "anti-secession" legislation which the National People's Congress plans to take up in March, is a significant and dangerous development. It goes far beyond the usual bellicose verbal threats of Chinese leaders. It would use Chinese national law as a rationale for military aggression against its democratic neighbor.

The United States, for more than 25 years since the passage of the Taiwan Relations Act, has made clear its determination that the future of Taiwan must be decided only by peaceful means, not by force of arms, and that any final determination must be in accord with the wishes of the people of Taiwan.

These are the fundamental building blocks upon which the future of the Taiwan Strait must rest: peace, and mutual consent between both sides. I urge the leadership of the PRC to put aside this ill-considered law as inimical to both peace and goodwill.

ADMINISTRATION'S BUDGET CUTS
TO AMTRAK

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I wish to discuss the Administration's proposed budget cuts to Amtrak.

I want to be clear from the very beginning: if the Administration's proposed cuts go into effect, Amtrak will not survive. And, in many cases, the millions of people who depend on Amtrak's services will be left with no reliable means of rail transportation. This would result in a serious problem for rail passengers, and represents a tremendous misjudgment by this Administration.

The Administration has made clear its position on Amtrak. The result of their cuts to Amtrak would "lead to the elimination of operations." I am concerned that the "elimination of operations" would result in a significant hardship for the people of southern West Virginia, and Amtrak riders everywhere.

Practically speaking, the millions of passengers who depend on Amtrak's services would be stranded. Those who can afford a car or plane ticket would descend on our already heavily congested roads and airports. Those without the means to purchase an airline ticket or pay for the ever-increasing price of gasoline—and those in rural communities without direct access to airline or highway travel—would be left twisting in the wind.

In West Virginia alone, Amtrak served nearly 51,000 passengers in 2004. Two of the largest cities in the 3rd Congressional District, Huntington and Hinton, represent nearly half that total with nearly 24,000 riders. In addition, Amtrak pumped \$3.7 million into the state's economy—which helped foster job creation and economic development opportunities for West Virginians. The economic impact of Amtrak on my state, and states throughout the country, cannot be overlooked.

Importantly, Amtrak is making great strides to improve itself from within. Capital investment is up substantially; a new and detailed five-year plan has been developed; unprofitable services have been eliminated; and significant overhauls and needed maintenance operations have been undertaken. And Amtrak's ridership has, and continues to, increase.

I urge this House, this Congress and this Administration to recognize the improvements Amtrak is making, the need Amtrak fills for millions of Americans and the importance of Amtrak on America's transportation infrastructure.

IN MEMORY OF MAGDALENO
DUENAS

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life of Magdaleno Duenas, a World War II military hero who passed away on February 27 at the age of 90.

We honor and thank him for his courageous military service and the sacrifices he made for

our nation, as well as his lifelong struggle on behalf of Filipino veterans of World War II. His life is a symbol of the struggle for total recognition of Filipino veterans and a sad reminder of a shameful page in the history of our nation.

Born and raised in the Philippines, Mr. Duenas joined the 101st Infantry in 1941. In 1943, he joined the guerilla forces in the mountains and was captured by the Japanese while procuring food for American soldiers. Under questioning, Mr. Duenas denied any knowledge of the whereabouts of the American soldiers. He escaped, and helped 10 U.S. soldiers escape the Japanese POW camp.

Mr. Duenas came to the United States to claim his U.S. citizenship and military benefits, and fell into the hands of an abusive landlord in Richmond, Calif. He and 16 other veterans were held in captivity, beaten, chained and fed dog food, while their landlord kept their monthly government checks.

After being rescued, his experience received news coverage. It brought public attention to the plight of elderly Filipino veterans who came to America expecting to receive previously promised veterans' pensions for their honorable U.S. military service, but instead learned that Congress had stripped them of those benefits and recognition.

Thousands of Filipino veterans came to the U.S. seeking equity and have waited 60 years for the promise to be honored. After fighting for more than half a century for their right to U.S. citizenship, other issues related to their health and recognition remain to be addressed. Many live alone in poverty. It is a national tragedy to see our veterans suffer from neglect, despair and hopelessness.

Mr. Duenas moved to San Francisco's Tenderloin district in 1993, where he was vibrant member of our community. This diminutive, gentle man worked tirelessly to improve the experience of Filipino Veterans in the Bay Area.

