

Dr. Rowe has touched the lives of numerous students and educators. He should be honored and commended for his dedication to the RFT program and the surrounding community. Through his instruction and guidance, Dr. Rowe has enabled students to realize their potential and become successful adults.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Rowe for his years of service and dedication to the Northern Virginia community. His contributions and efforts are noted and greatly appreciated.

HONORING THE DEDICATION OF UNITED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD MEMBER JUAN A. MOLINA, JR.

**HON. HENRY CUELLAR**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 9, 2005*

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

Juan A. Molina, Jr. is the newest member to join the United ISD Board of Trustees. Molina was elected to the district four seat on May 15, 2004. Molina will serve parents and students attending L.B. Johnson H.S., United South H.S., Los Obispos M.S., United South M.S., the new Centeno Elementary, Perez Elementary, Prada Elementary, Roosevelt Elementary, Ruiz Elementary, and Salinas Elementary.

Molina serves on the school district's Student Expulsion Appeals Committee. UISD also has two board members who represent the district's property value interests on the Webb County Appraisal District's (five-member Board of Directors), Juan A. Molina, Jr. is one of two UISD representatives.

Molina was born, raised, and educated in Laredo. He spent his after school hours working part-time in his family's business. He is a 1988 graduate of Nixon High School. After obtaining a computer programming and business management degree from Computer Business Management Systems, Molina went to work with his father for six years. He eventually purchased the business from his father in 1994. Under his leadership, the business has prospered and has expanded into new fields. Molina is the owner of South Texas Neon Signs.

Molina is married and has three children who attend UISD schools. "I am involved in my children's education through participation in the school PTC's and as a Site Based Decision Making Committee member of two schools. I am also a Cub Scout Master because I believe in our kids and want to see a better future for them." Molina has gone through special training sessions to provide Laredo Boy Scouts with more camping and outdoor learning opportunities. His new training has allowed him to direct an adventure weekend and assist in another. He helped organize and direct a scout show and "Spookery" at Camp Huisache. Molina plays an active role in the Perez Elementary Boy Scout Color Guard. In addition, he was also a little league assistant coach for two years. He is involved with his church as a choir

member, and as an active participant in the annual fund-raising Jamaica.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize the contributions of United Independent School District Juan A. Molina, Jr.

CONGRESS MUST ACT TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

**HON. NANCY PELOSI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 9, 2005*

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, for more than 10 years, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) has helped protect women in this country from violence, abuse, sexual assault, and sexual predators. This landmark piece of legislation was achieved in part by the bipartisan efforts of the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues, of which I am proud to be a member.

VAWA has provided improved access to services and resources for victims of violence and their families. It has made a real difference in the lives of women and children, who no longer suffer in silence.

Community programs funded through VAWA aid law enforcement officers and prosecutors, encourage arrest policies, stem domestic violence and child abuse, establish and operate training programs for victim advocates and counselors, and train probation and parole officers who work with released sex offenders. VAWA has also led to the creation of battered women's shelters, rape prevention and education programs, the reduction of sexual abuse of runaway and homeless street youth, and community programs on domestic violence.

Despite the success of this legislation, we still have much work to do.

One out of every four women will experience domestic violence during her lifetime. Equally alarming is that women ages 16 to 24 experience the highest per capita rates of intimate partner violence.

VAWA is up for reauthorization in this Congress. We must come together to put forward a bill that strengthens and improves our efforts to combat violence against women, including doing more for violence prevention. An essential component of prevention must be to increase outreach to young people.

We must also encourage adequate funding of VAWA initiatives. Unfortunately, each year we fall further behind in fulfilling the promises made in the authorization of VAWA. This year alone the Bush budget is more than \$163 million short of the goal.

As we recognize the vital role of the Violence Against Women Act, I urge my colleagues to reauthorize VAWA in a bipartisan way and to dedicate the necessary resources to fulfill its mission.

COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING: ACHIEVING ZERO TOLERANCE

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 9, 2005*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak regarding U.S. efforts to combat human trafficking.

The U.S. Government now estimates that 600,000 to 800,000 women, children and men are bought and sold across international borders each year and exploited through forced labor or commercial sex exploitation, and potentially millions more are trafficked internally within the borders of countries. Eighty percent of the victims are women and girls. An estimated 14,500 to 17,500 foreign citizens are trafficked into the United States each year.

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights in the late 1990s, I led an effort to end the scourge of trafficking by sponsoring the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), P.L. 106-386, which was signed into law in December 2000. In 2003, I sponsored a reauthorization of that Act which also became law.

