

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A TRIBUTE TO RAQUEL SHIVDAT

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding leader, Raquel Shivdat.

Ms. Shivdat may not have a very visible personality, but behind the scenes she is one of the biggest influences in the explosion of Caribbean music entertainment in New York City. As Promotion and Marketing manager of the JMC Entertainment Inc. (which includes JMC records, JMC Trevini band and Rum Jungle Bar and Restaurant), Ms. Shivdat's responsibilities range from the promotion of shows to the management of music recordings. After more than twelve years in the entertainment industry, Ms. Shivdat has become a defining force.

Ms. Shivdat rose through the ranks in the family's business, starting as flyer designer at JMC Records and later working at the family's Roti Express diner. Additionally, Ms. Shivdat managed to pursue a degree in Fashion Marketing at Berkeley College in New Jersey, while managing her household as a wife and mother of two boys, Tyler and Shane.

At Rum Jungle, Ms. Shivdat produces at least one concert every month involving artists from the West Indies. The biggest names in Soca and Chutney music are regular performers at the club. Ms. Shivdat also brought the legendary Indian performers Babla and Kanchan to New York.

Ms. Shivdat also makes regular contributions to charitable organizations and committee projects in New York and has done fund raisers at Rum Jungle for the Prime Ministers of Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.

At 32 years old, Ms. Shivdat has become a key member of the JMC Company and she says that she always draws inspiration from her father Mohan Jaikairan who owns the business.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Shivdat, a wife, mother and entrepreneur, is both passionate about her chosen field of music and her community. Thus, we proudly recognize her today.

TRIBUTE TO ARMY SPECIALIST
LOUIS NIEDERMEIER

HON. C. W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Army Specialist Louis E. Niedermeier of Largo, Florida, who gave the last full measure of service to our nation while serving in Iraq.

Our nation buried Louis with full military honors this afternoon at Arlington National Cemetery following his death by sniper fire in Ar Ramadi, Iraq on June 1st while serving with

his Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. He died just 2 weeks short of his 21st birthday.

Louis was a soldier's soldier. He wanted to enlist in the Army immediately after the events of 9-11, but he was only 17. His day came though as soon as he graduated from Pinellas Park High School in 2003. He followed in his father's footsteps and enlisted in the Army and a year later found himself serving in Iraq.

As a scout, Louis served on the front lines, providing critical targeting information to our air and artillery forces. He served with pride and with courage to bring about freedom in a land far from home. The true testament of Louis' service as a soldier came from the remembrances of three soldiers from his unit who served side-by-side with him in Iraq. The three were wounded in combat and were stateside at the time of Louis' death. They drove 36 hours nonstop from Fort Carson, Colorado to be with Louis and his family this afternoon. They said they did it because if the roles had been reversed Louis would have been there for them.

Louis' parents Edward A. Niedermeier and Denise A. Hoy were proud of their son. They were proud that he chose to serve his Nation in uniform. They were proud that he served with distinction to defend the principles of freedom and democracy. And they were proud that despite the fact that he served halfway around the world, first in Korea and then in Iraq, that he never forgot to remember his family and friends back home.

Both Ed and Denise marveled this afternoon that before they knew it Louis had grown from a boy into a man. They recounted Louis' love of family and country. And they emphasized that if Louis had it to do over again, they are convinced he would not have changed a thing.

Army Sergeant First Class Charles Welsh also attended today's services. He not only had the honor of serving with Louis in Iraq, but he was Louis' uncle. He recalled the day Louis came to him and told him he had enlisted in the Army as one of the proudest moments in this young man's life.

The price of freedom is great and in the case of Louis it was a life cut way too short. It was also the tragic interruption of a life together Louis had planned with his fiancée Sarah Hatley. Sarah and Louis were high school sweethearts who both volunteered to serve their Nation in uniform. Sarah is a Seaman serving aboard the U.S.S. *Fitzgerald*, stationed in Yokosuka, Japan. Her ship was underway off the coast of Australia when she learned of Louis' death.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation said goodbye to Specialist Louis E. Niedermeier today at Arlington National Cemetery. We said goodbye to a brave soldier who proudly wore the uniform in defense of freedom here and throughout the world. We said goodbye to a good son, a good nephew, and a good friend to so many people. And we said goodbye to the love of a young girl's life.

As the day draws to an end, we can take solace in the fact that America sleeps better

tonight and every night because of heroes like Louis Niedermeier who sacrificed all for the love of country and the love of freedom.

Mr. Speaker, a grateful Nation said thank you today to a courageous soldier and I join all my colleagues today in expressing our sorrow and our thanks for the life and the service of Louis Niedermeier and to the strong and loving family and friends he leaves behind. His was a life that was all too short in time but full of love and grace.

JUNETEENTH AFRICAN-AMERICAN
INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate an African-American day of celebration of freedom and justice. Juneteenth marks the end of slavery for African-American communities around the country. It is a day to embrace our freedom and equality, to reflect on the progress we have made as people, and to ponder our future role in this country.

Despite the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863, it took two and a half years—June 1865—for the liberation of all slaves in the United States to occur. For 140 years now, African-Americans have celebrated the final attainment of their freedom on the 19th of June. Tradition has it that it is the date when news of emancipation from slavery was finally delivered to slaves in Texas, the furthest point from Washington where slavery existed. The most accepted explanation is that the delay was caused by the primitive communications of the day, but some historians believe that the news of emancipation was deliberately denied to slaves.

On this Juneteenth, African-Americans across the country will contemplate the importance of their freedom compared to their ancestors. They will reflect on their ability and rights to hold a job, to ride a bus, to own property, to live unencumbered by the government, and to make decisions about their own lives. Some will think about the obstacles that remain in their way of achieving the "American dream." Others will ponder the future of their children and the opportunities ahead of them.

I, for one, would think both about how far we have come as a country and how much further we need to go to erase racism and discrimination from our society. Once the slaves of plantation owners, African-Americans now can freely move about the country, hold jobs and careers of importance, marry their chosen partner, provide for their families, raise their kids, and live in true freedom. African-Americans are graduating from college at increasing rates; receiving medical, professional, and doctoral degrees; working in major corporations and businesses; and making decisions about the future of this country. We have come a long way in our struggle for equality.

• 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.

Nonetheless, we have far to go. Less than half of African-American families own their own homes and they are twice as likely to be denied mortgages as whites. While the unemployment rate for whites is 5 percent, the black unemployment rate is 10 percent. African-Americans are three times more likely to be arrested as whites and on average serve longer sentences than whites. Crime, drugs, and poverty are rampant in many minority communities. Many young African-Americans are disillusioned, frustrated, and feel powerless in their own country.

The challenges African-Americans are facing today are rooted in the system of slavery. After emancipation, segregation, a system of continued oppression, was imposed which maintained the disparities between blacks and whites. It fueled the animosities, resentments, and discrimination that would separate and divide this country. We are still grappling with the effects of slavery, racism, and discrimination. We must do more to undo the wrongs of that evil institution.

On this Juneteenth, let this great country come together to reflect on the role slavery has played in our system today.

A TRIBUTE TO WINSTON P.
THOMPSON

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a distinguished and accomplished Brooklynite, Winston P. Thompson. It is an honor to represent Mr. Thompson in the House of Representatives and it behooves us to pay tribute to such an exemplary citizen.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Thompson worked diligently and attained his undergraduate and graduate degrees from St. Francis College and Pace University. His work experience is impressive—from being employed as an auditing officer for Morgan Guaranty Trust Company, a Wall Street Investment Banking firm, for two years, and a big five international accounting and consulting firm, where he remained for five years.

Over the past 20 years, he has demonstrated deep devotion and civic commitment as a CPA and Financial Planner by offering tax and financial services to the Brooklyn community. In addition, he is the founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Thompson & Company, a Certified Public Accounting and Consulting firm based in Downtown Brooklyn, which recently enjoyed its twentieth year in operation.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the achievements and service of Mr. Thompson. He continues to offer his talents and services for the betterment of the community through his involvement in several community activities and organizations, particularly as a Member of the Caribbean American Chamber of Commerce, the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce and the Bedford Stuyvesant Real Estate Board.

Mr. Speaker, may our country continue to benefit from the civic actions of committed and talented individuals such as Winston P. Thompson.

TRIBUTE TO MR. ROBERT L.
PANEK

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to Mr. Robert L. Panek, who retired from the Senior Executive Service, in the Department of the Navy, on June 3rd, 2005. Mr. Panek's long and highly distinguished career spans nearly 34 years of Federal Service and eclipses 27 years of dedicated service in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management and Comptroller).

A native of Oceanside, New York, Mr. Panek received a Bachelor of Science degree, a Naval Reserve commission, and a Merchant Marine Third Officer's license from the Maritime College of the State University of New York, before entering Federal Service in 1971.

Excelling as a management intern with the Naval Ordnance Systems Command, budget analyst in the Anti-Submarine Warfare Systems Project Office, financial management advisor to the Deputy Chief of Naval Material, and budget analyst/branch head in the Department of the Navy (DoN) Budget Policy and Procedures Directorate, Mr. Panek was appointed to the Senior Executive Service (SES) in July 1986. As a SES officer, his breadth of responsibilities grew to encompass nearly every facet of the DoN budget to include setting policies and procedures for the formulation and execution of the DoN budget; directing DoN budget operations; and overseeing Investment, Research & Development, Construction, and Acquisition accounts. In December 1994, Mr. Panek's exemplary career culminated in his selection as the Associate Director, Office of Budget with responsibility for the formulation, presentation and execution of the DoN budget. In this position he achieved the grade of Senior Executive Service, Level 6 and also served as Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management and Comptroller).

Mr. Panek's devotion to duty, financial acumen, and commitment to the Navy-Marine Corps Team have made our Nation safer and our Navy and Marine Corps Stronger. He has been awarded numerous performance awards and citations throughout his career to include the Department of the Navy Superior Civilian Service Award in December 1988, the Presidential Meritorious Rank Award in 1993, and the Department of the Navy Distinguished Civilian Service Award in 2001. His selflessness, exemplary conduct, and commitment to a cause greater than himself is memorialized in his parting email to his shipmates in the Department of the Navy in which he reminded them—"Finally, please always, always remember that we do this for our Sailors and Marines that go in harm's way."

It is fitting and altogether appropriate to recognize Mr. Panek's contributions to the DoN at the same time that we consider the Fiscal Year 2006 Defense Appropriations Act. Our Nation and the Department of the Navy have been made better through the talent and dedication of Mr. Robert L. Panek. I know all of my colleagues join me in congratulating Bob, his wife Susan, and their two daughters, on the completion of an outstanding career. While his

service to our Nation will be missed, he has left a legacy of high standards and superbly trained professionals in his wake. We wish him fair winds and following seas!

SCIENCE, STATE, JUSTICE, COMMERCE,
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 16, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2862) making appropriations for Science, the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes:

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the Moran amendment to restrict the exportation of 50 caliber sniper rifles.

This weapon was not built for hobbies or marksmanship, but for military purposes. According to its original patent filing, it was designed to destroy aircraft at long range, beyond security perimeters.

Semi-automatic versions of these guns can fire as many as ten rounds in one minute at a plane, but it only takes one accurate hit to the fuselage, engine or cockpit to cause disaster.

There are even two published books on the market that explain how to use this sniper weapon to attack planes and helicopters.

All this may be why the conservative Rand Corporation, in a 1995 report, found the 50 caliber sniper rifle to be a serious threat to U.S. military air bases.

Today, nine years after that report and three and a half years after 9/11, these terrorist weapons remain under extremely loose regulation.

They are as easy to purchase as a regular rifle and even easier to purchase than a hand gun and yet we know terrorists and criminal organizations have sought them.

According to the Violence Policy Center, Al Qaeda has at least 25, the Church Universal and Triumphant has at least 10, the IRA has 2, and the Militia Training Camp in Canada has 1.

This weapon not only threatens American planes and airports, but also chemical and refinery plants.

The military's top choice of ammunition for the 50 caliber is not only armor-piercing, but also explosive and incendiary—meaning it causes fire.

That type of ammunition could easily cause a huge disaster.

We should protect ourselves and pass the Moran Amendment.

A TRIBUTE TO DECOSTA HEADLEY

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a Brooklynite and distinguished entrepreneur, DeCosta Headley. It is an honor

to represent Mr. Headley in the House of Representatives and it behooves us to pay tribute to such an outstanding leader.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Headley obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in Behavioral Science from Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina. He became a successful entrepreneur, serving as the president of Diversified Inch By Inch, Inc., one of the city's leading African-American general contracting firms. In this position, Mr. Headley demonstrated deep commitment to the community through several development projects that his company undertook, including the construction of local medical and dental facilities for Oxford Health Plans, Brookdale Hospital & Medical Center, and Interfaith Medical Center, and new housing, including a multi-level senior citizens apartment complex for Berean Missionary Baptist Church. Mr. Headley launched efforts of urban renewal by assisting in the development of senior citizen housing and youth centers for communities in need across the five boroughs.

Mr. Headley has exhibited the qualities of an exemplary community leader in his service as District Leader for the 40th Assembly District in the East New York section of Kings County. During his term, he remained dedicated to improving the quality of life for his constituents by continuously engaging in initiatives aimed at expanding college scholarships, employment opportunities, affordable housing, public assistance services, and social services, including senior citizen centers that offer hot meals, transportation, and access to basic health care services. In addition, he remained actively involved on various local community and planning boards, founded the community's first Local Development Corporation along with the Federation of Block Associations for East New York, and established the Federation of Addiction Agencies that offers a drug-free treatment program in East New York and Brownsville. Currently, Mr. Headley enormously contributes to the political sector of the community by successfully managing the campaigns of candidates running for positions in the city, state, and federal levels of government.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the remarkable achievements and selfless service of Mr. Headley as he continues to benevolently extend his talents and services for the betterment of the community.

Mr. Speaker, may our country continue to benefit from the civic actions of committed and laudable community leaders such as Mr. DeCosta Headley.

COMMENDING JACK DILLENBURG
FOR EXEMPLARY COMMUNITY
SERVICE

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the exemplary public service of Jack Dillenburg, a resident of the town of Arkwright in Chautauqua County, upon the occasion of his recognition as the 2005 Chautauqua County Democrat of the Year.

Jack's dedication to public service has been manifest, and his commitment to the residents of Chautauqua County has been outstanding.