All these years, he waited for the recognition of the U.S. Government for the services he rendered during WWII. He was featured in two documentaries: *Tears of Old and Second Class Citizens*. He died still waiting for the full equity bill to be passed by the U.S. Congress. We will not rest until the equity bill becomes law.

Mr. Speaker, we will never forget his struggle on the frontlines of the battlefield and on the frontlines of the fight for equity for Filipino veterans. Mr. Duenas' courage and resolve moves all of us to continue the fight for justice in our country for all people.

We will never forget the sacrifices Mr. Duenas and other Filipino veterans made for our freedom. We must dedicate ourselves as a nation to ensure that America fulfills its moral obligation to those who pay the high price for our freedom.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE
JESUS GARZA

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important contributions of Judge

Jesus Garza in Laredo, TX in my Congressional District.

Judge Jesus Garza was born and raised in Laredo. He is a product of LISD and graduated from J.W. Nixon High School in 1977. Upon graduation he enrolled at the University of Texas and earned a Bachelor of Journalism in 1981. In 1984 he received his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law in Houston and was licensed to practice law in the State of Texas in 1985.

Judge Garza was appointed Associate Municipal Court Judge in 1984 and served until 1985 at which time he decided to run for Justice of the Peace. He ran a successful campaign and took office in 1986 and served for 6 years.

In 1993 Judge Garza, "Chuy" as he is known to his friends, was voted into the newly created Webb County County Court at Law #2 and is presently presiding over his second term.

In 1994 Mayor Saul Ramirez appointed Judge Garza to the Economic Advisory Council and selected Co-Chairman by its members.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize County Court of Law Judge Jesus Garza.

IN HONOR OF MARIA PLASENCIA

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Maria Plascencia, a beloved San Diego activist. Maria passed away on February 1, 2005. She is survived by her parents, Alma and Jesse Plascencia of Crown Point, Indiana, and brother, Jesse Jr. of Schererville, Indiana.

If an issue involved equality and social justice, Maria was among the first to rally her fellow feminists. Last April, as an official and activist in the San Diego Democratic Club, she organized a 500-member San Diego delegation that joined the March for Women's Lives in Washington, DC. After organizing San Diego's effort in the March of Women's Lives—which drew about a million people to Washington—Maria was elected to NOW's national board.

To those who knew her, bringing hundreds of San Diegians for the march in Washington, D.C. exemplified her uncompromising beliefs and her ability to galvanize grass-roots support. Her colleagues describe Maria as energetic and passionate about her beliefs. A diabetic, Maria did not let her condition stand in the way of pursuing her interests or from leading an active life.

In her role as an activist and in her job as an auditor for General Electric Commercial Finance, Maria traveled extensively. She enjoyed meeting new people and seeing the country. Cities and small towns alike fascinated Maria, delighting in each one's population and character.

Maria grew up in Crown Point, Indiana. Her father, a steel mill worker, had come to the United States from Mexico as a young man. Maria became the first member of her family to attend college and graduated with a degree in accounting from the University of Dayton.

Her career brought her to San Diego more than a decade ago. A longtime feminist and

supporter of NOW, she jumped wholeheartedly into local politics. Through her volunteering, Maria developed contacts that brought her into the San Diego Democratic Club. Called "a staple of the work crew," Maria quickly distinguished herself through her participation. She was elected Chairwoman of the Women's Caucus in 1999 and Executive Vice President in 2001.

Maria has left behind a legacy. The President of the San Diego Democratic Club had the following to say, "As we do things within our club—increasing its diversity, making it more woman-friendly—it will be in no small part due to the memory of Maria."

Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my deepest sympathy to Maria Plasencia's family by celebrating her life and contributions to the San Diego community. Maria was admired by so many for her dedication to women's issues and the friendly and effective manner she brought to activities. She will be greatly missed.

IN SUPPORT OF PASSENGER RAIL

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to disagree with the President's proposal to eliminate federal funding for passenger rail. On February 7, President Bush presented a budget proposal to Congress that contained no funding for Amtrak. As explanation, the provision states: "With no subsidies, Amtrak would quickly enter bankruptcy, which would likely lead to the elimination of inefficient operations and the reorganization of the railroad through bankruptcy procedures. Ultimately, a more rational passenger rail system would emerge, with service on routes where there is real ridership demand and support from local governments—such as the Northeast Corridor."

