

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

NATIONAL POLICY CONCERNING PRIVACY OF HEALTH CARE RECORDS

HON. TED STRICKLAND

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2006

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the National Academies of Practice I would like to submit the National Policy Concerning Privacy of Health Care Records Paper to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

NATIONAL POLICY CONCERNING PRIVACY OF HEALTH CARE RECORDS

SUMMARY

Confidentiality—the understanding that information given in confidence will be held in confidence—has characterized the patient-practitioner relationship for the last 2400 years or more. It has been an essential component of the professional's promise to be a conscientious fiduciary, a promise that has been the cornerstone of patient trust in the health care system.

Privacy—the right of the individual “to be left alone,” a liberty of personal autonomy that the Supreme Court has held to be protected by the 14th Amendment—has been emerging over the last several decades as a salient issue in health care. This emergence is driven by technological changes that have radically altered the ability of confidentiality pledges alone to assure the security of sensitive personal information. Privacy is related to confidentiality but has differing implications that need to be understood.

An effective health care system requires sound public policy that sensitively addresses privacy and confidentiality issues in ways that do not jeopardize the crucial patient-professional relationship and do not impair the practitioner's ability to justify the trust of his/her patients.

Introduction: This paper is a brief description of the issues involved in health care confidentiality and in statutory regulation of patient privacy rights. It suggests the direction that national policy should take in addressing these issues. It reflects the perspective of the National Academies of Practice (NAP), a multidisciplinary body of distinguished health care practitioners that was founded to distill the wisdom of the practice community into functional national health policy.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality is the assurance that information received in confidence will be held in confidence. As part of their ethical commitment, professionals have promised confidentiality of patient information from as long ago as approximately 400 BC, with the introduction of the Hippocratic Oath: “All that may come to my knowledge in the exercise of my profession . . . which ought not to be spread abroad, I will keep secret and will never reveal.” A similar confidentiality promise has been incorporated into almost every ethics code of almost every health care profession since that time. Trust, based in part on assurance of confidentiality, is necessary to achieve open communication and cooperation. Without such trust, professional effectiveness is severely limited or impossible.

The National Consumer Health Privacy Survey of 2005 (California HealthCare Foundation) suggests that this trust is severely stressed in our modern health care system.

Privacy: Privacy, in the words of Justice Louis Brandeis in 1890, is the “right to be left alone.” This right has been held to be supported by the 14th Amendment, and partially supported by the 1st, 4th, and 5th Amendments. In varying degrees, the right has been extended to certain personal records and other information; however, case law and judicial holding about the right to privacy of personal information is still in flux. The November 2, 2005 ruling on No. 04-2550 in the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, *Citizens for Health v. Leavitt*, suggests that such right may depend more on individual statutes than on constitutional protection.

Privacy was not a traditional consideration in health care, but has become one. The patient does not want to be “left alone” in the treatment relationship, but does want his or her health information to be held in confidence. Traditionally, when only the professional had access to the record, usually a hand-written notation in his or her private file, privacy of the record itself was automatic so long as confidentiality was maintained. Today, good health care requires that the professional's findings be entered into a permanent health care record that is available to multiple other parties. When that happens, the professional loses control of the information, and only protection of the record itself can assure professional confidentiality. That protection is directly dependent on privacy policies or laws that fall under statutory rather than professional control.

Adjudication of privacy rights under law, especially the extension of those rights to health record information, did not have its origin in health care concerns. Here, people writing privacy policy tend to be unfamiliar with the tradition of health care and confidentiality, just as health care providers, steeped in the tradition of confidentiality as an ethical commitment, tend to be uninformed about the nuances of privacy law. The hazard is great that health care practitioners, with the wisdom of the ages behind them in building necessary patient trust, will be ignored in the development of privacy law and that those who develop privacy policy will be insensitive to the critical nature of the patient-practitioner relationship. At risk is the functionality of health care delivery, one of the most humanely important and economically significant enterprises in the country.