These two pieces of legislation created a comprehensive framework for combating trafficking in persons abroad, as well as the trafficking of foreign nationals into the United States. As a result, our government has been a leader in addressing this human rights violation and encouraging other governments to do the same. When I held the first hearing on trafficking, back in 1999, only a handful of countries had laws explicitly prohibiting the practice of human trafficking. Individuals who engaged in this exploitation did so without fear of legal repercussions. Victims of trafficking were treated as criminals and illegal immigrants—governments did not offer them assistance to escape the slavery-like conditions in which they were trapped, and few NGOs were equipped to offer survivors of trafficking the restorative care needed to heal physically, mentally and spiritually from the trauma they experienced. Little was being done to prevent others from being exploited in the same way.

The situation today is remarkably improved. Since taking office, the Bush Administration has devoted more than \$295 million to combat trafficking in more than 120 countries. Across the globe, governments are taking action to prevent trafficking, to prosecute the exploiters, and to give hope and restoration to those victimized by trafficking. As Ambassador Miller testified to Congress last summer, between 2003 and 2004, twenty-four countries enacted new laws to combat trafficking. Dozens more were in the process of drafting or passing such laws. Moreover, nearly 8,000 traffickers were prosecuted worldwide and 2,800 were convicted. Shelters have been set up for victims. NGOs and faith communities have reached out to help heal survivors of trafficking.

In order to support the ongoing efforts that have made these gains possible, on February 17, I introduced, along with this Subcommittee's Ranking Member, Rep. DONALD PAYNE, and eight other original co-sponsors, the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005, H.R. 972. This bill would reauthorize appropriations for anti-trafficking programs here and abroad. The bill also offers solutions

to a number of specific scenarios in which trafficking is a problem, but which our experience has shown could benefit from additional initiatives. Our witnesses at today's hearing will focus on some of these issues and I will mention just a few here.

For example, drawing lessons from the aftermath of war in the Balkans a decade ago, and the devastating tsunami in South Asia a mere few months ago, foreign policy and humanitarian aid professionals increasingly recognize the heightened vulnerability of indigenous populations in crisis situations to many forms of violence, including trafficking for sexual and labor exploitation. Traffickers also recognize this vulnerability. This bill would focus governmental efforts, particularly by the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Department of Defense, to develop trafficking prevention strategies for post-conflict and humanitarian emergency situations—strategies which do not currently exist in sufficient form.

The bill would also take further steps to ensure that U.S. Government personnel and contractors are held accountable for involvement with acts of trafficking in persons while abroad on behalf of the U.S. Government. Although few would dispute that the involvement of U.S. personnel, including members of the U.S. Armed Forces, with trafficking in persons in any form is inconsistent with U.S. laws and policies and undermines the credibility and mission of U.S. Government programs in foreign countries, there remain loopholes in U.S. laws which allow such acts to go unpunished. This bill closes those loopholes by expanding U.S. criminal jurisdiction for serious offenses to all U.S. Government contractors abroad—jurisdiction which already exists with respect to contractors supporting Department of Defense missions abroad—and by making federal criminal laws against sex and labor trafficking applicable to members of the Armed Forces. The bill would also direct the Secretary of Defense to designate a director of anti-trafficking policies to guide DOD's efforts to faithfully implement policies against trafficking.

The bill would take on the outrageous situation of peacekeepers, humanitarian aid workers, and international organizations' personnel, being complicit in trafficking and sexual exploitation. On March 2nd, I chaired a hearing in this Subcommittee that examined the evidence of gross sexual misconduct and exploitation of refugees and vulnerable people by U.N. peacekeepers and civilian personnel assigned to the U.N. peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Human rights groups and the U.N.'s own internal investigations have U.N. covered over 150 allegations against Mission personnel involving sexual contact with Congolese women and girls, usually in exchange for food or small sums of money, as well as allegations of rape, forced prostitution, and demands of sex for jobs. However, to date, there has not been one successful prosecution of U.N. civilian or military personnel, either in the Congo or elsewhere.

The scandal with the U.N. Mission in the Congo is but the latest in a long list of allegations against international peacekeeping personnel involving sex trafficking and other forms of sexual exploitation that extends back at least a decade. The involvement of peacekeepers in trafficking or sexual exploitation is not just a private matter involving only personal moral choices. Hundreds of vulnerable

women and children are being re-victimized; the reputation of the United Nations is being badly damaged; and lack of internal discipline is compromising security and effectiveness of the peacekeeping operations.