Last year, Amtrak carried 25 million passengers on 22,000 miles of track with approximately 20,000 employees, including close to 2,000 employees based in my state of Delaware. In addition to operating 300 daily intercity trains, close to 850,000 daily rail commuters throughout the country also depend on operating agreements with Amtrak. While the Administration's goal is apparently to improve passenger rail by shutting it down, I surmise that eliminating federal funding for rail transportation would jeopardize the livelihood, and threaten the safety, of millions of riders and thousands of communities who depend on Amtrak.

No country in the world operates an effective passenger rail system without government subsidies. In fact, countries such as Germany and Japan, which have well-developed passenger rail networks but much smaller populations, invest \$3–4 billion annually, over 20 percent of their total transportation spending. In contrast, Amtrak's appropriation of \$1.217 billion last year equaled only two percent of the Department of Transportation's \$59 billion budget.

Directly, or indirectly, the United States subsidizes all our forms of transportation, with rail receiving the least amount by far. Other modes of transportation operate on predominantly federally owned or federally assisted in-

frastructure, and rely on government-supported security, research, and traffic controllers. The U.S. Transportation Security Administration alone received \$5.2 billion in federal funding for security this year, yet Amtrak sustains its own security force. Unlike aviation, highways, and transit, there is no dedicated fund for investing in passenger rail development.

For fiscal year 2005, the Administration proposed \$900 million for Amtrak and budgeted \$1.4 billion for each year thereafter. It is apparent that the current proposal to cut funding for passenger rail represents a drastic and dangerous turnaround in the President's policy. Seeking no funds for direct Amtrak expenses and ceding control of the railroad to a bankruptcy trustee, whose sole legal responsibility is to Amtrak's creditors, would put the future of rail travel on very uncertain footing.

Furthermore, the proposed budget provides \$360 million to continue commuter rail traffic on the Northeast Corridor, but only after Amtrak ceases operations. As some of my colleagues have recognized, the Administration's proposal anticipates a period during which all Amtrak services, including those on the Northeast Corridor, would be stopped. With over 1,700 trains operating over some portion of the Washington-Boston route each day, states would be devastated if forced to handle the disruption and congestion that terminating Amtrak service would trigger.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, while the President's plan undoubtedly includes some recommendations worth considering, the facts are clear; Amtrak needs federal support to survive, just like highways, ports, and airlines. I am one of many Republicans in Congress eager to improve the safety, efficiency, and ridership of passenger rail. Putting Amtrak on the chopping block directly contradicts this goal. Dozens of reform proposals exist without jeopardizing the viability of Amtrak and they should be openly debated in Congress.

H.R. 1042, THE NET WORTH AMENDMENT FOR CREDIT UNION ACT

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, earlier today, I, along with 15 of my colleagues introduced H.R. 1042, the Net Worth Amendment For Credit Unions Act. This amendment to Section 216 of the Federal Credit Union Act (12 USC 1790d(0)(2)(A)) redefines the term "net worth" for Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) purposes for credit unions. This legislation is needed in order to avoid an unintended consequence caused by an accounting change that the Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB") is about to promulgate, requiring credit unions to utilize the "purchase method" of accounting rather than the "pooling of interests" method of accounting to account for credit union mergers.

This amendment does not affect accounting practices; credit unions will be required to use the "purchase method" of accounting for mergers in order to receive a clean audit. It should be noted that FASB itself has stated that it sees no problem with the amendment from an accounting perspective. The legisla-

tion does not grant credit unions that currently lack the authority to offer alternative capital accounts the authority to do so, nor does it confer upon the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) the regulatory authority or discretion to authorize such accounts now or in the future. This amendment is intended to address a narrow and technical accounting issue and in the process simply maintain the status quo so that, in the case of merging credit unions, 2 + 2 can continue to equal 4.