Jack served as an appointed member of New York State Assemblyman Rolland Kidder's staff from 1976 until 1982.

During that time Jack continued to work very hard for his constituents back home. In 1975 Jack was elected to the Forestville Village Board of Trustees where he served until 1977 when he was elected mayor.

In 1980 Jack began a four-term streak as a member of the Chautauqua County legislature. During his time as a legislator, Jack's leadership and consensus building skills led him to be chosen by his colleagues to be both the majority leader and the minority leader.

The year 1992 ushered in six terms as the Arkwright Town Supervisor where there is no doubt that he did all he could to better the community.

Over 20 years later Jack decided to hang up his hat as an elected official and in 1998 he began a 5-year duty as the clerk of the Chautauqua County legislature; a responsibility he was well suited to fill following his years of experience in the legislature.

In addition to all of these outstanding achievements in public service, Jack still gave his all and served as the town of Arkwright's Democratic Chair for 27 years.

Mr. Dillenburg deserves recognition and congratulations for the vast contributions he has made over the last three decades, not just to the Democratic Party in general, but to the people of his community, his county and to all of western New York. Chautauqua County is a better place because of Jack Dillenburg's commitment to public service, and I am proud, Mr. Speaker, to have an opportunity to honor him today.

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL JOHN
PEABODY

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to recognize Colonel John Peabody who has served our Nation's Army with distinction for over 25 years. He will shortly be leaving his current post at the Pentagon and transferring to the State of Hawaii.

Colonel Peabody is a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point. John continued his education through the Command and General Staff College and the Army War College, where he earned his Master's Degree in Strategic Studies. He also has earned degrees from El Colegio de Mexico and Howard University.

Colonel Peabody has field proven leadership capabilities and an exemplary warrior ethos. He was first assigned to the 193rd Infantry Brigade in Panama where he served as a Sapper Platoon Leader, Company Executive Officer, and Aide-de-Camp. Later, he served as the Logistics Support Command Engineer, Somalia. He also was the Political-Military Division Chief of the J5, US Southern Command in Panama. During Operation Iraqi Freedom he commanded the 3rd Infantry Division's Engineer Brigade totaling over 3,000 engineers with ten attached units. Currently, he is assigned to the Army's Office of the Chief, Legislative Liaison, where he is the Programs Division Chief.

Colonel Peabody is a model soldier and his many awards and commendations stand as testimony to that. His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, Purple Heart, Joint Meritorious Service Medal, Army Meritorious Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service and Expeditionary Medals, the Presidential Unit Citation, Master Parachutist Badge, and Ranger Tab.

I know that the members of Congress will join me in honoring Colonel John Peabody and wishing his family and him all the best in the years to come.

SCIENCE, STATE, JUSTICE, COM-
MERCE, AND RELATED AGEN-
CIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 16, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2862) making appropriations for Science, the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes:

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I continue to be concerned about some of the funding cuts in this bill, but am heartened by the Committee's rejection of the President's proposal to eliminate Community Development Block Grants and the passage of the Sanders amendment that rolls back some of the most egregious components of the PATRIOT Act. While I am troubled by the lack of funding for important programs such as community policing and public broadcasting, the final version of the bill reflected significant improvements from the Bush administration's recommendations. Despite my initial opposition, when it came time to vote, I felt the improvements made to the bill warranted my support.

TRIBUTE TO VINCENT JOHNSON

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of a Brooklynite and distinguished lawyer, Vincent Johnson. It is an honor to represent Mr. Johnson in the House of Representatives and it behooves us to pay tribute to such an outstanding leader.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Johnson obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree from Brooklyn College and a Juris Doctor degree at St. John's University School of Law. Before completing his undergraduate studies, Mr. Johnson dedicated four years of service to the United States Air Force, where he rose to the rank of Airman first class and was assigned to the Scott Air Force Base in Belleville, Illinois and Tachikawa Air Force Base in Japan.

Mr. Johnson became an associate in the Admiralty Law firm of Fields & Rosen upon graduating from St. John's University School of Law, and was appointed an assistant District Attorney in the Kings County District Attorney's office, where he generously devoted

eight years serving the community. Mr. Johnson is now dedicated to the general practice of law and holds an office at 26 Court Street. He remains particularly active in several organizations, including the Bedford Stuyvesant Lions Club, Brooklyn Bar Association, Phi Alpha Delta Legal Fraternity, 100 Black Men of New York, and Comus Social Club.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the achievements and selfless service of Mr. Johnson as he continues to offer his talents and philanthropic services for the betterment of the community.

Mr. Speaker, may our country continue to benefit from the civic actions of altruistic community leaders such as Mr. Vincent Johnson.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I missed nine votes on June 17th, 2005 because I was attending my daughter's graduation from elementary school. Had I been present I would have voted "aye" on rollcall Nos. 274, 275, 276, 277, 278 and 281. I would have voted "no" on rollcall Nos. 279, 280 and 282.

RECOGNIZING ADMIRAL VERN CLARK, CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, FOR HIS SERVICE AND DEDICATION

HON. J. RANDY FORBES

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Admiral Vern Clark, Chief of Naval Operations, for his loyal service to the United States of America.

Admiral Clark's dedication and loyalty to the advancement of our naval service and the Nation as a whole is to be highly commended.

Admiral Clark's devotion to duty has reflected the highest standards of the military profession through a number of command and staff positions. He served aboard the destroyers USS *John W. Weeks* and the USS *Gearing*. As a Lieutenant, he commanded the USS *Grand Rapids*. He also commanded the USS *McCloy*, USS *Spruance*, the Atlantic Fleet's Anti-Submarine Warfare Training Center, Destroyer Squadron Seventeen, and Destroyer Squadron Five. After being selected for flag rank, he commanded the Carl Vinson Battle Group/Cruiser Destroyer Group Three, the Second Fleet, and the United States Atlantic Fleet. Ashore, he served as Special Assistant to the Director of the Systems Analysis Division in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. He later served as the Administrative Assistant to the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations and as the Administrative Assistant to the Deputy Chief on Naval Operations. He then served as the Administrative Aide to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations. He also served as Head of the Cruiser-Destroyer Combat Systems Requirements Section and Force Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer for the Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Atlantic

Fleet, and he directed the Joint Staff's Crisis Action Team for Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Admiral Clark's first flag assignment was at the U.S. Transportation Command where he was director of both Plans and Policy and Financial Management and Analysis. While he was commanding the Carl Vinson Battle Group, he deployed to the Arabian Gulf and served as Deputy Commander, Joint Task Force Southwest Asia. He also served as the Deputy Chief of Staff, United States Atlantic Fleet; the Director of Operations and subsequently Director of the Joint Staff. He became the 27th Chief of Naval Operations on July 21, 2000.

Admiral Clark's awards and decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal (three awards), the Distinguished Service Medal (two awards), the Legion of Merit (three awards), the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (four awards), the Navy Commendation Medal, and various service and campaign awards.

Admiral Vern Clark has shown the highest level of commitment and devotion to his country. Today we recognize him for his unwavering patriotism and dedication to both his profession and the American people.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Admiral Vern Clark, the 27th Chief of Naval Operations, on his retirement from the United States Navy.

HENRY J. HYDE UNITED NATIONS REFORM ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 17, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2745) to reform the United Nations, and for other purposes:

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I stand in wholehearted opposition to this outrageous Republican bill, which requires the Secretary of State to press for numerous reforms at the United Nations (UN) including budgeting, oversight and accountability, peacekeeping, and human rights. H.R. 2745, which requires the Secretary of State to withhold 50 percent of U.S. assessed contributions to the regular budget of the U.N., if the Secretary is unable to certify that the reforms called for by this bill have been met, is simply unacceptable.

The United Nations, which is based in our country, in New York City, was created in 1947 by the United Nations Participation Act, with a mission of assisting the President and the Department of State in conducting United States policy at the United Nations.

Along with my Democratic colleagues, I wholeheartedly believe in the goals of the United Nations, yet I do believe there is some need for reforming the organization. The idea that our country can just unilaterally withhold 50 percent of what we owe to the U.N. and then veto any new or expanded peacekeeping operations is not good politics, and does not serve our national interest by any means. I do however, strongly believe that the Lantos-Shays substitute, which, if passed, would empower the Secretary of State to withhold funds

if the suggested reforms are not met, would allow the United States to work with other nations to achieve true reform.

There are numerous problems with this bill. Perhaps the most ridiculous is the mandating of the withholding of 50 percent of our dues to the U.N. by giving inadequate flexibility to the Secretary of State. The bill, in effect, mandates a withholding of U.S. dues by imposing an unrealistically long list of 38 reforms, a number of which are virtually impossible to achieve in such a short period of time.

In my estimation, given that our country has been, and remains to be, the single largest contributor to the U.N., that we should not attempt to simply strong arm the organization with threats or sanctions merely to achieve the types of reforms we deem necessary. In fact, in 2002, our contributions to the U.N. totaled more than \$3.0 billion, a total which included over \$5 million in assessed contributions to their regular budget and U.N. affiliated agencies; about \$750 million in assessed contributions to U.N. peacekeeping activities; about \$50 million for war crimes tribunals; and about \$1.7 billion in voluntary contributions to U.N.-affiliated organizations and programs. To reiterate, I simply do not think that unilaterally withholding funds from the United Nations is a good way to achieve real reform of the organization, and if I had been able to be here today, I would have voted "yes" on the Lantos-Shays Substitute, and "no" on overall passage of the Hyde bill.

IN RECOGNITION OF CHIEF RON ACE FOR HIS 30 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Mrs. TAUSCHER and I, rise to pay tribute to Chief Ron Ace who is retiring from the City of Concord Police Department after 30 years of serving the residents of Concord and the entire region.

Ron Ace began his career in public service even before his work with the Concord Police Department when he served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1967 to 1971. As a Marine, he served a tour of duty in Viet Nam in 1969, attached to a Huey Gunship helicopter squadron as a door-gunner.

Chief Ace began his distinguished career with the City of Concord Police Department in 1975, having previously served as a Deputy Sheriff with Alameda County. In 1985, Ron Ace was promoted to Police Sergeant. Ten years later he became a Lieutenant, and in 1998, he was promoted to Captain.

In 1999, Ron Ace was promoted to Police Chief for the City of Concord. As Chief, he has been instrumental in helping the Police Department become recognized throughout the country as a model law enforcement agency.

During his tenure, Chief Ace helped to develop and advance the Department's generalist model of community policing. This approach has worked to support collaboration among police officers, residents, and civic leaders to ensure the safety of residents and the individuals who work to protect the City.

Chief Ace's efforts have resulted in an integrated philosophy of community policing that is visible throughout the entire community.

Chief Ace maintains membership in several peace officer associations and he is currently serving his second term as a Commissioner for the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

Chief Ace's work and commitment to Concord has been recognized by the Association of California School Administrators and the Northern California Juvenile Officer's Association. He also received the Warrington Stokes Award for Child Abuse Prevention.

Ron Ace has lived in Concord with his wife Carol and daughter Susan for more than 25 years. As a resident, he has gone far and beyond his professional responsibilities and served as an outstanding member of the Concord community. He has been active in school activities, youth sports and community organizations.

For 30 years, Chief Ron Ace has served the Concord Police Department and surrounding community. His hard work has improved the safety of the City, the community as a whole, and ensured an enduring legacy of public service in Concord. Today, we are proud to commend him for his service to the community, his dedication to duty and his commitment to the people of Concord.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ANGELA WILZ OF BISMARCK, ND

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, a constituent of mine, Angela Wilz of Bismarck, North Dakota, has shown tremendous courage during a very challenging year for her family. When her husband—CPT Grant Wilz of North Dakota's 141st Engineer Combat Battalion—was deployed to Iraq in February of 2004, Angela was forced to face the challenges of parenting and managing a household without her partner. Though this is always a difficult task when a spouse is serving overseas, Angela's situation was especially demanding.

Angela took over her husband's responsibilities as administrator of a local retirement home, working overtime to help meet the needs of those charged to her care. On top of these professional duties, Angela continued to provide love and care to the couple's three children—including their oldest child who has special needs.

To make matters more challenging, Angela was diagnosed with thyroid cancer during her husband's tour of duty. After undergoing two surgeries, Angela began to experience complications—including temporary paralysis that resulted in hospitalization. Never one to feel sorry for herself, Angela prayed for her health to return so that she could continue to be there for her children.

Thankfully, Angela is on her way towards a full recovery and Captain Wilz is now back home in North Dakota, safe and sound.

The courage showed by the Wilz family is indicative of the sacrifices made by the hus-

bands and wives of soldiers throughout our country's history. Whether their loved ones manned a battleship in the South Pacific, served in the sweltering jungle of Vietnam, or are currently performing dangerous duties in the sands of Iraq, it has been service members' spouses who provide love and care to anxious children and work long hours to make ends meet. Our nation's deeply felt gratitude goes out to all of our servicemen and women and their families who have endured so much on our behalf.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO KEITH AND RUTH SMILEY AND MOHONK CONSULTATIONS

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of my departed friends Keith and Ruth Smiley, on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of Mohonk Consultations. It is with great pleasure that I honor Keith and Ruth for their outstanding vision and their steadfast dedication to a more equitable and sustainable global community.

Keith Smiley was a good friend, who shared my enthusiasm for protecting and preserving the unique beauty of the Shawangunk Mountains. Keith's life reflected his Quaker upbringing. He treasured the world around him and sought to bring peace and social justice to people by promoting self-determination. He truly believed that all people had the innate right to be involved in the decisions that affected their day-to-day lives. However, the quality that made him special, and that I pay homage to today, was his ardent belief that these decisions, decisions on governing and development, must take into account their impact on the environment.

The idea of "consultations" had always been part of the Mohonk Mountain tradition and under Keith Smiley's leadership they were very successful. When the Mohonk Trust was formed in 1963, the Smileys were able to further their stewardship of the land as well as their goals of promoting international understanding and world peace through conferences and the exchange of ideas. After successfully hosting a gathering of environmental and international development groups for the Agency for International Development, Keith moved forward with his own dream for a unique environmental organization. Mohonk Consultations was officially incorporated in 1980. Since that time, the group has brought together the foremost leaders on the environment, the economy and other individuals seeking new, environmentally sound methods of getting things accomplished.