To his credit, U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan has promulgated a "zero tolerance" policy on sexual exploitation by peacekeepers. In June 2004, NATO also adopted an anti-trafficking policy. But words alone do not protect women and children from abuse. H.R. 972 would require that the Secretary of State certify prior to endorsing an international peacekeeping mission that the international organization has taken measures to prevent and, as necessary, hold accountable peacekeepers in the mission who are involved with trafficking or sexual exploitation. The bill would also require that the annual Trafficking in Persons Report include information on steps taken by international organizations to eliminate involvement of the organizations' personnel in trafficking.

The bill also continues to improve upon the provision of assistance to foreign victims in the United States by improving trafficking victims' access to information about federally funded victim services programs and facilitating access to counsel for victims. The bill would also establish a guardian ad litem program for child trafficking victims of trafficking.

H.R. 972 also recognizes that trafficking in persons occurs within the borders of single countries, including the United States. According to the State Department, if the number of people trafficked internally within countries is added to the estimate, the total number of trafficking victims annually would be in the range of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000. Although outside the jurisdiction of this subcommittee, I would just mention that the bill addresses the trafficking of American citizens and nationals within the United States—which the bill defines as "domestic trafficking." Although there are no precise statistics on the numbers of United States citizens or nationals who have been victimized through trafficking, researchers at the University of Pennsylvania have estimated that 100,000 to 300,000 children in the United States are at risk for commercial sexual exploitation, including trafficking, at any given time.

Despite the willingness of most governments today to address international trafficking, few have recognized the existence of internal trafficking within their own borders. By addressing internal trafficking in a bill that also addresses international trafficking, the United States will again lead by example in showing that internal trafficking victims must not be dismissed by the law enforcement community as prostitutes or juvenile delinquents. This bill would begin to shift the paradigm—much as we have done so successfully in the international arena—to view these exploited souls for what they really are—victims of crime and sexually exploited children.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TOWN OF SOUTH PALM BEACH

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 9, 2005

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the founding of

the Town of South Palm Beach, Florida. Since 1992, I have had the distinct pleasure to represent the residents of this lovely community, and would like to share with you some of the town's attributes and history.

Located in Palm Beach County, the Town of South Palm Beach is nestled in one of Florida's many barrier islands. Rich in natural beauty, South Palm Beach shares its eastern border with the Atlantic Ocean, and its western border with the Florida Intracoastal Waterway.

The town's colorful history dates back to 1948, when two Finnish brothers from New York, Amos and Anton Askila, settled in the area. Enamored with South Florida's beauty, the Askila brothers set out for Tallahassee in 1955 to obtain a charter for the town. At the time, there were only 6 full time residents, including the Askila brothers, Robert Coletti, James Sloan and Mr. and Mrs. George Woods. The Askila brothers successfully incorporated the town during their 1955 trip to Tallahassee and, that same year, Mr. George Woods was elected as South Palm Beach's first mayor.

Today, reflecting on 50 years of history since the town's incorporation, it is clear that future generations of South Floridians have much for which to be thankful. Over the years, South Palm Beach's residents have worked diligently to preserve its residential character, friendly atmosphere and overall high quality of life. I also know that South Palm Beach's nearly 3,000 residents are working hard every day to carry on this tradition, ensuring that South Palm Beach continues to serve as a model community for other towns throughout Florida.

On behalf of Florida's 22nd Congressional District, in honor of the town's 50th anniversary celebration, I wish to recognize and commend the Town of South Palm Beach for its longstanding commitment to excellence in South Florida.

INTRODUCTION OF BIPARTISAN RESOLUTION ON JUÁREZ

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 9, 2005

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce this bipartisan resolution with my colleagues Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida, Mrs. CAPPS, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. REYES, and Mr. LANTOS.

Since 1993, over 400 mutilated bodies have been found in the desert of Ciudad Juárez and the city of Chihuahua. We are deeply concerned about the murders and violence against women that have occurred and condemn these horrific acts of violence.

This Resolution expresses our deepest sympathy to the families of the women killed in the State of Chihuahua, Mexico; requests that the Mexican government's investigative and preventative efforts be incorporated into the bilateral agenda between Mexico and the United States; urges the President and Secretary of State to express concern for the harassment of the families and support for the victims' families as they seek justice; and condemns the use of torture as a means of investigation into these crimes. It also urges the State of