

ACT COMMEMORATING THE LIFE:
OR LIFETIME INNOVATIONS OF
THOMAS EDISON

SPEECH OF

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1096, which commemorates the lifetime innovations of Thomas Edison.

This legislation will ensure the preservation of Thomas Edison's laboratory in New Jersey. Edison set a tremendous example for all Americans to follow, and, through this legislation, Americans of future generations will be able to learn from the lessons he taught us.

Before Thomas Edison opened his lab in New Jersey, he called Port Huron, Michigan, his hometown. That town has done a fine job in its own right to preserve the memory of Thomas Edison, and I am proud to represent it in the House.

In 2004, Port Huron rededicated the Edison Rock as part of the 125th Anniversary of the invention of the light bulb. The event featured the actor Mickey Rooney who starred in the 1940 movie "Young Tom Edison", which chronicled Tom's formative years.

I think the Edison Rock is a fitting tribute—not only because it is very big and very heavy—something like 62 tons—but because, like most rocks, it is very old.

That's significant.

In order to rank the importance of Thomas Edison's achievement of the first, practical light bulb you have to go back a long, long way—

In fact, you have to go back to the very beginning—to the Bible and the Book of Genesis, where it says: "And God said, let there be light—and there was light."

Of course, God meant there was sunlight—and don't get me wrong—that was a great start.

But the only problem with sunlight is that it lasts only when the sun is out.

It wasn't until thousands of years later when Thomas Edison said,—"Let there be light"—and finally we had light during the other half of the day.

The significance of this invention can never be exaggerated.

Electric light was the spark that ignited the Industrial Revolution and all the technological breakthroughs that followed.

America's work ethic is also part of Edison's extraordinary legacy. Although Edison was undoubtedly a genius, he never thought of himself as one. In fact, he always claimed that his inventions were the product of hard work. "Genius is one percent inspiration, 99 percent perspiration" was one of his most famous quotes.

Thomas Edison actually struggled for years and built more than 6,000 prototypes before he came up with the successful design for the light bulb.

He made us believe that through hard work, anything can be accomplished.

Edison gave us many gifts—the light bulb—the phonograph—the motion picture camera—as well as hundreds of other inventions that have shaped our modern world.

The phrase—"Good old American ingenuity" describes the "can-do" spirit of our nation—

our ability to take on any problem and come up with a solution.

Edison was the personification of American opportunity. He didn't grow up as a member of the privileged class.

He was just an average American, who through a lot of hard work and a little inspiration became one of the most famous and influential people in history.

And so he gave us many gifts—the light bulb, the phonograph, the motion picture camera as well as hundreds of other inventions that have shaped our modern world.

But possibly his greatest gift to us was his representation of the American spirit.

For when we think of Thomas Edison, we believe that anything is possible.

Edison's ability to take on the most difficult problems of mankind—and come up with an invention that could make everyone's life better is a source of American pride.

We believe that American know-how and American ingenuity are among the characteristics that make our nation great.

That's why I'm confident in our nation.

I'm confident in our ability to do whatever it takes to assure the safety of our nation and the success of liberty.

And it's our nation that continues to bring the light of liberty to the world.

And finally, we believe that you can grow up in Port Huron, Michigan—or thousands of other communities across America—and in everyone of them you have the opportunity to reach for greatness.

IN FAVOR OF THE SOLOMON
AMENDMENT SUPREME COURT
DECISION

HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2006

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the March 6 Supreme Court Decision in favor of the Solomon Amendment. This decision brings resolution to a period of time in which students seeking military careers have been denied equal access to their career of choice due to the political climates and cultures of the institutions in which they receive their education.

My commendation goes to the United States Supreme Court's prudent action in siding with Congress to uphold this vital legislation. Even in this time of great sacrifice when our men and women in uniform are engaged in defeating the forces of tyranny and terror, some have neither masked nor disguised their loathing of the American military. A blatant disregard and violation of the basic principles of free speech and right to association has been demonstrated by these institutions. I feel it pertinent to add that Congress never asked for anything other than equal access for military recruiters. We simply ask the same access as that given to any other employer.

It has been argued that the less fortunate carry the burden of military service.

This decision of the Supreme Court in fact levels the playing field. It guarantees students at higher educational institutions have equal access to military service for our great nation. This decision could not have come at a more important time. Today's cultural tone places so much emphasis on receiving benefits rather

than on service to our country. A lack of military recruiters on campus would only continue to erode the consciousness of the people about the pride of military service and our obligation in defense of America. I would be remiss not to mention that such access to military recruiters is a cornerstone of our successful all-volunteer force.

Colleagues, our Constitutional obligation was clearly laid out. Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution states, "that Congress shall have the power to . . . raise and support Armies, . . . to provide and maintain a Navy, . . . and to provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the Militia." I once again commend the Supreme Court in helping us uphold the Constitution of the United States of America.

REMEMBERING CALVIN RITCHIE
OF FAUQUIER COUNTY, VIRGINIA

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 7, 2006

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia and me to remember Calvin L. "Boots" Ritchie, a farmer and activist deeply committed to agriculture and his fellow farmers in Fauquier County, Virginia, who passed away on February 26.

Selected by the Fauquier Times-Democrat as "Citizen of the Year" in 1994, Boots will be remembered for his countless accomplishments, including co-founding People Helping People of Fauquier County, Inc., a local charity offering immediate help to residents of Fauquier struggling against natural disaster, illness, or sudden financial hardship.

We insert for the RECORD a Fauquier Times-Democrat obituary from February 28. A Fauquier native, Boots will be deeply missed by the people of the county, and at home by his family.

[From the Fauquier Times-Democrat, Feb. 28, 2006]

"BOOTS" SUCCUMBS TO CANCER

SOUTHERN FAUQUIER FARMER WAS OUTSPOKEN
ADVOCATE FOR AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION

Calvin L. "Boots" Ritchie, of Bealeton, one of Fauquier County's leading citizens for the past two decades and an active force behind a home-grown charitable organization, died at home on Feb. 27 after a long and valiant fight against cancer. He was 78.

A native son of Fauquier, Mr. Ritchie was born June 17, 1927 at Inglewood Farm, where he died.

He earned his unique nickname as a child, when he did his chores around the farm "wearing an adult-sized pair of gumboots that reached to his hips," recalled his sister, Hazel Bell, in a 1994 interview. "He was about 5 or 6 years old, and the name stuck."

He spent his entire life working in agriculture, first on the family farm and later, while engaged in custom farming. In the mid-1970s, he founded the Fauquier Grain Company.

Mr. Ritchie came to the general public's attention in 1978, when he was involved in the American Agriculture Movement.

The AAM sought 100 percent parity for farm products, and made their point by staging a memorable "Tractorcade" demonstration that passed through Fauquier into Washington, D.C.

"Our main agricultural export is grain, which is priced lower now than it was five