A tribute to Keith and his work would be incomplete without mentioning his wife, Ruth. Trained as a naturalist and horticulturist, she truly appreciated the sublime nature of her surroundings. What Keith brought to the table in discussion, Ruth brought through her photographs. She always had her camera ready to capture the beauty of the Mountains and was an eager participant in the numerous programs and nature walks sponsored at

Mohonk. Together, Keith and Ruth had a holistic approach to life, the environment and to the world around them. Their vision lives on today through Mohonk Consultations.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to submit these remarks in honor of Keith and Ruth Smiley and in recognition of the 25th anniversary of Mohonk Consultations.

IN HONOR OF THE GROWER-SHIPPER ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary organization based in my Central California district, the Grower-Shipper Association of Central California, on the occasion of its 75th anniversary. Initially formed in 1930 by a handful of growers and shippers to represent one commodity—iceberg lettuce, the GSA now includes over 300 members, spanning four Central Coast counties and representing dozens of commodities—virtually all vegetables, berries, mushrooms, and wine grapes. Through its long record of achievement, the Association has become the premier local representative of agriculture on the Central Coast.

For most of its first 50 years, the Association's work focused on the issue of labor. Today the GSA tackles an extensive workload including food safety and security, pest and plant disease prevention, control and eradication, land use in the agriculture/urban interface, water supply and distribution, market access and trade, agricultural research and education, government, legislative and regulatory affairs, worker safety and training, and labor and employment law.

While managing these increased challenges, the Grower-Shipper Association maintains a commitment to its members and community. Its mission statement declares "We are the local solution representing our members' agricultural needs." The Grower-Shipper Association lives up to this standard through education, representation, and advocacy. In 2003, GSA established the non-profit Grower-Shipper Association Foundation to further its support of the Central Coast agricultural community. Funds from the Foundation will allow the Association to significantly expand its support of educational, training, and other programs of service to the community.

The Grower-Shipper Association has made a substantial contribution to both the agriculture industry and the broader community of the Central Coast. The Association's achievements are a direct result of the leadership of its members, boards, and presidents, past and present. For 75 years the GSA organization has earned a reputation for integrity that honors the culture, companies, and employees of Central Coast agriculture that have made this region the most productive and innovative in the world. Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honor to recognize the Grower-Shipper Association of Central California.

NOAA VESSEL TIME CHARTER

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, beginning in Fiscal Year 2001 Congress began providing funds for a vessel time charter for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, to use in addressing the critical hydrographic survey backlog. The vessel time charter added a third method of acquiring the data needed to update and improve the hydrographic charts of our nation's waterways. These charts are essential for our national security, defense and economy. NOAA now uses (1) its own hydrographic survey vessels, (2) data—contracts under the Brooks Act, and (3) a long-term, multi-year, vessel lease/charter of a private sector vessel with contract hydrographers.

The long-term vessel lease/charter, is now completing its first year of operation. I rise today to urge NOAA to reprogram funds to extend the current charter through the end of this calendar year. This extension will allow enough data to be gathered to determine whether the continued use of the time charter is cost effective, and competitive with other methods of acquiring hydrographic data. It will also keep the contract going long enough to determine if fiscal year 2006 funds are available for continued long term vessel charters. To emphasize the bipartisan importance of this issue, I ask that the May 31, 2005, letter to the NOAA Administrator that my good friend and colleague, NORM DICKS signed with me, be entered into the RECORD.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, May 31, 2005.

Vice Admiral CONRAD C. LAUTENBACHER, Jr.,
Undersecretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Herbert Clark Hoover Building, Washington DC.

DEAR ADMIRAL LAUTENBACHER: As you are aware, the Nation faces a huge backlog of critical hydrographic survey work. To reduce this backlog, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) had developed a three-pronged approach. NOAA is using 1) its own hydrographic survey vessels and personnel; 2) data acquisition contracts; and 3) a leased vessel staffed by contract hydrographers.

In fiscal years 2002 through 2005, Congress provided funding and specific direction to NOAA to enter into a multi-year vessel lease. After a lengthy bid process, the Military Sealift Command entered into a lease on NOAA's behalf that included a base year, and 4 one-year options. The first year of that lease will soon end, and unless it is extended this portion of the hydrographic surveying initiative will end. The bidders, including the winning bidder, based their bids on a 5-year lease period. Therefore, it was very disappointing to learn that NOAA does not intend to exercise even its first annual lease option, especially since NOAA appears to be satisfied with the work that has been done by the leased vessel.

We have requested that the Appropriations Committee include funding to continue the vessel lease program in fiscal year 2006. This will allow NOAA time to acquire and examine cost data on the lease to determine if vessel leasing is a cost effective method of acquiring hydrographic data. While this request is pending, we urge you to extend the

vessel lease with the roughly \$1.6 million remaining of the amounts already appropriated for that purpose. This will hold open the door to allow NOAA to exercise the first annual contract option if Congress appropriates vessel lease funds in Fiscal Year 2006.

Both Congress and NOAA deliberated long and hard before establishing the longterm vessel lease program as an additional method to reduce the survey backlog. Given the time and effort it has taken to get that program under way, it would be very inefficient for NOAA to kill the program this year, and then go through another multi-year contract bidding process starting next year. Therefore, we urge you to use the remaining funds to extend the vessel contract.

Thank you for your expeditious consideration of this request. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

DON YOUNG,
*Congressman for All
Alaska.*

NORMAN D. DICKS,
Member of Congress.

CELEBRATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF GARY JOB CORPS IN SAN MARCOS, TEXAS

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Gary Job Corps for 40 years of successful service to the people of San Marcos, Texas.

Located on a campus of 1,000 acres at the former Gary Army Air Field, Gary Job Corps is the largest of 118 Job Corps campuses nationwide, enrolling nearly 2,000 young men and women. It represents the fulfillment of President Johnson's 1964 promise to develop a national job training program for youth, a promise he made while visiting the former Southwest Texas State University.

For 40 years, Gary Job Corps has been helping young men and women achieve their academic and professional dreams. In addition to providing vocational training for careers in the health occupations, business, computers, cooking, and numerous other industries, it has sent on its alumni to the student bodies of Texas State University, Alamo Community College, and other institutions of higher education.

Gary Job Corps has helped countless young Texans achieve their life goals, and has helped bring economic growth, educational achievement, and the promise of a better future to Central Texas. I am happy to have this opportunity to congratulate Gary Job Corps on the occasion of its 40th anniversary, and I wish all of its staff and students many more years of success.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on World Refugee Day, to pay tribute to the indomitable spirit and courage of the world's ref-

ugees and internally displaced persons (IDP's), as well as the brave people who help them rebuild their lives. I recognize the generosity of the United States and its assistance to refugees. However, the next year promises to be a unique opportunity for the return of refugees, and in order to seize this opportunity, we must increase our investment in long-term development to make refugee returns durable. I also urge the Bush Administration government to do more to protect current refugees, resolve the conflicts that produce refugees, and prevent future refugee crises.

Among the most vulnerable groups of people in the world are those who are displaced, whether as a result of conflict, persecution or other human rights violations. Often losing everything but hope, refugees and IDP's are among the great survivors of our time. Initially, the fear that refugees and IDP's must overcome may be the immediate one of trying to escape the horrors of war and persecution, the pain of losing homes and loved ones, and the ordeal of flight. Refugees and IDP's deserve our respect—not just for enduring the dangers and violence of the crises that made them refugees—but also for the courage they show in rebuilding their lives and contributing to society in difficult or, unfamiliar circumstances. Albert Einstein, Victor Hugo, Congressman TOM LANTOS, Thabo Mbeki, Marlene Dietrich, and Paul Rusesabagina (of Hotel Rwanda fame) were all refugees whose phenomenal achievements earned the world's respect. Today's refugees are also heroes and deserve no less than our respect.

But giving our respect to refugees and IDP's—truly honoring their courage—requires much more than flattering rhetoric and pledges of solidarity. It requires us to look back at what the world has done well to assist refugees and IDP's. It also requires us to deepen our understanding of the perils and fears they continue to face. In addition, if we truly want to celebrate their courage, it means we must focus our attention on what still needs to be done to help them.

People have fled persecution from the moment in history when they began forming communities. The tradition of offering asylum began at almost the same time. And when nations began to develop an international conscience in the early 20th century, efforts to help refugees also spread across the globe. In 1921, Fridtjof Nansen was appointed as the first refugee High Commissioner of the League of Nations, the forerunner of the United Nations. The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) began as a small organization, with a three-year mandate to help resettle millions of European refugees who were still homeless in the aftermath of the Second World War. Since that time, the organization has continually expanded to meet the growing needs of refugees and other displaced people. In more than five decades, the agency has helped an estimated 50 million people restart their lives. Today, a staff of more than 6,000 people in more than 100 countries continues to help some 17 million persons in every corner of the world. Today I commend the outstanding, tireless work of the UNHCR. However, as a former high commissioner said, the fact that the world still finds a need for the UNHCR should serve as a sobering reminder of the international community's continuing failure to prevent prejudice, persecution, poverty and other root causes of conflict and displacement.

In our tribute to the world's refugees, it is important not to forget the internally displaced persons, or IDP's. Last week, during his first few days as the 10th U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres reminded the world that millions of internally displaced people are not currently being cared for. The internal displacement problem is one of the biggest neglected humanitarian problems that we face. The abstract term "internal displacement," created to distinguish IDP's from refugees, fails to convey the immense human suffering most internally displaced people are forced to undergo. The act of displacement itself often is accompanied by violence and the most serious human rights violations such as killings, torture, kidnappings and rape. IDP's are a very vulnerable category and most of them receive less assistance than refugees in camps. Whereas refugees have managed to cross borders to escape persecution, the internally displaced, for various reasons, are stuck within the same borders between which forces of violence and persecution continue to hunt them.

The number of people "of concern" to UNHCR, including IDP's, grew last year by over 2 million to 19.2 million. The increase was mainly the result of a rise in the numbers of internally displaced people and stateless persons to 7.6 million—up from 5.3 million at the end of 2003. Of the world's approximately 25 million IDP's, 13 million are in Africa. Sudan has the largest IDP population in the world, with between 5 and 6 million displaced persons. Sudan also is the country with the largest number of newly displaced persons in 2004 (about 1 million, mostly in Darfur, where a total of 2 million IDP's survive on a day-to-day basis). Sudan is followed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo with 2.3 million IDP's. In Colombia, Afro-Colombians continue to be caught in the crossfire between government troops and rebels. Afro-Colombians represent a disproportionate level of the country's IDP population of more than 2 million, which represents the world's third largest IDP population. Iraq and northern Uganda each have around 2 million IDP's.

Despite the scale of the worldwide internal displacement crisis, its destabilizing effects on regional security, and the vulnerabilities of many internally displaced populations, the U.S. and other members of the international community have been slow in addressing the issue. Refugees, usually far more visible, continue to receive a great deal more international attention, although their number is only about half that of IDP's. The IDP problem is a humanitarian challenge, as well as a challenge to peace-building and post-conflict recovery. For example, it will be extremely difficult to rebuild Sudan with millions of persons uprooted and on the move. As we see in the massive displacement crises of Colombia and Somalia, the U.S. and the rest of the international community are far from being capable of effectively responding to or preventing such emergencies. Due to the chronic under-funding of aid agencies by donor governments, the IDP problem will not likely see progress towards a solution any time soon. Unless we change this shameful status quo.

Today, I call on the Bush administration to take three specific steps to help the internally displaced. First, I call on the Bush administration to actively pressure countries that are using the global "war on terror" to justify brutal

repression and the displacement of millions. In 2004, several governments continued or intensified anti-rebel military campaigns labeled "counter-terrorist" operations, which resulted in new internal displacements and prevented return, including in Chechnya (Russian Federation), Aceh (Indonesia), Colombia, northern Uganda and Nepal. Second, I call on the Bush administration to reexamine the effectiveness of U.S. bureaucratic structures that are intended to assist IDP's. Currently, the responsibility for assisting IDP's is shared between the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration and the U.S. Agency for International Development; however, this responsibility is poorly defined, suffers from lack of coherence, and is vulnerable to bureaucratic turf battles. Regarding IDP's, the relationship between PRM and USAID must be better defined in order to facilitate the creation of a more effective system to monitor and assist the internally displaced.

Finally, I call upon the Bush administration to set up a fund specifically intended to assist IDP's. IDP's continue to fall through the cracks in our handling of crises. Establishing such a fund—to be administered by the appropriate government agency—would serve as a first step toward not treating IDP's as an afterthought. It would also serve as a model to the international community that would facilitate an improvement in how we address the sad phenomenon of internal displacement. In summary, let us not neglect IDP's, for their struggle is often just as dangerous as that of refugees, and their courage also merits a tribute today, a tribute that translates to humanitarian action.

Today, the worldwide suffering of uprooted peoples continues. There are currently nearly 20 million refugees and other persons of concern to the UNHCR, the majority of whom are women and children. Afghans remain by far the biggest refugee group in the world at 2.1 million. In Sudan, the increase in refugees in 2004 accounted for the largest increase in the world. Sudan produced 125,000 new refugees, mostly people fleeing genocide in the Darfur region to neighboring Chad. The total number of Sudanese refugees world-wide rose to 731,000 in 2004, from 606,000 in 2003, an increase of 20 percent.

Recent trends give some room for guarded optimism. On June 17, the UNHCR reported that the global number of refugees fell 4 percent in 2004 to 9.2 million, the lowest total in almost a quarter of a century. Repatriations are also up. In 2004, a total of 1.5 million refugees repatriated voluntarily, an increase of some 400,000 over the previous year. The 2004 returns include 940,000 refugees who went back to Afghanistan and 194,000 who returned to Iraq. In addition, over the past few years, successful repatriation operations in Africa and the countries of former Yugoslavia have reduced significantly the number of people of concern to the UNHCR. In Burma, recent developments are providing a basis on which to plan for the eventual return of refugees in Thailand. Across the globe, resettlement continues expanding through the practice of group resettlement. The UNHCR, with support from the U.S., has succeeded in helping several million people begin new lives.

