

SIR KNIGHT PASQUALE COLLETTI

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sir Knight Pasquale Colletti for his outstanding service to the Chester County community as the Knights of Columbus' Past Faithful Navigator. The Chester County, Pennsylvania Fourth Degree Assembly #1873 has faithfully served the community and parishes for many generations. Mr. Colletti has received numerous accolades and awards from the Assembly and fellow Knights hold him in high esteem for the compassion he shows to families with loved ones in military service. Mr. Colletti extends help, support, and prayers for servicemen and women either before or during deployment or after their return. His leadership in patriotic causes and community service is inspirational. He is a true patriot, an exemplary citizen, and a pillar of the Chester County community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Sir Knight Pasquale Colletti for his leadership, dedication, and love of country. I hope that Mr. Colletti will continue to undertake his great works on behalf of the community and County and help Pennsylvania Fourth Degree Assembly #1873 continue its long history of distinguished community service.

TRIBUTE TO HOPE WILLIAMS, JR.

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Hope Williams, Jr., the grandson of slaves, the son of a man wrongfully imprisoned, and a civil rights pioneer. This native of rural Fort Motte, South Carolina, was a fixture during the civil rights era in his home state, and his passing on November 21, 2005 left a void that will never be filled.

On June 14, 1910, Mr. Williams was born the youngest of 12 children to Hope, Sr., and Adline Gold Williams during the era of Jim Crow laws. He received only a sixth grade education at Julia Peterkin's Lang Syne School because a public school education was not available to him and others similarly situated. Yet he continued to educate himself beyond his formal school years.

While Mr. Williams was still at home, his father was snatched and put on a chain gang for defending himself against the assault of a local white man. With his mother left to care for her large family alone, Mr. Williams stepped up and helped build a new cabin for his family. The house still stands, although battered by time. It remains a testament to Hope Williams' legacy of determination and endurance.

During World War II the boundaries of skin color temporarily diminished as all young men were called to serve. Hope Williams served his country by cultivating cotton on a Calhoun County farm he secured through one of the government's "Resettlement Administration" programs. However, racial tensions rose

again, and Mr. Williams found himself drawn into the civil rights movement joining the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, SCLC. He was involved in organizational meetings with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at Penn Center in Frogmore, South Carolina, and helped mobilize voter registration and participation in Calhoun and Orangeburg counties.

His leadership in the African American community, led Mr. Williams to form the Calhoun County Branch of the NAACP, and he served as its president for 12 years. He focused his efforts on working with South Carolina's first Black Senator since Reconstruction, I. DeQuincey Newman, to improve voter registration and economic development in African American communities.

Mr. Williams defied threats by the Ku Klux Klan and even took on the powerful State Senator Marion Gressette, and continued his voter registration drives. Ultimately Senator Gressette deputized him as a registrar with the power to register people where he met them rather than at the voter registration office. He was then appointed to the Calhoun County Board of Education and Voter Participation. He served in that capacity for many years, and was active in many other community organizations.

His dedication to his faith was equally profound. Mr. Williams joined New Bethany Baptist Church at the age of 14, and remained an active member until his passing. He served as Church Clerk, Sunday School Teacher and Superintendent. He became an Ordained Deacon, and finally served as Chairman of the Deacon Board until he fell ill before departing this life.

Mr. Williams was the patriarch of a wonderful family. His married June Miller in August 1932, and the two had 18 children. Mr. Williams was also the proud grandfather of 56 grandchildren and great-grandfather to another 45. At the time of his passing, he had eight great-great grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Hope Williams was a stalwart of the civil rights movement. He was instrumental in helping African-American communities in Calhoun County secure their right to vote, and he was among the unsung heroes in South Carolina that pave the way for me to be elected the first African American to Congress from South Carolina since Reconstruction. In fact, he was very active in all my political efforts until his illness. It was a long road, but one made easier by the tremendous work and sacrifice of men and women like Hope Williams. I encourage you to join me in expressing deep gratitude, posthumously, to Mr. Williams, and to issue that this triumph story is enshrined in the hollowed halls of Congress.

MEDICARE PART D DEADLINE

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge Congress and the Bush Administration to extend the May 15th deadline for enrollment in Medicare Part D.

The Bush Administration has spent millions of taxpayer dollars to promote this complicated plan. However, 6 months after enrollment began, only slightly over half of Medicare re-

ipients, who did not previously have coverage, have enrolled in Part D. These low numbers are due in large part to the complexity of the system, the number of unfamiliar plans entering the market and the misinformation initially presented by CMS.