Currently, under the "pooling of interests" method of accounting, if a credit union with \$2 million in retained earnings merges with another credit union with \$2 million in retained earnings, the surviving credit union has \$4 million in retained earnings: 2 + 2 = 4. In the absence of this amendment, when the "purchase method" of accounting becomes mandatory for credit union mergers, if a credit union with \$2 million in retained earnings merges with another credit union with \$2 million in retained earnings, the surviving credit union will only have \$2 million in retained earnings: 2 + 2 = 2! That inequitable conclusion results from the fact that the Federal Credit Union Act defines the "net worth" of a federally-insured credit union as "GAAP retained earnings" and under Generally Accepted Accounting Principles when utilizing the "purchase method" of accounting only \$2 million would be categorized as "retained earnings" while the other \$2 million would be classified as "acquired equity."

Many credit union mergers are done at the request of the NCUA as a way of dealing in a constructive way with troubled institutions. Accordingly, it is in the public interest to redefine the term "net worth" for PCA purposes so that a credit union is not unfairly penalized and its net worth diminished merely because of an antiquated definition contained in the Federal Credit Union Act. It is with this in mind that I have introduced H.R. 1042 today. I hope that we will be able to move this important legislation for credit unions through the Financial Services Committee and this body in a timely fashion.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF LAREDO CITY COUNCILMAN ALFREDO AGREDANO

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the important contribution of Council Member District 1 Alfredo Agredano in Laredo, TX in my Congressional District.

Alfredo Agredano was born on August 28, 1948 in Grafton, North Dakota. He was the second of 9 children born to migrant workers Norberto and Francisca Agredano. After attending elementary schools in Corpus Christi, TX, Mr. Agredano and his family moved back to Laredo, TX at the age of thirteen. From there he attended L.J. Christen Jr. High School and graduated from Martin High School in 1968.

The following year he went on to joining the United States Marine Corps. During his stay, he became a Viet-Nam veteran and received an Honorable Discharge from the Marine Corps with the rank of sergeant. Not only did Mr. Agredano serve his country proudly, he

also went on to earn an Associate Degree in Law Enforcement from Laredo Community College.

Mr. Agredano went on to work for the Laredo Fire Department for 7 years. For the past 25 years he has been an employee of the United States Post Office.

As a long life resident of Laredo, TX, Mr. Agredano went on to be elected to the Laredo City Council in 1998 and re-elected in 2002 in which he ran unopposed.

Councilman Agredano has been married to Geraldine Valdez for the past 21 years. He has 8 wonderful children and 3 grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize the hard work of Councilman Alfredo Agredano.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY TO
JUDGE JOAN HUMPHREY
LEFKOW AND FAMILY

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my sincere sympathy to Judge Joan Humphrey Lefkow and her entire family after the tragic deaths of her husband, Michael F. Lefkow, and her mother, Donna Grace Humphrey.

The city of Chicago and the entire nation have been shaken by these horrific murders. While we watched the headlines every day this week, we ask ourselves how such terrible crimes could have taken place, and we hope those answers come sooner than later.

Michael Lefkow spent his life fighting to protect civil rights for all Americans—marching with Martin Luther King, Jr., arguing cases before the Supreme Court, and representing the poor and underserved in his law practice. To all who knew and loved him, Michael was a dedicated family man and an active member of his church who used his time and his expertise to make life better for so many others.

Judge Lefkow is also a dedicated public servant, committed to her family and her community and with a reputation for fairness in her judicial decisions.

I want to particularly express sympathy to Michael Lefkow's daughter and Donna Humphrey's granddaughter, Laura, who attended high school on the northwest side of Chicago, won my district's entry in the Congressional Arts Contest in 2003, and volunteered in my Washington office during the summer of 2004.

Mr. Speaker, my prayers and thoughts are with Judge Lefkow, Laura, and the entire Lefkow family in this difficult hour.

AMTRAK FUNDING

HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my dissatisfaction with the President's Fiscal Year 2006 budget that zeroes out funding for Amtrak, eliminates funding for high-speed rail, and provides \$360 million to the Surface Transportation Board to maintain ex-

isting commuter operations should Amtrak shut down.

The shutdown of Amtrak would cause wide disruption and hardship. Millions of passengers—many of whom can't afford a car or a plane ticket—would be stranded. Millions of travelers would be added to already congested roads and airports.

Residents of 106 U.S. cities, which have no air service and are well over 25 miles away from the nearest airport, would have to find new transportation alternatives.