Despite the good news, though, numerous serious challenges remain. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the numbers of refugees increased by 2.4 percent, pushing the

total number of Congolese refugees up to 462,000. In Northern Uganda the murderous Lord's Resistance Army continues to abduct thousands for use as soldiers and sex slaves. In Burundi, under pressure from Rwanda, the Burundi government recently announced that 10,000 Rwandan asylum seekers who had fled Rwanda since the beginning of April in fear of persecution over the 1994 genocide would not be granted asylum, despite not having been screened to see if they met the definition of a refugee. Already, at least 5,000 of the refugees have been returned to Rwanda, and because the UN was not granted access to the refugees, many fear they were forced to return. In Afghanistan, there is a need for more comprehensive solutions for Afghans still outside their country, and dialogue between the UNHCR and relevant governments and other stakeholders in the Afghanistan situation must continue. In addition, although a peace deal in January officially ended Sudan's north-south conflict, at least 7,500 people had fled into Uganda this year, and refugees and IDP's say that food distribution had stopped in camps inside Sudan.

Because of its long history of displacement, and since Africa Refugee Day corresponds with World Refugee Day in many countries, Africa merits special attention in this examination of refugees and IDP's. Africa hosts approximately 3 million refugees, about 30 percent of the world's total. Africa also hosts 13 million IDP's, or more than half of the world's total IDP population. In Africa today, return and reintegration opportunities abound if we can get the politics of peace right. There are an unprecedented number of repatriation and reintegration operations currently underway—particularly in Burundi, Liberia, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, and Somalia. In 2004, refugees from Liberia (100,000), Burundi (90,000), Angola (64,000), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (30,000) returned to their countries in large numbers and the UNHCR started a program intended to help an additional 340,000 Liberians repatriate. In March 2004, the UNHCR took an important step to act on the improved prospects for the return home of millions of long-time refugees in Africa. The UNHCR launched its Dialogue on Voluntary Repatriation and Sustainable Reintegration in Africa. The Africa Dialogue calls on the international community to seize this unique opportunity for the return of up to 2 million refugees and several million displaced persons across the continent, and it stresses the need to invest in long-term development to make returns durable. Today, the Africa Dialogue continues to make progress; however, considerable challenges still lie ahead. Returns must be matched by post-conflict reconstruction and reintegration in order to break the cycle of violence and make repatriation sustainable. The populations of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia all await the outcome of political negotiations, and the U.S. and the UNHCR must lend their support to these peace efforts while assisting the victims of conflict.

Of great concern, the genocide being perpetuated by the government of Sudan in that country's Darfur region has forced approximately 2 million Darfurians to become internally displaced. In addition, more than 200,000 Sudanese have fled Darfur and are now living in camps in neighboring Chad. For the

UNHCR mission in eastern Chad, where 300 UNHCR staff assist a total of 213,000 refugees in 12 camps, the U.S. has given \$18 million in 2005, or half of all donors' contributions. However, the UNHCR still lacks about \$40 million to cover the 2005 needs-based budget.

Across the border from the camps in eastern Chad, the situation in Darfur is more dire. In Darfur, the mismatch between humanitarian capacity and human need grows more deadly by the day. The UNHCR Darfur mission has a total of 25 staff. The U.S. has provided no money for UNHCR operations in Darfur in 2005, although half the year has already passed. There is now a disgraceful \$30 million shortfall from what the UNHCR needs in Darfur for 2005. The lack of security is still a tremendous problem, partly due to an increase in small arms trafficking. Government-recruited and armed Arab militias, also known as Janjaweed, continue to target civilians, and in April, rape, kidnapping, and banditry increased. Aid workers are still at great risk of being targeted. Due to the conflict and failed harvests, the food situation is serious. More than 3.5 million IDP's are in critical need of food and are running dangerously short of water. The World Food Program does not have what it needs to feed persons of concern past July. Local Sudanese officials are pressuring some IDP's to return to their villages, despite the constant threat of government-supported Janjaweed militias and other armed groups. Although the presence of the AU force in Darfur promises some protection, it will never be sufficient.

A country of concern that is often forgotten is Western Sahara, a swath of land in West Africa that lies along the Atlantic Ocean. In camps in Algeria, about 165,000 refugees from Western Sahara, a country that has been occupied illegally by Morocco since 1975, continue to live in "deplorable conditions," according to a recent report from UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. The government of Morocco has promised the people of Western Sahara, the Sahrawi, a vote to determine their own future. However, more than a decade later, that vote has yet to occur, and Morocco continues to disregard international law. No progress has been made in UN efforts to find a solution to the dispute between Morocco and the Sahrawis. The U.S. must put pressure on Morocco, not only to end the exile and suffering of Sahrawi refugees, but also to allow a free, fair and transparent referendum to determine the country's future and prevent the creation of more refugees.

Another source of concern is Tanzania. A generous host of refugees over the last 30 years, Tanzania continues to host Africa's largest number of refugees. However, recently, a troubling policy shift seems to have emerged, reflecting an increasingly harsh stance towards refugees. Local and national politicians are feeling increasing pressure from their constituencies due to the perception that refugees receive more attention and assistance than local communities and have in some cases publicly blamed them for crime and the spread of disease. In 2004, the government frequently did not provide protection against refoulement, the return of persons to a country where they feared persecution; on a number of occasions, the government refouled refugees and refused persons seeking asylum or refugee status. In addition, the government

at times did not cooperate with the UNHCR during 2004. Although repatriations of Burundian refugees living in Tanzania continues, the U.S. and the international community must engage Tanzania regularly to ensure that the country does not turn its back on those in need, and on decades of humanitarian tradition. At the least, we must listen to Tanzania's concerns and explore options to provide more support to what has traditionally been the most hospitable country in Africa for refugees.

The best solution for refugees is voluntary repatriation, or going back to one's original homeland once all the key conditions are in place. However, for some people who fled their homes amid conflict and widespread human rights abuses, returning is still a distant prospect. For this reason, finding creative solutions for meeting the needs of refugees and the local populations that host them is critical. One example is the *Zambian Initiative*, a government-led "Development through Local Integration Project" established in 2002. The *Zambian Initiative* has promoted a holistic approach in addressing the needs of refugees and Zambians living in refugee hosting areas in the Western Province of Zambia. By facilitating cooperation between the host communities and the refugees, the UNHCR and the Zambian government have enabled the production of food and housing, thus alleviating the effects of a food deficit, poor infrastructure and limited access to services and economic opportunities. The presence of refugees can stretch local resources and infrastructure and exacerbate poverty. However, in Zambia, local development committees involve the local populations and refugees by identifying needs and projects in areas such as health and education. While voluntary repatriation of Angolan refugees continues, the *Zambian Initiative* has created a sense of ownership while pursuing durable solutions for refugees through local integration. We must commend and encourage this type of innovative approach to refugees and the pressure their presence can place on local populations. Let us use *World Refugee Day* to call for more such innovation, so that refugees will not be trapped in the same sad status quo.

The donor response to the Indian Ocean tsunami in December 2004 was admirable and generated unprecedented world-record contributions, thanks in part to the dramatic nature of the tsunami, its effects on numerous countries, and its timing, the day after Christmas. However, other humanitarian catastrophes, especially the needs of refugees and IDP's in Africa, remain virtually ignored. As UN Humanitarian Coordinator Jan Egeland has pointed out, in many ways, Africa has a silent tsunami several times each year. If you look at the numbers in Sudan or the Democratic Republic of the Congo, you see that the impact of conflict on refugees and IDP's is equivalent to a tsunami every few months. Today, we have an opportunity to honor the courage of refugees and IDP's by recognizing the magnitude of their suffering, but to do this we must act out of the same compassion that drove us to alleviate the suffering of the tsunami victims.

The UNHCR is working hard to resolve many of the protracted situations around the world. But it is a labor and resource-intensive endeavor, requiring sustained international attention and continuing donor support, including support from the United States. The same is true of UNHCR's advocacy efforts and its work

to ensure a smooth transition from repatriation to reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction so that refugees can go home and stay home. The results show that an investment in solutions is a good investment indeed.

The U.S. has shown great hospitality and generosity in hosting and assisting refugees and other displaced people. In 2004, the U.S. welcomed 52,000 refugees from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. In absolute terms, the U.S. continues to be the leading donor to UNHCR and for humanitarian assistance to refugees world-wide. However, as a proportion of national wealth, the U.S. contribution to refugees and IDP's lags far behind most western countries. The persistent failure of donor government, including the U.S., to provide funding for relief efforts is the most critical flaw in the humanitarian aid process today. The UN Consolidated Appeal (CAP) is a collaborative assessment of the minimal financial commitment necessary to provide essential emergency assistance in humanitarian crises. Despite the CAP, all assistance programming is under-funded by almost 35 percent every year, leaving tens of millions of men, women, and children around the world to suffer needlessly. The recurring shortfall in financial assistance is not the only thing hindering our response to the refugee and IDP crises of the world. In the last five years, global food aid has dropped by nearly 50 percent, despite an 8 percent increase in the number of chronically hungry people in the world. In addition, funding delays continue to jeopardize the progress of emergency relief for refugees and IDP's. In Somalia in recent years for example, nearly 50 percent of all funds received for emergency assistance arrived in the last quarter of the year. And currently, reportedly due to bureaucratic delay, the U.S. has still not contributed any funds to the UNHCR operation in Darfur, although we are already in the second half of 2005.

The U.S. must act as a leader to address the persistent and damaging delays in funding for refugees and IDP's. If the U.S. wants to reform the UN and render the international donor community more effective, this is a good place to start. Therefore, I call on the Bush administration and other members of the international community to increase financial commitments to humanitarian appeals for refugees and IDP's. At the least, the international community should pledge to provide 75 percent of the aid requested in the CAP pledge in order to ensure that the most critical emergency relief programs remain funded.

Many prosperous countries with strong economies complain about the large number of asylum seekers and refugees, but they offer little to prevent refugee crises. Humanitarian action is of limited value if it does not form part of a wider strategic and political framework aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict. Experience has shown time and time again that humanitarian action alone cannot solve problems which are fundamentally political in nature. Yet all too often, humanitarian organizations like the UNHCR have found themselves isolated and alone in dangerous and difficult situations (such as Darfur), where they have had to operate without adequate financial and political support. Therefore, we must invest in lasting solutions: conflict prevention, return, and reintegration. We must support the UNHCR's efforts to ensure international protection and assistance to refugees

and IDP's through a range of solutions, including improved management of operations. We must not demonstrate a lack of political commitment to solving refugee problems during the post-conflict phase, when the spotlight of the international media has moved away. We must more fully recognize the link between human displacement and international peace and security. History has shown that displacement is not only a consequence of conflicts; it can also cause conflict. Without human security, there can be no peace and stability. The U.S. must recognize the link between refugees and IDP's, on the one hand, and stability and the seeds of democracy on the other.

If we are to honor the courage of refugees and IDP's today, we must come together with the UNHCR, nongovernmental organizations, and other donor governments to actively pursue durable solutions. If we fail to do so, refugees and IDP's will remain in their miserable conditions—surviving on a handful of maize each day, living in immense boredom under windblown tents, and clinging to their hope amid memories of atrocities. On World Refugee Day and every other day, let us show the refugees and IDP's that we are with them. Having endured conflict, rape, abduction, trafficking, chronic hunger, squalor, and other unspeakable suffering, the courage of refugees and IDP's has been tested beyond what we can imagine. However, despite their courage, they remain vulnerable to the loss of hope. If we will allow them to lose hope, we allow them to lose courage. In our tribute to their indomitable courage, we must pledge never to let that happen. We must pledge to help them rebuild their lives today, to commit ourselves to long-term solutions, and to prevent the nightmare from reoccurring tomorrow.

AUTHORIZATION OF PARKINSON'S
DISEASE RESEARCH EDUCATION
AND CLINICAL CENTERS

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, Parkinson's disease is a serious health problem in the United States. Up to 1.5 million Americans have the disease and approximately 60,000 new cases are diagnosed each year nationwide. By 2010, an estimated 39,000 veterans who are age 85 and older will have this progressive neurological disorder. Treatments exist for Parkinson's, but medical research continues to improve treatments and to find a cure.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) took an important step in 2001 towards eradicating this disease by establishing Parkinson's Disease Research Education and Clinical Centers (PADRECCs). In addition to providing an unparalleled environment for researchers to see their results rapidly and directly applied to better patient care and shared with the medical and scientific community, these centers of excellence are the backbone that now enables the VA to provide excellent care to veterans with Parkinson's disease and to conduct research.

Through the PADRECCs and the National VA Parkinson's Disease Consortium—a network of nationally dispersed VA clinicians with expertise and/or interest in the fields of Parkin-

son's disease and related movement disorders—the VA is able to treat 42,000 veterans with Parkinson's disease.

Together the PADRECCs and the Consortium serve as a channel for collaboration and development in the areas of clinical care, scientific research and educational outreach. The collaborative efforts of the PADRECCs and Consortium provide veterans nationwide with integrated, expert medical care and access to the full spectrum of state-of-the-art diagnostic and therapeutic services to meet and exceed the standard of care.

In just a brief time since their inception, the six PADRECCs, which are based at the VA medical centers in Houston, West Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Portland-Seattle, Richmond and San Francisco, have made enormous contribution to Parkinson's disease care and research and training of health care professionals. The PADRECCs, including the VA hospitals in Albuquerque, Las Vegas, Lorna Linda and Long Beach, Calif., Phoenix, San Diego and Tucson, which are affiliated with the Southwestern PADRECC located at the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center put VA at the forefront of the landmark clinical study to assess the effectiveness of surgical implantation of deep brain stimulators in reducing the symptoms of the disease.

The efforts of the VA PADRECCs are the model of innovation in the delivery of healthcare and research for chronic disease in the veteran population. The efforts of the PADRECCs deserve continued support.

Today, I am proud to introduce H.R. 2959 along with Mr. BAKER of Louisiana, Mr. BOEHLERT of New York, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Ms. MALONEY of New York, Mr. PICKERING of Mississippi, Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. BLUMENAUER of Oregon, which would permanently authorize these six PADRECCs. The Disabled American Veterans and Parkinson's Action Network support permanently authorizing the PADRECCs.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill which will benefit tens of thousands of veterans and provide additional hope for all Americans who have Parkinson's disease.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,
Washington, DC, June 17, 2005.

HON. LANE EVANS,

Ranking Member, House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE EVANS: The Disabled American Veterans supports your draft bill that would authorize the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to establish six Parkinson's Disease Research, Education and Clinical Centers. Currently, VA medical centers treat over 40,000 Parkinson's disease patients every year.