This was made very clear to me after many meetings with seniors and persons with disabilities in my district that this is unnecessarily complicated and that CMS was unprepared to deal with its implementation from the outset. As Members of Congress, we have all heard from constituents—both Medicare recipients and providers—about the difficulties in enrollment and in the accuracy of the payment system. I even heard from one constituent who was so frustrated by the system that, against our advice, he has disenrolled completely and plans to rely on emergency room care for his health coverage. That is unacceptable.

Coverage decisions are made more difficult by the fact that a beneficiary may only change plans once a year, whereas a plan may change its coverage options on a whim. Regardless of these complexities, those who do not enroll by May 15th will be charged a 7 percent minimum penalty for the rest of their lives. Medicare beneficiaries should not be charged for this Administration's problems. We need to extend the deadline for enrollment and in the meantime, go back to the drawing board and write a Medicare prescription drug plan that makes sense.

The Medicare Part D plan does not provide the comprehensive coverage that is needed for our seniors and persons with disabilities. This plan appears to be focused on providing profits for HMOs and pharmaceutical companies, not on improving health care and quality of life for Medicare recipients. Those priorities are made clear with the provision banning the Secretary of Health and Human Services from negotiating for best price on prescription drugs.

Recent studies show that by negotiating for best price we could save enough money to provide coverage for all recipients without a premium. A comprehensive Medicare drug benefit focused on seniors would come directly from Medicare, would allow negotiation, and would allow for re-importation of prescription drugs when safety standards are met.

We can do better, and we must do better. I urge my colleagues to support a deadline extension and comprehensive prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

IRAN FREEDOM SUPPORT ACT

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 26, 2006

Mr. KOLBE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the Iran Freedom Support Act. We are at a crucial point in U.S. relations with Iran. The U.S. must insist that they stop the nuclear programs, respect international regulations, and end harboring of any terrorist or terrorist funding organizations.

I support my colleagues in taking up this piece of legislation. I urge a yes vote. However, I believe a few changes and improvements to the legislation need to be made before it is sent to the President.

One concern is that section 202 of this bill sanctions companies in the countries who are

working with us to oppose Iran's nuclear program. These sanctions have a potential to split our allies, aiding Iran, something I'm sure supporters of this bill would not want to do. Congress and the President should have a united front against Iran and enacting legislation that threatens that unity is not in our best interests.

Additionally, Title II urges managers of U.S. pension plans to divest stocks of companies that report investments in Iran's energy sector. These provisions could negatively affect the smooth functioning of U.S. capital markets and the savings and investment flows that are essential to economic growth.

We must send Iran a strong signal with a united front. I urge passage of this bill because we must address the very real threat of the nuclear arms race in the Middle East stemming from Iran's irresponsible actions. The current regime in Iran must be held accountable for its threatening behavior even as we support a transition to democracy and tolerance in Iran.

BETHEL AFRICAN METHODIST
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church on the occasion of its 135 years of continuing service.

On April 23, 2006, Bethel African Methodist Church, the oldest African-American church in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, will celebrate its 135th anniversary. Bethel had a very humble beginning. While the Church was initiated in 1869, original members of the Church began holding worship services for many years in local homes. It was not until 1871 that the Church marked its formal founding as an African Methodist Episcopal Church. During 1871, the Church also moved into its present and only sanctuary. Many renovations, upgrades, and membership additions have helped the Church grow, but members still turn to their original roots for strength and stability.

Over twenty pastors have served the congregation of Bethel and their current pastor, the Reverend Dr. Vernon Ross, Jr., has helped provide both spiritual and community growth. Through his leadership, Bible studies and Sunday school have grown tremendously and over 100 new members have found a new church home. Bethel has taken the initiative to create an after-school program, a women's and men's ministry, and a program to facilitate Christian education. They have also added a youth/young adult choice program and expanded the voice mass choir. In addition to this growth, the congregation remains focused on its missionary and lay organizations and has added to its outreach ministry by using church vans to stay involved in the community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church on the wonderful occasion of its 135th anniversary. Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church is committed to serving its community and is carrying out its mission to minister to the spiritual needs of the people of the greater Pottstown community in a most extemporaneous fashion.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GUYANA

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 40th anniversary of the independence of the nation of Guyana from Great Britain and to enter a tribute to the relationship between Guyana and the United States into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

On May 26, 1966 the people of Guyana rejoiced in their newfound freedom status and embarked on their journey of establishing independent statehood. Guyana officially became a republic on February 23, 1970. The transition to independence was not an easy one but the people of Guyana persevered and sustained as their nation evolved into a country of peace and prosperity.