Amtrak's 20,000 workers would be out on the streets looking for new jobs. Local economies and businesses that have benefited from Amtrak's service would suffer.

Amtrak serves my state of Ohio with four long-distance trains: The Capital Limited (daily Chicago-Cleveland-Pittsburgh-Washington, DC); The Cardinal (tri-weekly Chicago-Cincinnati-Washington, DC-New York); The Lake Shore Limited (daily Chicago-Cleveland-Buffalo-Boston-New York); and The Three Rivers (daily New York-Philadelphia-Akron-Chicago).

During Fiscal Year 2004 Amtrak served the following Ohio locations:

City and ridership: Akron—7,930; Alliance—2,324; Bryan—6,204; Cincinnati—11,632; Cleveland—35,394; Elyria—2,651; Fostoria—1,935; Hamilton—1,483; Sandusky—4,098; Toledo—59,661, and Youngstown—4,417.

Total Ohio Ridership: 137,729.

Amtrak expended \$9,567,180 for goods and services in Ohio in Fiscal Year 2004. Much of this money was spent in the following locations: Cleveland, \$2,458,778; and Columbus \$1,540,264.

During fiscal year 2004, Amtrak employed 88 Ohio residents. Total wages of Amtrak employees living in Ohio were \$4,609,915 during this period.

The Railroad Retirement and Unemployment programs, which cover employees of all railroads, freight and passenger, would be depleted. According to the Railroad Retirement Board, without the participation of Amtrak, employer and employee payroll taxes would need to be increased from the current 16 percent to 27 percent in 2027. Those tax increases, however, would ultimately be insufficient and serious cash flow problems for Railroad Retirement would begin in 2031.

Cash reserves for the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Account would be exhausted by 2006, and nearly \$297 million would have to be borrowed from the Railroad Retirement account to make up for losses. Ultimately, Amtrak's unemployment benefit costs would be borne by other railroads. In Fiscal Year 2004, Ohio had a passenger rail ridership of 137,729.

While the United States once had a passenger rail system that was the envy of the world, a lack of capital investment has stalled the advancement of corridor development throughout the country.

Dependent upon an annual federal appropriation, Amtrak's national network is constantly threatened by under-investment, lack of a clearly articulated federal rail policy, and an uncertain future.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to reiterate my outrage over a budget that cuts out a program that carried 25 million passengers in 2004; operates a nationwide rail network, serving over 500 stations in 46 states on 22,000 miles of track with approximately 20,000 employees; and operates 300 daily intercity trains, ap-

proximately 850,000 commuters each day depend on operating agreements with Amtrak, Amtrak-owned infrastructure, or shared operations.

INTRODUCTION OF "INFORMATION PROTECTION AND SECURITY ACT" AND "SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER PROTECTION ACT"

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing two bills aimed at protecting the privacy of personally identifiable individual information and making it more difficult for unauthorized persons to obtain access to such data.

In *Bonfire of the Vanities*, the novelist Tom Wolfe wrote about "The Bororo Indians, a primitive jungle tribe who live along the Vermelho River in the Amazon Jungles of Brazil." According to Wolfe, the Bororos believed that "there is no such thing as a private self." Instead, they "regard the mind as an open cavity, like a cave or a tunnel or an arcade, if you will, in which the entire village dwells and the jungle grows." Wolfe compared this to the situation faced by his protagonist, Sherman McCoy, who was caught in the middle of a public scandal in the last quarter of the 20th century.

In the 21st century, we now face the prospect of a world in which all of us—not just someone in the midst of scandal—will be forced to live without a private self: with the entire "village" able to obtain access to some of the most personal aspects of our lives.

In the emerging surveillance society of the 21st century, the data mining and information brokerage firms, much like Wolf's Bororo Indians, believe that there is no such thing as a private self. These companies are collecting and selling a vast array of personal information about the American public. For a fee, these companies will tell you someone's Social Security number, their address, phone number, driver's license number, driving record, any criminal record information, court records, insurance claims, divorce records, and even credit and financial information.

Recent press reports indicate that ChoicePoint, an information broker and data mining firm, had allowed a group of Nigerian con artists to get access to names, Social Security numbers, and other personal information about 140,000 Americans, including roughly 1,100 Massachusetts residents. Apparently this is not the first time that ChoicePoint has allowed criminal identity thieves to get access to such information. Two years ago, a similar problem reportedly occurred at the same company.