These centers would conduct research covering basic biomedicine, rehabilitation, health services delivery, and clinical trials to assess the effectiveness of treatments such as surgical implantation of deep brain stimulators in reducing the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. Furthermore, the establishment of a consortium would allow VA to design a national network of VA clinicians with expertise and interest in the fields of Parkinson's disease and related movement disorders. The collaboration and development in the areas of clinical care, scientific research, and educational outreach would ensure specialized care will be embedded throughout the continuum of care provided by the VA health care system.

Thank you for your efforts to improve VA's specialized medical programs for serv-

ice connected disabled veterans, and thank you for your continued support of disabled veterans

Sincerely,

JOSEPH A. VIOLANTE,
National Legislative Director.

PARKINSON'S ACTION NETWORK,
Washington, DC, June 16, 2005.
House of Representatives, Veterans' Affairs Committee, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE: On behalf of the Parkinson's Action Network (PAN), I would like to express support for legislation that will be introduced by Rep. Lane Evans shortly that provides for the establishment of the Parkinson's Disease Research Education and Clinical Centers (PADRECCs) in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

PAN is the unified education and advocacy voice of the Parkinson's community—more than one million Americans and their families. Through education and interaction with the Parkinson's community, scientists, lawmakers, opinion leaders, and the public, PAN leads the fight to ease the burden and find a cure. PAN increases awareness about Parkinson's disease and seeks federal support for Parkinson's research.

More than one million Americans have Parkinson's disease, with approximately 60,000 more diagnosed each year. As the disease progresses, patients are ultimately robbed of their ability to speak, walk, and perform many of the activities of daily life such as rising from a chair or rolling over in bed.

PADRECCs, as suggested by their name, are charged with conducting clinical and basic science research, administering national outreach and education programs, and providing state-of-the-art clinical care. These services, provided by the existing six PADRECCs, are vital not only to veterans, but to the entire community.

We firmly believe that patients, family members, and the general public should continue to have access to the invaluable services provided by the Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinical Centers. On this basis, PAN respectfully requests your support of this important legislation.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me or Mary Richards, PAN Director of Government Relations at (202) 638-4101.

Sincerely,

AMY L. COMSTOCK,
Executive Director.

CONGRATULATING COMMERCE
BANK AND PRESIDENT IGNACIO
URRABAZO ON THE OPENING OF
THEIR NEW HEADQUARTERS

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Commerce Bank and President Ignacio Urrabazo on the opening of their new headquarters.

The headquarters will serve as the bank's primary location for the Laredo market. Commerce Bank is dedicated to providing convenient and superior services to its customers, even if that means traveling to a customers' place of business, or working far beyond a banker's traditional hours. Customers are known by their names, not by their account

numbers. This personal attention allows services to be tailored to the specific needs of their clients.

Commerce Bank President and CEO Ignacio Urrabazo sees the expansion as part of a larger commitment to help accommodate the outstanding growth that Laredo is currently experiencing. Mr. Urrabazo supports a community-oriented banking approach, and is active in minority causes. In 1999, he co-founded Minbanc, a nonprofit organization which works to support and promote the continued success of minority-owned banks across America. Mr. Urrabazo also endeavors to encourage minority businesses in the oil and gas industries.

I am honored to recognize the Commerce Bank and its President Ignacio Urrabazo on the opening of their new headquarters in Laredo. The outstanding work put forth by the Commerce Bank and President Urrabazo helps foster Laredo's continued economic growth and success.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to represent in the U.S. Congress thousands and thousands of refugees who live in St. Paul and the East Metro area. Whether they are originally from East Asia, East Africa, Eastern Europe or Central America, Minnesota is now their home and we call them our neighbors, our co-workers and our friends.

The resettlement of refugees in Minnesota is a success story. We should all celebrate the economic, social and cultural contributions made over the past generation who found peace, hope and opportunity in Minnesota. For the refugees and the communities that welcomed them it has not always been easy, but it has worked and worked to the benefit of our state.

Let me acknowledge the state, county and local government officials as well as the staff and educators from our school districts who work so hard to get families settled and transitioned to life in Minnesota. Let me also thank the resettlement agencies, community based non-profits, the faith community and the many families and volunteers. This collective effort has kept the refugee resettlement experience positive for both new Minnesotans as well as long-time residents.

While today is a celebration of sorts, I do not want anyone here to forget that suffering also continues for the more than 19 million people around the world fleeing persecution. The fact that more than nine million people are refugees and almost eight million more are internally displaced inside their own country due to violence—while millions more are stateless or seeking asylum.

Earlier this year I traveled to Eastern Chad to visit refugees in camps along the border of Sudan's Darfur region. The men, women and children I met had escaped the horrors of mass murder, mass rape, the burning of their villages, the killing of their animals and the poisoning of their wells. These exhausted souls were the survivors a genocide that continues to go on today—at this very moment.

Just as Minnesota has been a refuge—a place of safe, I want to publicly commend the people of Chad, a very, very poor nation with difficult geography, little water and few resources, for providing nearly a million Sudanese survivors of genocide a safe place. In normal times the people of Chad have very little, now they are sharing what they have with the Darfur refugees.

In Darfur, at least 180,000 people have been killed, starved to death or died of disease because of the intentional campaign of cleansing by the militias sponsored by the government of Sudan. Tens of thousand of women and girls have been raped and tortured in this campaign of terror.

Inside Sudan almost 2 million people are displaced—driven from their homes. Let me praise the work that Hugh Parmer and his staff at the American Refugee Committee are doing to keep people alive in Sudan—they are true heroes.

In the camp I visited in Chad the women were exhausted, the children were restless and the men were few—most had been killed. The struggles of daily life were unimaginable—little water, little food, almost no shelter and only very limited health services. The trauma of escaping genocide, surviving rape, watching one's family be murdered is almost too much to comprehend. Yet, these brave souls fight on to care for their children, hope for the future and work together to make the most of every day.

The people of the U.S. are helping—and helping a lot. More than \$1 billion in aid and emergency humanitarian relief has been provided to keep people alive. The courageous humanitarian workers who help deliver this relief take big risks and work tirelessly and they deserve both our praise and our prayers.

The crisis in Darfur is man-made, not some natural catastrophe. This is genocide—mass, planned murder of thousands. This is a horror. Ending the genocide in Darfur requires more than humanitarian aid—it requires the political will of nations—especially the United States willing to stand up and say these lives have value—this killing must be stopped. Every diplomatic, political, and if necessary—military tool—must be used to stop the killing.

This brings me to a disturbing and shameful recent episode. For all the good the U.S. has done with humanitarian relief for the victims of Darfur—our government also appears committed to working with the perpetrators of the genocide.

It was recently reported that in April of this year, a U.S. government jet owned by the CIA flew Major General Salah Abdullah Gosh—the head of Sudan's intelligence agency—to Washington for meetings with high level CIA officials. This was a reward for his government's work with the U.S. on the war on terrorism.

The government of Sudan is officially designated a "state sponsor of terrorism." The government of Sudan has participated in the murder and terrorizing of tens of thousands of their own citizens. The women and children I met in the refugee camps were victims of the Sudanese government's terror.

It is beyond my belief that a senior official complicit in this terror, this genocide could be jettied to Washington with our tax dollars to be commended for his "counter-terrorism" efforts. This episode is offensive, a slap in the face to every survivor of this horrible ethnic cleansing

and is truly a betrayal of the value we share as Americans. A likely perpetrator of genocide should never be the dinner guest of our government.

As a superpower, as a free people, as a people who will generously reach out anywhere in the world to help people in need, we cannot be on the side of the victims and the murders at the same time. The terror the people of Darfur are experiencing every day must be the same War on Terror our Nation is fighting—those people's lives have value and it is wrong for the CIA or anyone else in Washington to sell them out.

Let me say in conclusion, that I respect and admire the courage, the determination and amazing spirit of the refugees I have had the privilege to meet and know—both in Minnesota and in Chad.

The struggle and journey to find peace, security, hope and opportunity is real for refugees and anyone forced to flee their home. This is exactly what all human beings seek in life. It is my hope and it will be my determined commitment to myself, the families I work for in Washington, and the women and children I met from Darfur, that our government work tirelessly to make sure there are fewer refugees, fewer displaced persons and much, much more peace, security, hope and opportunity over the next twenty-five years.

This is truly the world I hope we can build together.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TRUE REINVESTMENT FOR AMTRAK INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to be joined by Mr. NADLER and Ms. SCHWARTZ to introduce the True Reinvestment for Amtrak Infrastructure in the 21st Century Act, otherwise known as TRAIN-21, which would provide the true federal commitment to Amtrak that has been missing for too long.

Amtrak is currently under attack by people who don't recognize the tremendous benefits generated by intercity rail in this country. Not the billions of dollars generated in commerce, nor the thousands of businesses along the Northeast Corridor whose employees are dependent on Amtrak, nor the national security value of having an additional mode of transportation, nor the benefits to our environment by taking cars off the road. However, 25 million people did recognize those benefits and rode Amtrak in 2004, which was the 2nd straight year of record ridership.

Amtrak is crucial for more than just the businessmen who ride its trains along the Northeast Corridor. It is just as crucial for commuters who unknowingly are dependent on Amtrak's survival. Were Amtrak to go bankrupt, nearly 100,000 New Jersey commuters would be stranded, because over three-quarters of New Jersey Transit trains ride on track owned and maintained by Amtrak. And Amtrak is just as crucial for the people in rural Montana or Colorado, who depend on the train as their link to the national transportation system.

There is no question that Amtrak has its share of problems. But there are two ways to

address Amtrak's problems. The first is what we've been doing: blame Amtrak, blame labor, and keep cutting until the system becomes profitable. This method has been a failure. Keeping Amtrak on a starvation budget means maintenance can't be performed, the system can't be improved, and service deteriorates. This path leads to certain bankruptcy and the elimination of intercity passenger rail service in this country.

The people who prefer this method of cutting funding and raising expectations seem to forget a few simple truths: First, the reason Amtrak was created in the first place was because the railroads were hemorrhaging money on passenger service and begged the government to take it off their hands. Second, public transportation is not profitable. No public transit system in the country covers its operating expenses with passenger fares, and virtually no intercity passenger rail systems in the world turn a profit, either. The trains that we admire in Europe are supported yearly by large government subsidies. Third, no form of transportation pays for itself, including highways. But we subsidize them because they improve the quality of our lives. And that's what transportation is about. It's not just getting from one place to another. It's about creating jobs, revitalizing neighborhoods, stimulating commerce, redeveloping underutilized land, and making us more secure.

That's why I'm introducing this legislation today that will put us on the other path towards solving Amtrak's problems: Actually giving it the funding it needs to be successful. That means addressing the huge backlog of deferred maintenance on the Northeast Corridor, and establishing new funding mechanisms to improve rail service throughout the country. This idea has been tried recently, with tremendous success. In California, for example, a serious investment into train service by the State since 1998 has resulted in a near tripling of ridership and a doubling of revenues. They accomplished this with a simple formula: run more trains, run them faster, and run them on time.

This legislation would take that model and build on it. It establishes a Federal/State matching program for passenger rail, similar to what we do for highways and transit, and it provides a stable funding source that's not dependent on annual appropriations. It does this by establishing an independent corporation, the Rail Infrastructure Finance Corporation, which will sell bonds and invest the proceeds in a way to provide for a steady stream of income. The Corporation will select rail projects approved for funding by the Secretary of Transportation, and provide 80 percent of the necessary money, with the State, or consortium of States, providing the other 20 percent. And the money will be distributed in the form of contract authority good for 6 years, so States will be able to make firm long-term plans.

The Corporation will be authorized to distribute \$500 million in contract authority each year, with the bulk of that going to four corridors that have been identified by Amtrak as being "ready to go" for investment: A Southeast Corridor from Washington to Jacksonville; a Midwest Corridor radiating outwards from Chicago to Minneapolis, Detroit, and St. Louis; a Pacific Northwest Corridor from Eugene to Vancouver; and a California Corridor running along the Pacific coast and through the central

valley. Contract authority will also be distributed to states with other federally-designated high-speed corridors, states with long-distance Amtrak trains only, and states not served by Amtrak at all.

The goals of this program are simple: run more trains, faster, and on-time. This does not require using exotic technologies, and it does not require massive new investments. This is just a simple shift of philosophy. Instead of trying to pare Amtrak down until it becomes profitable, which would have the inevitable result of leaving us with no trains at all, we will expand it and improve it so that people begin to ride Amtrak in ever increasing numbers.

In addition, the bill reauthorizes Amtrak at a level of \$2 billion per year, the same level recently passed by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, which will go a long way towards addressing the \$5 billion in backlogged maintenance on the Northeast Corridor.

Just as important is what this bill does not do. It does not put the burden of paying for trains onto the already over-burdened States. It does not cannibalize Amtrak into different companies. It does not mandate the elimination of long-distance routes. And it does not harm the essential labor protections that cover rail workers.

I have heard some people say that rail is the past. An obsolete mode of transportation for a bygone time. I strongly disagree. In fact, I believe that rail could be the mode of the future. With rising gas prices and overcrowded highways and airports, we need alternative ways to get around. This legislation firmly establishes a true national commitment to intercity rail, and put Amtrak on a path towards lasting success.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF SERGEANT ROBERTO
ARIZOLA, JR.

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and service of Sergeant Roberto Arizola Jr., who died serving his country as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Sgt. Arizola died on June 8th, 2005 in Baghdad when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle. He was assigned to the Army's 297th Military Intelligence Battalion, 513th Military Intelligence Brigade, of Fort Gordon, Georgia. Roberto was awarded the Army Achievement Medal in 2000 for his extraordinary performance in operations "Joint Endeavor" and "Joint Guard" in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

A superb soldier, Sgt. Arizola was an even better friend, husband, and father. Roberto was kind and loving, possessing a charismatic personality that brought joy to those lucky enough to share in his company.

Sgt. Arizola died a soldier, defending the lives of those unable to defend themselves. The father of a seven-year-old son, he died so that other families and other children might live. He gave up a safe life in a free country so that others might grow up in safety and freedom.

Sergeant Roberto Arizola gave his life to protect ordinary people from those who would

do them harm. He leaves behind him an example of extraordinary service and courage. He died a hero, and he deserves the thanks of a grateful nation.

IN HONOR OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF IRRELEVANT WEEK

HON. CHRISTOPHER COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Andy Stokes, this year's 255th National Football League draft pick. The final pick of the NFL draft is a position of tremendous honor in my hometown of Newport Beach, California. For the past 30 years, the NFL Underdog has been treated to a week-long celebration in his honor. This annual tradition of Irrelevant Week was founded by my friend Paul Salata as an occasion for "Doing Something Nice For No Reason." Irrelevant Week XXX, which commences today, will celebrate "Mr. Irrelevant" Andy Stokes, a tight end from William Penn University in Iowa, who was chosen by the New England Patriots as the final pick in the 2005 NFL draft.