Cultural Shift from Confidentiality as Sole Protector of Privacy: The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) and other groups require accredited facilities to have in place patient's rights regulations that protect sensitive health information. As noted, the safety of such records can no longer depend on confidentiality agreements alone. Privacy of the health care record itself has to be assured. Extensive national policy positions have recently been established to address the privacy issue. The most notable is the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which laudably adds many necessary patient protections. Health care professionals nevertheless find HIP AA to be

both ineffective and burdensome in certain key respects. Future refinements are clearly needed. Understanding the shift from exclusive reliance on confidentiality to the need for privacy laws can point toward effective solutions. Four trends warrant highlighting.

Numerous health care professionals, third party payers, employers, and support personnel are routinely involved in today's health care system. The health care record has become the medium of communication among these involved groups. The health care professional can neither functionally withhold sensitive information from the record nor control the use of that information by others. The old promise of confidentiality is therefore no longer adequate protection of the sensitive information.

Technology has greatly increased the amount of sensitive information that directly enters the record, information that is not directly under the practitioner's control. These data include X-rays, blood chemistries, and numerous other laboratory or technologist-based findings. At the same time, the need for these laboratory personnel and technologists, as well as insurers, consultants, and others, to have access to health care information increases. All of these developments magnify the importance of controlling the health care record itself and its use by everyone with access to it.

The growing complexity of the health care system places increasing demands on the health care record. In response, the information age is replacing traditional multiple written records with a single electronically encoded one that can be accessed by almost any properly prepared person almost anywhere on earth. This shift to an agglomerated record in electronic format greatly magnifies the utility of the record as an aide to effective health care. At the same time, it creates a nightmare for control of privacy of the information it contains. Not only are confidentiality pledges inadequate but so also are privacy laws that cannot prevent hacking and other forms of electronic information theft.

The primary ingredient of effective health care over the last 2400 years or so has been the commitment of health care professionals to be conscientious fiduciaries. That continues to be the primary ingredient, but one that is being increasingly obfuscated by the shift from guild control to legal control of health care practice. As already noted, laws are necessary to implement privacy rights. Similarly, legally enforced licensing laws have replaced guild control of code of conduct issues, and the growing complexity of the health care system has interfaced health care with the legal system as never before. The result has been a tendency to raise both public and regulatory expectation that legal mandate can guarantee professional integrity. In fact, laws can supplement but cannot guarantee or replace professional integrity, which is as critical today for effective health care as it ever was. How far this muddying of the critical importance of the professional relationship will go remains to be seen. In the mean time, it creates a pressure for the professional to shift away from “caring” practice to “safe” practice and for the patient to shift away from a “trusting” attitude to a “litigious” attitude. Both of these trends are often at the expense of effectiveness of treatment and economy of service delivery. The shift toward legal regulation is

• 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.

inevitable, so the sensitivity with which policies and laws are drafted is absolutely critical for the future health of the nation.

The foregoing are dramatic changes in long-accepted traditions. Privacy of the health care record, legally regulated, is the visible "new kid on the block." Unlike professional confidentiality, it has little "wisdom of history" behind it. Not surprisingly, there is a tendency to address privacy by tactics that might work for confidentiality but do not work for privacy, by placing heavy penalties on professional breaches. This is ineffective when little attention is given to the leaky-sieve aspects of the health care record system itself. In fact, it can be severely counter-productive if it poisons the traditional trusting relationship between patient and professional. The urgent need is for highly sensitive and highly enlightened health care policy that preserves the wisdom of the past.

Tentative Answers to Complex Questions: Five questions arise in the context of the new privacy era in health care.

1. How extensive should the health care record be? The health care record will, and should, become increasingly complex and extensive. Information technology allows the retention and utilization of vast quantities of information. The future health care record will almost certainly be in electronic form. With electronic data manipulation techniques, even an extensive record can be efficiently sorted to allow quick decisions about immunizations, allergies, past responses to specific treatment approaches, drug interaction risks, excessive or inappropriate drug use, and similar questions of care. Aggregated data across a given problem or disease spectrum could identify both promising and ineffective treatment approaches. The potential gain from having such records is impressive indeed, and the technology for collecting, preserving, and utilizing them is already largely in place.