Unchecked, these companies take advantage of the most valuable possessions that Americans have: their personal identities. Companies like ChoicePoint are playing Russian roulette with the personal information and identities of millions of Americans. If we don't take steps to protect America's consumers soon, it is not a question of whether or not more Americans will lose their privacy—it is question of when will the next ID theft scandal hit. We must take immediate action to protect consumers from more information breaches.

The "Information Protection and Security Act," which I am introducing today in the House, and which Senator NELSON of Florida is introducing in the Senate, would do three basic things:

1. Subject information brokers like ChoicePoint to federal regulation by the Federal Trade Commission, and specifically, require such brokers to comply with a set of new fair information practice rules that the FTC would be required to issue within 6 months of enactment.

2. The FTC rules that the bill mandates will require information brokers to better secure the information in their possession, grant consumers the right to obtain access to and correct information held by the broker, require information brokers to protect information from unauthorized users, and prohibit users of an information broker to obtain the information for impermissible or unlawful purposes.

3. The bill's requirements will be enforceable through the FTC, which would be empowered to bring civil actions to punish and fine violators; the State Attorney's General, who could bring similar actions; and consumers, who would be empowered to bring a private right of action.

My second bill, the "Social Security Number Protection Act," would bring a halt to unregulated commerce in Social Security numbers. This bill would make it a crime for a person to sell or purchase Social Security numbers. Under the bill, the FTC would be given rule-making authority to restrict the sale of Social Security numbers, determine appropriate exemptions, and to enforce civil compliance with the bill's restrictions. The bill would also authorize the States to enforce compliance, and provide for appropriate penalties.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House and the Senate to see to it that these two bills are enacted into law.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF TEXAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE CARTER CASTEEL

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Carter Casteel for her service to the people of Texas.

Carter Casteel was born in Monahans, Texas. She comes from a family with a tradition of public service; her mother was Monahans city secretary during the community's early founding, and was one of the first women elected to office in West Texas.

Ms. Casteel studied at the University of Texas, where she majored in government and history. She received her Masters from Southwest Texas State University, and moved with her husband and children to New Braunfels.

After a stint as a public school teacher in Comal, she attended law school and began practicing law in 1985. She was elected to the office of Comal County Judge in 1990, and served there until 1999. She was elected to the Texas House of Representatives in 2001, and works to represent the Texas Hill country and its interests.

In addition to her public service career, Carter Casteel has found time to run a suc-

cessful law practice, Casteel and Casteel, with her son. She has also been involved in a wide variety of community organizations, including the Comal County United Way, Communities in Schools, Habitat For Humanity, and the Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Committee. She had the honor of being appointed to the Battleship Texas Advisory Board by President George W. Bush, and has served as President of the Comal Independent School District Board of Trustees.

Mr. Speaker, throughout her career, Carter Casteel has been an advocate for education, tax reduction, preservation of natural resources and the community values for which the Hill Country of Texas is known. She has done a great deal of good for her community, and I am pleased to have this opportunity to offer her my thanks.

RECOGNIZING MR. GEORGE HENSEL

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. George Hensel, a recipient of the West San Gabriel Valley Boys and Girls Club Humanitarian Award. This prestigious award is being given to Mr. Hensel to recognize his lifetime achievements and accomplishments.

Mr. Hensel was born and raised in East Los Angeles and served our country honorably as a Merchant Marine from 1942 to 1950. Mr. Hensel has a long history of leadership in the community including: Chairman of the Board of Directors at Beverly Community Hospital; founding President and Board Member Emeritus of Beverly Community Hospital Foundation; Chairman of the Board of Directors at Woodbury University; President and Founder of the California Driving School Association; President and Co-Founder of Driving School Association of the Americans; member of the Board of Directors at Don Bosco Technical Institute; member of the Board of Directors of the Montebello Police Activities League; Chairman of the Montebello Planning Commission; Director of the West San Gabriel Valley Boys and Girls Club; advisory board member of the Salvation Army; Chairman of Assemblyman Jack Fenton's Citizen's Advisory Committee; member of District Attorney Evelle Youngers Citizen's Advisory Committee on crime; President of the East Los Angeles Rotary Club; and President of the Montebello Toastmasters Club. Mr. Hensel remains a Rotarian with 43 years of perfect weekly attendance.