Though Andy Stokes may have been the final pick for the Patriots, the St. George, Utah native will be number one in Newport Beach as we use this occasion to celebrate the NFL Underdog and to recognize all former "Mr. Irrelevants" from the past three decades. Among the highlighted events for Irrelevant Week XXX are a welcoming party, grand banquet, and activities at various Southern California resorts. The fun and games will include a football game with Mickey and Goofy at Disneyland, a tailgate party at Angel Stadium before the Angels vs. Dodgers baseball game, and a visit to Hollywood Park with other NFL alumni for a day of horse racing action.

This special anniversary Irrelevant Week also serves as an opportunity to pay tribute to its 30 years of service to our community. Though Irrelevant Week is a lighthearted affair, over the years it has helped to raise over one million dollars for charities that help youth in both the academic and athletic arenas. This year, at the behest of Newport Beach Fire Chief Tim Riley, who serves on the Irrelevant Week steering committee, Irrelevant Week will be sending 15 to 20 children to special camps designed to lend emotional support and friendship to child burn survivors. Other beneficiaries of Irrelevant Week XXX include Costa Mesa United and Orangewood Children's Home.

Irrelevant Week has long been recognized by the NFL, ESPN and others in the sports world because it is a celebration of the underdog. Moreover, Irrelevant Week provides an opportunity for sharing community spirit and providing support for children in need. On behalf of the United States House of Representatives, I would like to commend Paul Salata and his family for founding and carrying on the tradition of Irrelevant Week for the past 30 years. I also ask my colleagues to join me today in congratulating Andy Stokes on his selection as "Mr. Irrelevant" and wishing him the very best for a long and successful career in the National Football League.

HENRY J. HYDE UNITED NATIONS
REFORM ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 17, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2745) to reform the United Nations, and for other purposes:

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to speak in support of the Lantos Shays substitute and in opposition to the United Nations Reform Bill sponsored by Chairman HYDE.

While I am concerned about the withholding of funding from the United Nations, I believe that reforms are needed within this world body while enhancing not diminishing the U.S.'s moral authority in this august body.

While I agree with many of my colleagues who have spoken on this bill that reform is needed, I am troubled by the way Chairman HYDE has drafted this bill.

I have great respect for the Chairman but I think the bill could have been drafted in a less draconian manner.

This bill makes it almost impossible for the United Nations to complete all the reforms within the time frame that has been set.

I do not believe that the United States should be withholding contributions if reforms are not made at the pace this bill sets them at.

Withholding our contributions from the United Nations until certain programs are shifted to voluntary is something that all of the member states would have to approve and I do not believe that this bill gives a reasonable enough time frame.

The Lantos Shays substitute will arm the United States to promote serious reforms and not just forcing to cut off funds to the United Nations that would be counterproductive to our national interests.

The substitute keeps the reform of the Chairman HYDE's bill as a goal, but does not link it to a mandatory \$100 million deduction in U.S. contributions.

Another important difference between the Chairman's bill and the substitute is the inflexibility on the issue of peacekeeping.

The substitute retains the much needed reforms on peace keeping instead of just cutting aid to these missions. The substitute will provide the Secretary of State with a waiver in the event that a new mission is essential to America's national interest.

We all know that the United States has problems and we see one of the most evident ones in its treatment of the state of Israel.

The General Assembly has turned itself into a forum to bash Israel and until recently it had a policy equating Zionism as racism.

The U.N. Commission on Human Rights also routinely castigates Israel and the General Assembly has gone out of its way to pass a one-sided resolution condemning Israel for protecting its citizens from terrorism.

The General Assembly created two committees which focus negatively on Israeli actions and protectively on the Palestinians: the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, and the Committee on the Exercise of

the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

The United Nation needs to be reformed so it is a body of creating diplomacy and understanding not a forum for hate.

I do believe the United Nations needs to be reformed to remain a strong supporter not just because of its close proximity to my Congressional district or the large amounts of my constituents who work at the United Nations but because I strongly believe in the founding principals of the United Nations.

This multilateral organization has helped the world come together since its creation and brought us out of the horrors of World War II.

If we truly want to work toward reform we must work with our friends and partners to make this happen—not just threaten the loss of contributions.

This will solve none of the reforms that are needed so badly to get the United Nations back on the right tract.

I do not support this bill in its current form and urge all of my colleagues to support the Lantos Shays substitute so we can start to have a real dialogue on the much needed reform of the United Nations.

THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF
ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT ON
U.S. INTERESTS

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the death of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, the emergence of a new Palestinian leadership, and the government of Israel's proposed disengagement from Gaza and parts of the West Bank have created a high degree of optimism in the International Community that we are on the cusp of dramatic new openings in the Middle East peace process.

As a senior Member of the House International Relations Committee, I have watched the often turbulent goings on in the Middle East for a few years to say the least, and my experience tells me that our optimism should be tempered by the lessons of the past. In fact, I believe we should take a very cautious view of the current round of Israeli Palestinian peacemaking, particularly with regard to Israel's withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the West Bank.

I have met Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and I know that he is a fine man. I am sure he firmly believes that this "strategic retreat" from the Gaza Strip and four settlements in the West Bank is the best way to guarantee Israel's long-term security by allowing Israel to conserve and consolidate military and security resources, reducing opportunities for further friction with the Palestinians, and potentially reducing pressure on Israel to negotiate a final peace settlement on unfavorable terms. Personally, I will not second guess the Prime Minister's wisdom; I very much hope that he is right. But again, my experience tells me that if you take steps to appease an enemy you only give him a green light to put more pressure on you. In my opinion, it is imperative and critical to U.S. National Security that we as policymakers understand the consequences should the Israeli disengagement plan fail to live up to expectations.

I was recently presented a copy of an interesting opinion piece by Ambassador Yoram Ettinger—former Minister for Congressional Affairs at Israel's Embassy in Washington, Israeli Consul General in Houston, and Director of Israel's Government Press Office; and currently editor of "Straight from the Jerusalem Cloakroom and Boardroom" newsletters—regarding the potential consequences of ceding Israeli territory to terrorists. I would like to have the text of this Op-Ed placed into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD following my statement.

[May 26, 2005]

JERUSALEM CLOAKROOM #178: THE IMPACT OF
DISENGAGEMENT ON U.S. INTERESTS

(By Yoram Ettinger)

1. Escalated Terrorism. The morally/strategically justifiable demolition of terror regimes in Iraq and Afghanistan is inconsistent with the creation/bolstering of a terror regime in Gaza, Judea and Samaria. The 1994-6 series of disengagement from 85 percent and 40 percent of the territory (and 100 percent and 95 percent of the population) of Gaza and Judea and Samaria have established the largest terrorist base in the world, led/harbored by PLO/PA graduates of terrorist camps in Iraq, Yemen, Sudan, Lebanon, Syria, Libya and Tunisia. Since 1993 the PA has harbored anti-U.S. terrorists. U.S. GIs in Afghanistan and Iraq were encountered by Palestinian terrorists.

2. Higher U.S. Terror Casualties. The July 2000 disengagement from Southern Lebanon propelled Hizbullah from a local, to a regional, profile, haunting U.S. GIs in Iraq and Afghanistan and threatening U.S. homeland security.

3. Contradicting U.S. War on Terrorism. Disengagement is perceived, by the Mideast, as cut and run, appeasement and cave-in, in sharp contrast to U.S. war on terrorism: No negotiation with—and no concession to—terrorists; no ceasefire with—but destruction of—terrorist regimes; no political—but military—solution to terrorism.

4. Setback to Peace. The only peace attainable in the (inter-Arab) Mideast is deterrence-driven peace. Disengagement undermines deterrence; hence it sets the area farther from peace and closer to exacerbated terrorism and an all out war. Every square inch ceded by Israel to the PA, since the 1994 disengagement, has been transformed into a platform of hate-education and homicide bombing.

5. Tailwind to Anti-U.S. Terrorists. While the 1976 Israeli Entebbe Operation constituted a tailwind to the U.S. war on terrorism, the 1993-2005 retreat by the role-model of countering terrorism (Israel) in face of the role-model of terrorism (PLO/PA) has added more fuel to the fire of terrorism. Disengagement has been heralded by the PLO/PA and other Arabs as a crucial victory, frequently compared to the U.S. flight from Beirut (1983) and Somalia (1993). It would nurture Arab hope that neither the U.S. nor Israel possess a marathon-like steadfastness, required for a long-term victory.

6. PA Feeds Anti-U.S. Terrorism. A correlation has existed between the bolstering of PLO stock since Oslo 1993 on one hand, and the exacerbation of anti-U.S. terrorism on the other hand (since the 1993 Twin Towers I, through the 1995 Khobar Towers, the 1998 Kenya and Tanzania U.S. embassies, the 2000 USS Cole and 2001 Twin Towers II); the wider the maneuverability of the PLO/PA, the deeper the inspiration to regional anti-U.S. terrorism, irrespective of (and probably due to) U.S. and Israeli appeasement of—and unprecedented concessions to—the PLO/PA.

7. Undermining the Stability of Pro-U.S. Regimes (e.g. Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar,

etc.). Disengagement would enhance the profile of the PLO/PA, a lethal threat to the Hashemite regime and a chief ally of radical regimes in the Mideast and beyond. PLO-Hashemite relations have been a classic case of zero-sumgame: The stronger the PLO the weaker the Hashemites. The rise of the PLO/PA has emboldened subversive anti-U.S. terrorists in Jordan and in the Gulf area.

8. Strengthening Anti-U.S. Mideast Regimes. Disengagement would buttress the PLO/PA, which has been a sustained ally of the Saddam and bin Laden forces, of Khomeini and his successors in Iran, of the terrorist regime in Sudan and other anti-U.S. Mideast regimes. A stronger PA would be a liability—to the U.S.—in the U.N. and in the context of Clash of Civilizations.

9. Inigorating Mideast Profile of U.S. Global Rivals. The strengthening of the PLO/PA would facilitate the road to a re-assertive Russia in the Mideast. It would improve the strategic posture of China and North Korea in the region, at the expense of vital U.S. concerns, including U.S. standard of living.

10. Ignoring Plight of Christians. The 1995 disengagement from Bethlehem and Beit Jallah has accelerated the flight of Christians, caused by PLO/PA oppression and desecration of churches.

11. Setback to Mideast Democratization. Disengagement would promote the most corrupt and repressive Arab regime in the Mideast, rewarding a terrorist regime, thus dealing a blow to moderate Palestinians.

12. Undermining Israel-Egypt Peace. The 1979 peace treaty disengaged Israeli and Egyptian military forces from one another. The Plan of Disengagement would reengage them in a terror-ridden area, thus fueling unintentional and intentional confrontations. It could drag the U.S. unnecessarily into such conflict. Egypt has facilitated/tolerated the smuggling of terror hardware, missiles and mortars into Gaza. It has undermined U.S. interests in Africa, in the Red Sea and in the U.N., and it has spearheaded anti-Jewish Arab/Palestinian hate education (PA hate education employs Egyptian school text books).

13. PLO's Track Record of Inter-Arab Treachery. Abu Mazen Abu Ala', Inc. fled Egypt (late 1950s) for subversive activities. They escaped Syria (1966) for betraying their hosts. They were expelled from Jordan for attempting to topple the Hashemite regimes via terrorism. They exacerbated a series of civil wars in Lebanon since 1975. They spearheaded Saddam's invasion of Kuwait (1990), which hosted them since the 1950s. Their systematic violent violation of the 1993 Oslo Accords have been consistent with their inter-Arab back-stabbing. Disengagement would be viewed—by the PLO/PA as a reward to treachery, which would vindicate the aforementioned track record.

HONORING ARMY PRIVATE FIRST
CLASS JOHN HAROLD BERG

HON. DONALD A. MANZULLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, last month, I had the honor and privilege of attending the annual Memorial Day Vietnam Wall observance, in which one of my constituents and friends, the late Army PFC John Harold Berg of Rockford, Illinois, was honored for his service to our country. John was gravely injured in

Vietnam, but he passed up his 100 percent disability status when he returned because he wanted to help others. Despite a host of serious medical issues, John served as a veterans representative for 25 years at the Illinois Department of Employment Security before he died in 2003 from cancer caused by shrapnel lodged in his brain from his Vietnam injury. On Memorial Day, I sat with John's widow, Lynn, and several of John's friends as his name was one of just four this year officially added to the Vietnam Wall. It was a remarkable day for a remarkable man. I have attached a newspaper article written by Judy Emerson of the Rockford Register Star that describes John's contributions and his character perfectly:

ADDING SOLDIERS TO THE WALL

One hundred years from now, someone will read the name "John H. Berg" cut into black granite on The Wall in Washington, D.C., and they will assume he died in Vietnam in the spring of 1968. Berg was fatally wounded April 7, 1968, in combat near Khe Sahn, but it took him 37½ years to die. When he did, on Oct. 10, 2003, it was in his rural Rockford home surrounded by family. But the Vietnam War took his life, just as surely as if he had died that spring day long ago as he lay in the dirt with blood streaming from the hole in his skull. Medics postponed his death that day. Military doctors patched him up as well as they could and sent him home to Rockford with a plate covering the hole in his skull and shrapnel still embedded in his brain.

He dragged his left leg, and his left hand was useless. He slurred his words. Back in Rockford, he couldn't find a job. A talented musician, he was bitterly disappointed that he couldn't play piano, organ, violin and guitar, as he once did. But he went to college. He re-learned how to play his instruments with only his right hand and arm. He sought the company of other Vietnam veterans who understood the struggle. He found a job that gave him purpose. For 25 years, he was a veterans representative at the Illinois Department of Employment Security. Over the years, he helped thousands of veterans find jobs and get benefits to which they were entitled. Many were disabled, as he was.

In 2002, doctors found the tumor growing under the plate in Berg's head. His widow, Lynn Berg, said doctors found shrapnel when they tried to carve away the tumor and buy her husband a little more time. Even fighting the relentless growth of a malignant tumor, Berg continued to work. He lived longer than anybody expected.