The Caribbean is a diverse region that includes some of the hemisphere's richest and poorest nations. Among the 16 independent nations of the Caribbean, Guyana sits poised on the north central coast of South America. United States interest in Guyana and other Caribbean nations include economic, political and security concerns. Guyana has long been recognized as a vital partner to the U.S. on security, trade, health, the environment, education, and regional democracy.

Mr. Speaker: In the spirit of friendship and cooperation I congratulate Guyana on the occasion of their 40th anniversary of independence and I enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a statement submitted by the Ambassador of Guyana, the Honorable Bayney Karran.

THE TRIBUTE

As a former British colony Guyana shares a similar historical, linguistic, religious and socio-political heritage with the United States. Moreover, as a member state of the Organization of American States (OAS), Guyana is a solid partner and ally of the United States at the hemispheric and the wider international levels in advancing mutual interests and addressing common challenges. In remarking upon the status of the bilateral relationship in 2003, President George W. Bush stated, "The United States and Guyana enjoy a strong and productive partnership. . . . (The interests of the Guyanese people) and those of the United States are closely aligned. . . . Working together to further our shared goals, we will build ever stronger bonds between our two countries".

Those bonds were evident when Guyana, aided by the combined efforts of former Presidents George H.W. Bush and Jimmy Carter to bring about free and fair elections, emerged from the clutches of authoritarianism and returned to the fold of democratic nations in 1992. Guyana has always collaborated unstintingly with the United States to combat the scourges which pose challenges to democracy, development, human rights, peace and security.

The following are some useful indicators of Guyana's level of friendship and cooperation with the United States:

The Fight Against Drugs: Guyana recently extended an invitation to the DEA to open an office in Guyana after the DEA was made to depart neighboring Venezuela. The United States has responded positively to the invitation. Guyana has also concluded a Shiprider Agreement with the United States.

Free Trade: Guyana and the United States were in mutual agreement at the Fourth Summit of the Americas that the Free Trade Area of the Americas should proceed to be implemented.

Good Governance and Governability: Guyana's classification as a Threshold Country by the Millennium Challenge Corporation underlines its determination to improve its performance in ruling justly, investing in people and encouraging economic freedom.

Terrorism: Guyana suffered proportionately the heaviest losses in human casualties of any country including the United States from the 9/11 airplane attacks. Of a population of 750,000, 25 Guyanese nationals perished at the World Trade Center and one at the Pentagon.

HIV/AIDS: Guyana is a beneficiary country under the PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plans for AIDS Relief) Program.

Trafficking in Persons: The 2005 TIP Report which elevated Guyana from a Tier 3 to a Tier 2 country referred to appreciable progress by Guyana in complying with standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons.

International Criminal Court: Guyana has signed an Article 98 agreement with the United States.

Inter-American Agenda: As a member of the Inter-American System, Guyana shares policies and programs with the United States and other states in the hemisphere as set out, for example, in the OAS Charter, the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Declaration on Hemispheric Security and other Conventions of the Inter-American System.

Above all, however, lasting bonds of friendship and cooperation between Guyana and the United States have been nurtured and strengthened by our respective people. The United States is home to a large Guyanese Diaspora which makes significant contributions to both Guyanese and American societies.

BAYNEY KARRAN,
Ambassador of Guyana.

RECOGNIZING AFRICA MALARIA
DAY

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Africa Malaria Day and express my support and admiration for the determined public health officials, NGOs, clinicians and communities that are working to defeat this preventable disease that takes its greatest toll on the pregnant women and children of Africa.

Each year, 300–500 million people in Africa contract malaria. One to three million Africans will unnecessarily die. Every thirty seconds an African child under the age of five dies. Nearly four percent of all maternal deaths annually are the result of malaria. The battle against malaria is ranked as the second highest global disease burden in Africa.

Despite these tragic statistics, there is great hope for beating the disease and reducing the human cost it inflicts. Through contributions and collaborations of the public and private sectors, great strides have been made in the fight against malaria. Insecticide treated nets have been distributed to the vulnerable populations in pilot projects. Another project