The above community involvement is in addition to Mr. Hensel's significant achievements in his professional and personal life. He has received numerous honors and recognitions culminating in this recognition for his lifetime of accomplishments and community service. His loving family consists of 6 children, 20 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren and 6 great-great grandchildren.

Mr. Hensel's contributions are a shining example of positive community involvement and service. It gives me great pleasure to honor Mr. George Hensel for a lifetime of service, dedication and philanthropic involvement.

HONORING THE LIFE OF RAY MCKENNA

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Ray McKenna of East Hartford, a community sports leader, champion, and friend, who passed away Tuesday, March 1, 2005.

A hometown hero, Ray defined integrity, commitment, and generosity of spirit and vision to his family and the East Hartford community. For kids like me growing up in East Hartford, the man from Burnside—Ray McKenna was a legend. At East Hartford High, Ray demonstrated his competitive nature in athletics and excelled at basketball, football and baseball. In 1939, he was the instrumental cog in East Hartford's first Connecticut state basketball championship. With a sense of duty to his country, Ray enlisted in the U.S. Navy during World War II and was stationed in the Philippines and the Aleutian Islands. Upon his return, Ray organized a local fast-pitch softball team, the legendary Burnside Dovelettes in 1947. For 30 years, he lead the Dovelettes to the top of the semipro league with a record of 1,831–339. While employed by the East Hartford Post Office, Ray formed the Marco Polo Explorers basketball team and coached them to 13 New England Basketball Association titles. In 35 years, the semipro team held an unparallel record of 1,123 to 245. Ray also founded and directed the annual Tap-Off Club Hall of Fame dinner to honor East Hartford athletes for 28 years. Although Ray retired from the Post Office in 1985, his long interest in sports continued and he became Sports Editor for the East Hartford Gazette—the most widely read column in the town.

The impact Ray has had on the town of East Hartford is inspirational. In 1984, East Hartford honored Ray's devotion to athletics by dedicating a local sports field in his name. For over two decades, Ray McKenna Field has been the home for baseball teams of all ages, including the Hartford Hawks. In 1985, Ray was presented with the Gold Key, the most prestigious sports' award in the state of Connecticut. The Gold Key is awarded by the Connecticut Sports Writer's Alliance to those like Ray, who have made noteworthy contributions to athletics in Connecticut. Representing one of Connecticut's finest, Ray was also inducted into the New England Basketball Hall of Fame at the University of Rhode Island in 2003.

With all his good works and awards of recognition, Ray will most be remembered for his honest love of the game. He lived everyday giving back to his community and inspired the best in all of us. To Ray, true victory was the result of discipline, confidence, and heart. His giving nature, generous laugh and Irish wit will be missed by all those who knew him. For my family and myself, we will forever treasure and value this wonderful man who so loved the game, the competition, and the camaraderie of sports and made it the centerpiece of his life in East Hartford, the state of Connecticut and throughout the Nation.

Our hearts go out to the entire McKenna family, especially his beloved wife Josephine,

his son Michael, and daughters Dorene, Susan and Carol, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE PATRICK ROSE

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize State Representative Patrick M. Rose for a lifetime of distinguished public service.

State Representative Patrick Rose is serving his second term as a member of the Texas House of Representatives and currently holds the position of Vice Chair of the House Committee on Civil Practices and is also a member of the Higher Education Committee and the Calendars committee.

He represents the House 45th district which covers Blanco, Caldwell and Hay's Counties. He is working on various state issues such as insurance reform, ethics reform and the public education system. He is a member of the higher Education Committee and works closely with Texas State University on issues such as college affordability and creating scholarships.

His efforts on behalf of his constituents were recognized when he was featured in Texas Monthly as "Rookie of the Year" during his freshman session. He was also honored with the "2003 Civil Justice Leadership Award," the "Texas Medicine's Best" and the "Young Professional of the Year Award." Patrick Rose is a credit to his community and a tremendous resource to his county.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have had this opportunity to recognize the many achievements of State Representative Patrick Rose.