When he died, his buddies at VietNow, which he'd helped to start, began the process to have his name added to The Wall, the Vietnam Memorial in Washington. The Department of Defense concluded that Berg's fatal wound was incurred in Vietnam in 1968 and that he qualified to have his name listed on the memorial. And so, Berg's name was carved on The Wall earlier this month. A small diamond after the name signifies a confirmed combat death. His name was placed as close as possible to those of other soldiers who suffered their fatal injuries on the same day. The thinking is that they should be together. His father, 86-year-old Harold John Berg, said that the memorial was waiting for his son, despite the 37½-year reprieve from death. "We saw the wall once," the elder Berg said. "And now we go the rest of the way. He's on it." John H. Berg of Rockford was fatally wounded in Vietnam April 7, 1968. He died Oct. 10, 2003. What he did in between is the story.

TALENTED BOY

Harold Berg was a machinist and inspector who retired from Camcar years ago. His health is poor but his memory and spirits are good. His wife, 80-year-old Vergene, has Alzheimer's disease. They spend their days in side-by-side hospital beds in the Cherry Valley home of their daughter Hilary Belcher, who cares for them. Her husband, Nick, and 9-year-old daughter, Chenoa, help.

Young John Berg wanted to be a musician. His mother was a long-time organist for their church, and her firstborn son also played the organ, as well as piano, violin and guitar. A 1965 graduate of East High School, John took some classes at Rock Valley College until he was drafted in the summer of 1967. "We tried to talk him into going into the Air Force, but he thought he'd get this over with in two years," his dad said. By January 1968, 20-year-old John was in Vietnam. His early letters home to his parents, three younger sisters and a brother revealed a diminishing innocence as reality and the futility of the mission sank in. "I only hope this year goes fast and I come back in one piece," he wrote two weeks before his injury.

His wife, Lynn, said John could remember what happened during the firefight on April 7, 1968, up until he was wounded. He was feeding an ammunition belt into a machine gun being fired by another soldier when he turned to dive for cover from incoming mortar. It's still unclear whether he was shot in the head or hit by shrapnel or both. He was unconscious or semiconscious for weeks. The Western Union telegram arrived early one weekday morning as Harold Berg was getting ready for work. "Deep regret . . . very seriously ill list . . . penetrating fragment wound to the head." Vergene couldn't stop crying. Hilary Belcher, who's 15 years younger than John, doesn't remember too much about the time, except that her parents were distraught.

The telegrams kept coming with updates on her brother's condition, and after John was transferred to a hospital in Denver, Colo., the family drove out there to see him. "I remember walking down a long hallway and doorway after doorway, there were all these men with holes in their heads, just like John," Belcher said. "We took him out for a while. You could hardly understand him when he talked." Months later, when he came home, she said, "I ran out to him saying 'John's home! John's home!' He screamed. He thought I was going to knock him down. "I used to run to him and he'd throw me up in the air." There was plenty of trauma to go around.

"Those first eight years, he was very angry," Belcher said. "When you get a head injury, it changes your whole personality." John was bitter that he couldn't play his instruments. His disability was obvious, and nobody would hire him. "It took him years to find a job. He even applied to a gas station to pump gas, but they told him, 'You only have one hand,'" Belcher said. He decided to go back to Rock Valley College. There, he met Reuben Johnson, dean of community services and the producer and founder of Starlight Theatre. Johnson helped Berg learn to play the piano, organ, guitar and violin with one hand.

It was a turning point, as was the job Berg landed in July 1977 as a veterans representative at the Illinois Department of Employment Security. He was good at it, said Jack

Snyder, who also is a disabled Vietnam veteran. The two men worked together at the department for close to 25 years. "I've never seen a person give so much heart and caring to his job as John did," Snyder said. "We had guys coming in who were basically homeless. He would take them home until they got on their feet. "I've seen him cry at his desk over some of these situations, over the misuse and abuse the military has given some of these people."

Berg often referred clients to the Winnebago County Veterans Assistance office in Memorial Hall. Herbert L. Crenshaw, also a Vietnam veteran, works there. He and Berg worked together to get help for thousands of vets over the years, he said. "He worked with this office to get veterans back on their feet, to get jobs, get assistance," Crenshaw said. "He had walked in their shoes. He had the same difficulties and disabilities they had."

Berg, like many of his clients, had a full disability designation from the Department of Veterans Affairs. "He could have sat home and drawn a disability," Crenshaw said. "He chose to work." Berg had a network that he could use to get practical assistance for veterans and offer them moral support. He helped found VietNow, a support group for Vietnam veterans that started in Rockford and then became a national organization. It still thrives.

Nick Parnello, one of the original VietNow members and now president of the Vietnam Veterans Honor Society, said John was "the only guy that always showed up" at the early meetings. "Some of the guys felt that we should give up because there were so few of us back then," Parnello said. "But if John could show up in his disabled condition, it was an inspiration to all of us. "Everybody he came in contact with was changed because of his commitment to them."

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

In November 1991, Berg met Lynn Walquist of Rockford. Her daughter and son-in-law, who knew Berg through mutual acquaintances in the veterans circle, fixed them up. "I've got four kids—two in college—and all these animals," recalled Lynn, who's always had a cat and at least one dog. "What's wrong with him?"

The kids always had rock music blaring when Berg came to pick her up for a date. "He said, 'Do you ever listen to classical music?'" she said, she didn't. He taught her to love it as he did. Lynn's scrapbook holds tickets from concerts they attended at the Lyric Opera in Chicago and elsewhere. By then, Berg could make music on the piano and other instruments with one hand. He sang with the Rock Valley Chorale and with a Mendelssohn Club group. They fell in love and were married April 25, 1992. "It was the best day of our lives," Lynn Berg said. "He told me: 'I'll never say no to you,' and he kept his promise."

Over the years they attended VietNow conventions and events. She became active as an "associate," which is what veterans' spouses are called in the group. "He always said that he felt very fortunate. He was only in Vietnam for three months," Lynn Berg said. "The others who had been there longer were the ones who came back with so many problems." His friends became her friends. Her children and grandchildren were his.

He's smiling in every picture his wife has in her numerous photo albums. But it would be a mistake to say Berg's transformation from an angry young man to a person with purpose and a zest for living was easy, said his sister, Hilary Belcher. "He had to grow into a new personality and lifestyle and everything," Belcher said. "He was gung-ho when he went into the service, and then he lost it and he got angry. "But he got through it, and his gung ho came back."

Retired U.S. Army Col. Fremont Piercefield knew Berg well from their mutual work in various organizations, including the VFW, Disabled American Veterans and the Winnebago County Veterans Association. "He was the gentlest, kindest man," the colonel said. "He was there when you expected him and when you needed him." He was the same way on the home front, his wife said. He took care of the house and the cars and the lawn, but he also taught her how to do those things. She needs to know them now that he's gone.

He would see a need and answer it before other people noticed, she said. For instance, he was concerned that one of her daughters was in danger walking from the library back to her dorm at Northern Illinois University after using a computer late at night. He bought her a computer for her room.

There were health issues over the years. Berg took medication to deal with headaches and seizures that came with the head injury. He learned to compensate for the partial paralysis of his left side and minimized the limp. He never regained use of his left hand. It looked just as it did when he was 20 years old, his wife and sister said, as if it had been frozen in time the day he was injured.

THE END OF SOMETHING

In May of 2002, Berg began having excruciating, debilitating headaches and more frequent seizures, his wife said. Brain scans showed bright spots of shrapnel but the brain tumor was not detected for a couple of months. He had surgery, but the tumor was malignant, and doctors indicated it was just a matter of time. Lynn Berg remembers one doctor predicting John had about nine months. He exceeded that by about seven months. VietNow treasurer and good friend Darrell Gilgan visited Berg as he was recuperating from the surgery in a Beloit nursing home.

Berg's radio was missing one day and Gilgan asked him about it. "He gave it to the guy in the next bed, a B-17 pilot during World War II," Gilgan said. "He was like that." Berg continued to work as much as he could, but the tumor was growing again and the pain was awful, his wife said. During his last months, she cared for him at their home, with help from the Northern Illinois Hospice Association. He died Oct. 10, 2003. A few months later, Gilgan began the paperwork necessary to have Berg considered for addition to the Vietnam Memorial. The key element in Berg's favor was that the Department of Veterans Affairs had determined that his death was a result of the combat injury in 1968.

Gilgan sent a letter to U.S. Rep. Don Manzullo, R-Egan, who sent it through the proper military channels. "I had known John for years," said Manzullo, who will sit with Berg's family at a Memorial Day ceremony Monday at The Wall. "Here is a guy who could have given up, but he refused to accept the fact that people told him he was 100 percent disabled. "He went to work to serve as a witness and an example to people who are severely disabled."

Some friends and family have traveled from the Rockford area to join Lynn Berg at the ceremony, which will include a special remembrance for her husband and three other veterans whose names have been added on The Wall. John Berg's parents are not well enough to go. His dad wishes he could, though. "It's an end to something, I guess," Harold Berg said. "He just got an extension on his death." That sad morning when the telegram came so many years ago and the day his son died all those years later occupy the same place of grief in his heart. "We hoped the day would never come," his dad said, "but then we found out he wasn't going to make it, after all."

HUMAN RIGHTS IN VIETNAM

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today in the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and Africa, I chaired a timely and critical hearing that examined the government of Vietnam's respect for human rights and religious freedom.

Our witnesses included Ms. Nina Shea, Vice Chair, U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom; Ms. Minky Worden, Media Director, Human Rights Watch; Ms. Helen Ngo, Chairwoman Committee for Religious Freedom in Vietnam; Dr. Nguyen Than, Executive Director, Boat People S.O.S.; Mr. Vo Van Ai, President, Vietnam Committee on Human Rights; Mr. Y Khim Nie, Executive Director, Montagnard Human Rights Organization. The excellent testimony these witnesses provided can be found online (http://wwwc.house.gov/international_relations/)

Before I report on the human rights crisis in Vietnam, let me say at the outset, Mr. Speaker, that I remain deeply concerned about obtaining a full, thorough and responsible accounting of the remaining American MIAs from the Vietnam conflict. As my colleagues know well, of the 2,583 POW/MIAs who were unaccounted for—Vietnam, 1,921; Laos, 569; Cambodia, 83; and China, 10—just under 1,400 remain unaccounted for in Vietnam. While the joint POW/MIA accounting command normally conducts four joint field activities per year in Vietnam, I remain deeply concerned that the government of Vietnam could be more forthcoming and transparent in providing the fullest accounting. It is our sacred duty to the families of the missing that we never forget and never cease our pursuit until we achieve the fullest possible accounting of our MIAs.

Today's hearing on human rights abuses in Vietnam must be reviewed in the context of the official visit this week to Washington by Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai. Designed to mark 10 years of diplomatic relations between the United States and Vietnam, the visit is the highest-level since the end of the Vietnam War. Khai will meet with President Bush and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, conclude intelligence agreements on terrorism and transnational crime, as well as begin IMET military cooperation, meet with Microsoft chairman Bill Gates, and ring the bell on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

Vietnam hopes to gain U.S. support to join the World Trade Organization this year. Trade with the United States has exploded in the past decade, from \$1.5 billion to \$6.4 billion in 2004. Vietnamese exports to the United States have also jumped from \$800 million in 2001 to \$5 billion last year.

An outside observer looking at all of this activity would in all likelihood conclude that Vietnam is a close business and political partner of the United States in Asia. And that observer, if asked, would also likely deduce that in order to cooperate so closely, Vietnam must also share the core values of the United States that make our country great. Values such as the promotion of democracy, respect for human rights, and the protection of religious freedom, free speech, and the rights of minorities.

A quick look at the State Department's annual Human Rights report on Vietnam, however, reveals the opposite. According to the 2004 report released just three months ago:

"Vietnam is a one-party state, ruled and controlled by the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV). . . . The Government's human rights record remained poor, and it continued to commit serious abuses. The Government continued to deny citizens the right to change their government. Several sources reported that security forces shot, detained, beat, and were responsible for the disappearances of persons during the year. Police also reportedly sometimes beat suspects during arrests, detention, and interrogation. . . . The Government continued to hold political and religious prisoners. . . . The Government significantly restricted freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and freedom of association. . . . Security forces continued to enforce restrictions on public gatherings and travel in some parts of the country, particularly in the Central Highlands and the Northwest Highlands. The Government prohibited independent political, labor, and social organizations. . . . The Government restricted freedom of religion and prohibited the operation of unregistered religious organizations. Participants in unregistered organizations faced harassment as well as possible detention and imprisonment. The Government imposed limits on freedom of movement of some individuals whom it deemed a threat. The Government did not permit human rights organizations to form or operate.

Moreover, in September 2004, the State Department designated Vietnam as a "Country of Particular Concern" or "CPC" for its systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom.

Congress has also expressed its grave concern about the state of human rights in Vietnam. The House of Representatives has twice passed legislation authored by me on human rights in Vietnam. H.R. 1587, The Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2004, passed the House by a 323–45 vote in July of 2004. A similar measure passed by a 410–1 landslide in the House in 2001. The measures called for limiting further increases of non-humanitarian U.S. aid from being provided to Vietnam if certain human rights provisions were not met, and authorized funding to overcome the jamming of Radio Free Asia and funding to support non-governmental organizations which promote human rights and democratic change in Vietnam. Regrettably, both bills stalled in Senate committees and have not been enacted into law.

I regret that no one from the State Department was available to participate in today's hearing to explain the incongruity of United States support for the government of Vietnam, as expressed in our close and growing-ever-closer trade and military relations, and U.S. concern for the appalling lack of respect for the basic human rights of its citizens that the Vietnamese government has consistently demonstrated.

The Human Rights Reports, the Report on International Religious Freedom, the Trafficking in Persons Report, the reports of leading international human rights organizations, and countless witnesses, some of whose testimonies were provided today, give evidence to the fact that the government of Vietnam has inflicted and continues to inflict terrible suffering on countless people.

It is a regime that arrests and imprisons writers, scientists, academics, religious leaders

and even veteran communists in their own homes, and lately in Internet cafes, for speaking out for freedom and against corruption. In fact, the comments I am making right now would easily fetch me a 15-year prison sentence replete with torture if I were a Vietnamese national or Member of Parliament making these comments in Vietnam.

It is a government that crushes thousands of Montagnard protestors, as they did in the Central Highlands during Easter weekend in 2004, killing and beating many peaceful protestors.

The government has forcibly closed over 400 Christian churches in the Central Highlands, and the government continues to force tens of thousands of Christians to renounce their faith. I would note here that it is inspiring but not unexpected that many of these Christians have steadfastly resisted those pressures and refused to renounce Christ. One pastor estimated that 90 percent have refused to renounce their Christian faith, despite government efforts to compel them to do so.

This is a government that has detained the leadership of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam and continues to attempt to control the leadership of the Catholic Church.

This is a government that imprisoned a Catholic priest by the name of Father Ly and meted out a 10-year prison sentence. Father Ly was imprisoned in 2001 when he was arrested after submitting testimony to a hearing of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. In his testimony, he criticized the communist government of Vietnam for its policies of repressing religious freedom. In fact, I was the author of H. Con. Res. 378, which called for the immediate release of Father Ly and cleared Congress 424–1 on May 12, 2004.

Thankfully Father Ly, along with Dr. Nguyen Dan Que, were released from prison earlier this year, in all likelihood due to the pressure from the United States with its CPC designation.

Their release was part of a process called for in the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act, which I cosponsored, which mandates that the U.S. government engage in dialogue with severe violators of religious freedom to improve conditions or face "Presidential actions," which could include sanctions or withdrawal of non-humanitarian assistance.

The Vietnamese government also took some other positive steps in response to the CPC designation, including a new law streamlining the application process for religious groups registering with the government and prime ministerial directives which prohibit forced renunciations of faith and allow Protestant "house churches" in ethnic minority provinces to operate if they renounce connections to certain expatriate groups, particularly the Montagnard Foundation, which is based in the United States.

And in May, the State Department announced it had reached an agreement on religious freedom with Vietnam. Under the agreement, the Vietnamese government committed to:

Fully implement the new legislation on religious freedom and to render previous contradictory regulations obsolete;

Instruct local authorities to strictly and completely adhere to the new legislation and ensure their compliance;

Facilitate the process by which religious congregations are able to open houses of worship; and

Give special consideration to prisoners and cases of concern raised by the United States during the granting of prisoner amnesties.

Time will tell whether the government will respect this agreement and comply with its provisions, or whether there will be a return to business as usual once the spotlight is removed. But the agreement does show that the provisions of the International Religious Freedom Act seem to be helping to improve the respect for religious freedom in some of the worst violator countries.

The more important point is that religious freedom is not a matter of compliance with an agreement, but an attitude of respect for citizens who choose to worship and peacefully practice their religious beliefs that extends from the highest government leaders down to local authorities and the village police.

In a recent interview given prior to his visit to the United States, Prime Minister Khai stated, "we have no prisoners of conscience in Vietnam," and declared that "political reforms and economic reforms should be closely harmonized."

His statement is typical of the attitude of the government of Vietnam, which has scoffed at the Vietnam Human Rights Act and dismissed charges of human rights abuses, pleading the tired mantra of interference in the internal affairs of their government and that our struggle is some way related to the war in Vietnam. They say, Vietnam is a country, not a war. That is their protest, and I would say that is precisely the issue.

The hearing we held today was about the shameful human rights record of a country, more accurately, of a government that abuses the rights of its own people. And, of course, Vietnam is a country with millions of wonderful people who yearn to breathe free and to enjoy the blessings of liberty. We say, behave like an honorable government, stop bringing dishonor and shame to your government by abusing your own people and start abiding by internationally recognized U.N. covenants that you have signed.

When is enough, enough? Vietnam needs to come out of the dark ages of repression, brutality and abuse and embrace freedom, the rule of law, and respect for fundamental human rights. Vietnam needs to act like the strategic partner of the United States we would like it to be, treating its citizens, even those who disagree with government policies, with respect and dignity.

Human rights are central, are at the core of our relationship with governments and the people they purport to represent. The United States of America will not turn a blind eye to the oppression of a people, any people in any region of the world.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WEATHER MODIFICATION RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2005

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Weather Modification

Research and Technology Transfer Authorization Act. This bill will increase and enhance research and development in weather modification to better understand its effectiveness in addressing drought in our country.

The western part of our country, including my own state of Colorado, has experienced drought conditions in recent years. Efforts have been made to address drought recovery, preparedness and mitigation. However, little fundamental research has been done to better understand weather modification, which some believe can increase the snowpacks that provide water resources for several western states.

The National Academies of Science report Critical Issues in Weather Modification Research, released in 2003, noted that there is no scientific proof that weather modification is effective, however attributes this to a lack of understanding of "critical atmospheric processes" that has caused unpredictable results with weather modification, not a lack of success with such efforts. The report called for a national program for a sustained research effort in weather modification research to enhance the effectiveness and predictability of weather modification.

There is currently no federal investment in weather modification, though there are private funds that are largely going toward unproven techniques. My bill, similar to a bill introduced in the Senate by Senator KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON, establishes a federal research and development effort to improve our understanding of the atmosphere and develop more effective weather modification technologies and techniques.

Specifically, the bill creates a Weather Modification Advisory and Research Board in the Department of Commerce to promote the "theoretical and practical knowledge of weather modification" through the funding of research and development projects. The board will be made up of representatives from the American Meteorological Society, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Center for Atmospheric Research, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a higher education institution and a state which is currently supporting operational weather modification projects.

In Colorado, a large portion of our water source comes from the snowpack run off each year. A better understanding of weather modifications has the potential to enhance our snowpacks, and thus assist in addressing drought concerns.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support the expansion of the research and development of weather modification and urge a swift passage of this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to include this personal explanation in the RECORD.

On June 17, 2005, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote #265 to the Fiscal Year 2006 Science, State, Justice, and Commerce Appropriations Act. I was unavoidably detained by other Congressional duties related to the 29th District of Texas.

I would have voted "no" on the Moran amendment to prohibit Federal funds from being used to license the export of .50 caliber firearms. Federal agencies already have the ability to prohibit exports of certain firearms to certain countries or groups when that is in the national interest. In addition, there are countless sources of firearms in the global marketplace. Unfortunately, this amendment would not have provided any benefits in terms of reducing terrorists' access to firearms.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DR.
RICHARD WALLINGFORD, JR.

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, doctors of optometry from around the nation will convene in Dallas, Texas, from June 22–26 for Optometry's Meeting, the American Optometric Association's 108th annual convention. On Saturday, June 25, they will elect Dr. Richard Wallingford, Jr. as the association's 84th president.

Dr. Wallingford is a resident of Rockwood, Maine, on Moosehead Lake. He is a native son who has practiced optometry in our state for 30 years. He is a graduate of the University of Maine at Orono and the College of Optometry at the State University of New York. He currently serves as Director of Clinical Services at Vision Care of Maine in Bangor.

Dr. Wallingford has been a leader in his profession at the state, regional and national levels. He has been a member of the Maine Optometric Association since 1975, and served as president in 1982. He was appointed to the Maine Board of Optometry in 1989, and he served until 1999. He was also a member of the New England Council of Optometrists, and he currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the New England College of Optometry.

At the national level, Dr. Wallingford has been a member of American Optometric Association (AOA) since 1971, and has served in the association's volunteer structure since 1983. He was elected to the AOA Board of Trustees in 1998 and was re-elected in 2001.

Remarkably, Dr. Wallingford has maintained his hectic schedule while battling multiple myeloma, a form of blood cancer. Diagnosed with the disease in 2000, he began an aggressive treatment plan last year which included six rounds of chemotherapy and two stem cell transplants. In January, Dr. Wallingford received good news that the myeloma was in remission.

In his community, Dr. Wallingford was elected to the board of Maine School Administrative District (MSAD) #67, where he served as chairman for two years. He was president of

the Lincoln Rotary Club and chairman of the Lincoln Recreation Committee. He also coached youth baseball and basketball.

In addition to his professional responsibilities, Dr. Wallingford is a devoted outdoorsman. He has been a member of the National Ski Patrol since 1989 and serves on the Squaw Mountain Ski Patrol. He is a licensed whitewater guide and has a land and sea rating as a licensed private pilot. Dr. Wallingford also owns and manages the Moosehead Lake Sporting Camps and Mt. Kineo Cabins.

Dr. Wallingford and his wife Elaine have been married for 35 years and they have three children. Richard III is a physician and is completing his residency in psychiatry at Harvard University. Denise holds a Master's Degree from Boston College and is an elementary school teacher. Tiffany is a graduate student at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, California.

The American Optometric Association is the professional society for optometrists nationwide and has more than 34,000 members. Dr. Wallingford will lead the association on its mission to improve eye and vision care in the United States.

Dr. Richard Wallingford has built a distinguished record of service and leadership in his profession and in his community. I am confident that he will have a very successful term as president of the American Optometric Association. I join his family, friends and colleagues in congratulating him on this achievement and wishing him good luck and good health.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I missed votes on Friday, June 17, 2005 due to a previously scheduled event in my district. Had I been able to, I would have voted:

Against the Royce amendment to H.R. 2745 (rollcall vote No. 274).

Against the Fortenberry amendment to H.R. 2745 (rollcall vote No. 275).

Against the Flake amendment to H.R. 2745 (rollcall vote No. 276).

For the Chabot amendment to H.R. 2745 (rollcall vote No. 277).

Against the Pence amendment to H.R. 2745 (rollcall vote No. 278).

Against the Gohmert amendment to H.R. 2745 (rollcall vote No. 279).

Against the Stearns amendment to H.R. 2745 (rollcall vote No. 280).

For the Lantos amendment to H.R. 2745 (rollcall vote No. 281).

Against Final passage of H.R. 2745 (rollcall vote No. 282).

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, June 21, 2005 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

JUNE 22

Time to be announced

Foreign Relations

Business meeting to consider the nominations of Ronald E. Neumann, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Gregory L. Schulte, of Virginia, to be U.S. Representative to the Vienna Office of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador, and to be U.S. Representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency, with the rank of Ambassador, Michael E. Hess, of New York, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development in the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance, and Dina Habib Powell, of Texas, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

S-116, Capitol

9:30 a.m.

Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine the In Re Tribal Lobbying Matters, Et Al.

SH-216

10 a.m.

Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Richard A. Raymond, of Nebraska, to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Food Safety.

SR-328A

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings to examine telecom mergers.

SR-253

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Business meeting to consider S. 662, to reform the postal laws of the United States, S. 457, to require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to issue guidance for, and provide oversight of, the management of micro-purchases made with Governmentwide commercial purchase cards, S. 611, to establish a Federal Interagency Committee on Emergency Medical Services and a Federal Interagency Committee on emergency Medical Services Advisory Council, S. 37, to extend the special postage stamp for breast cancer research for 2 years, and the nominations

of Linda Morrison Combs, of North Carolina, to be Controller, Office of Federal Financial Management, Office of Management and Budget, Linda M. Springer, of Pennsylvania, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management, Laura A. Cordero, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia, and A. Noel Anketell Kramer, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, and several post office naming bills.

SD-562

10:30 a.m.

Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine the Livestock Mandatory Reporting Act of 1999.

SR-328A

2:30 p.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Aviation Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine financial stability of airlines.

SR-253

Intelligence

To hold a closed briefing on certain intelligence matters.

SH-219

JUNE 23

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine United States military strategy and operations in Iraq.

SR-325

Judiciary

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SD-226

10 a.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SR-253

Finance

To hold hearings to examine United States-China economic relations.

SD-215

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine issues relative to developing an HIV/AIDS vaccine.

SD-419

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To meet to discuss the Family Medical Leave Act.

SD-430

Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings to examine pending veterans benefits related legislation.

SR-418

2 p.m.

Appropriations

Business meeting to mark up H.R. 2744, making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, H.R. 2862, making appropriations for Science, the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and proposed legislation making appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for the Legislative Branch.

SD-106

Judiciary

Constitution, Civil Rights and Property Rights Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the consequences of Roe V. Wade and Doe V. Bolton.

SD-226

2:30 p.m.

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Federal Financial Management, Government Information, and International Security Subcommittee

To hold oversight hearings to examine disparities in federal HIV/AIDS CARE programs, focusing on the effectiveness of CARE Act funding allocations in ensuring that all Americans living with HIV are provided access to core medical services and life-saving AIDS medications.

SD-562

Intelligence

To hold closed hearings to examine certain intelligence matters.

SH-219

4:15 p.m.

Armed Services

Strategic Forces Subcommittee

To hold a closed briefing on the Ballistic Missile Defense Test Program.

SR-222

JUNE 28

10 a.m.

Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000 and related crop insurance issues.

SR-328A

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Global Climate Change and Impacts Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine coastal impacts.

SR-253

Indian Affairs

To hold an oversight hearing to examine regulation of Indian gaming.

Room to be announced

Energy and Natural Resources

National Parks Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine S. 206, to designate the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail, S. 556, to direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to jointly conduct a study of certain land adjacent to the Walnut Canyon National Monument in the State of Arizona, S. 588, to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to jointly conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Arizona Trail as a national scenic trail or a national historic trail, and S. 955, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study to determine the suitability and feasibility of including in the National Park System certain sites in Williamson County, Tennessee, relating to the Battle of Franklin.

SD-366

3 p.m.

Energy and Natural Resources

Water and Power Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the water supply status in the Pacific Northwest and its impact on power production, and S. 648, to amend the Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991 to extend the authority for drought assistance.

SD-366

JUNE 29

9:30 a.m.

Indian Affairs

Business meeting to consider pending committee issues.

SR-485

10 a.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To hold hearings to examine Spectrum-DTV.

SR-253

2:30 p.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Disaster Prevention and Prediction Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine national weather service-severe weather.

SR-253

JUNE 30

10 a.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Technology, Innovation, and Competitiveness Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine how information technology can reduce medical errors, lower healthcare costs, and improve the quality of patient care, including the importance of developing interoperable electronic medical records and highlight new technologies

that will impact how health services are provided in the future.

SR-253

2 p.m.
Appropriations

Business meeting to mark up H.R. 2528, making appropriations for military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, proposed legislation making appropriations for fiscal year 2006 for the Department of State and foreign operations.

SD-106

3 p.m.
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Education and Early Childhood Development Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine issues relating to American history.

SD-430

SEPTEMBER 20

10 a.m.
Veterans' Affairs
To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the American Legion.

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CANCELLATIONS

JUNE 22

10 a.m.
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SD-430

POSTPONEMENTS

9:30 a.m.
Environment and Public Works
To hold an oversight hearing to examine grants management within the Environmental Protection Agency.

SD-406