2. Who should have access to what information? Portions of the health care record should be accessible by every health care practitioner with whom each client will potentially interact. Other portions should be accessible by insurers, managed care officials, and similar non-health-care personnel who have a direct and necessary "need to know." Portions should be available for malpractice monitoring and similar purposes. Portions should be available to research programs, perhaps stripped of data identifying the individual source. The number of people who should have legitimate access, in the interest of improving the health of both our individual citizens and the nation itself, will inevitably grow.

3. How can access be made easy on a "need to know" basis? In this electronic age, partitioning the record for limited access is technologically easy. For example, a school nurse needing to certify an immunization record neither needs nor wants to sort through the entire record. An electronic summary of immunizations can be programmed into the record and be made immediately available to a coded request by a "school health worker." Similarly, current health status and current proposed or completed treatments can be electronically isolated for benefit of reimbursement or managed care assessments without exposure of the entire chart. The mental health record can be sequestered, with access limited to those with legitimate interest in that area. In general easy electronic access to appropriate data can be designed into the system, provided inappropriate policies do not frustrate legitimate access in the name of security.

4. How can inappropriate access be prevented? Any effective solution requires that

the electronic record itself be designed from the beginning to incorporate essentially fool-proof security features. In the past, "loose lips" were the primary problem, people with legitimate information intentionally or unintentionally leaking that information. Control of people was the primary solution. Within the health care professions, lapse of confidentiality has long been addressed by guild ethics and by licensing laws that regulate the actions of the professionals. Outside of the health care professions, especially in the economic sector, abuse of confidentiality still needs to be addressed more effectively.

Although important, loose lips are not the primary problem. They usually endanger only one person at a time, rather than thousands whose data may be accessible in the electronic record. Limiting access to the electronic record to those with a legitimate need to know is the most significant key to guaranteeing privacy. Electronic data can be hacked, copied, transported, collected, sold, and otherwise manipulated in ways that are difficult to detect by people who are hard to identify. Passwords and other access codes, encryption, and the like may be essential, but they are not enough. The Internet, the primary platform for current electronic data portability, has not yet achieved the levels of security that are necessary.

A workable system might involve a completely separate health information network operating out of a centralized data bank and accessible only through authorized terminals. Security might involve requiring bio-electronic screening for palm prints, iris patterns, voice prints, or the like prior to system access. Electronic "footprints," or audit trails, could preserve a record of all data accessed and for what purposes. An alarm system could alert a central information-monitoring group when an unauthorized access was attempted or when an unusual pattern of access was detected. Such steps would make unwarranted penetration of the system rare, access to the system by authorized persons easy, and apprehension of violators probable.

5. Who should control the privacy information? Privacy rights should guarantee that health care information is held confidential within the health care system, except as the patient explicitly opts out of the privacy agreement. It is the patient's knowledge that his or her own sensitive information will be used only for health care purposes that assures the trust necessary for effective cooperation. Circulation of the information within the legitimate health care system is necessary and functional, but circulation outside of that system, without explicit and uncoerced patient consent, should be taboo. Public knowledge of personal health problems can be severely damaging. One only has to recall Eagleton's vice-presidential nomination.

A few legally mandated requirements, such as the duty to protect or the duty to alert authorities of abuse of helpless patients, currently require exceptions to confidentiality. Perhaps other exceptions are warranted, but professional experience suggests that they should be rare and very carefully crafted. We suggest that they should be limited to those circumstances that pose an explicit future threat to others or an abuse against which a patient is not capable of protecting himself/herself.

While a patient may voluntarily choose to waive some privacy rights, perhaps in exchange for convenience or other benefits, waivers that are determined by law as part of health care policy, as in certain sections of HIPAA, are often more disclosure notices than they are matters of voluntary consent. Without true voluntary consent, there is no choice and no trust. These complexities re-

fect the early growing pains of privacy law and can have serious unintended consequences.

It is in these areas of developing health care policy and related privacy law that health care practitioners can make some of their most important policy contributions. The danger is that others who determine such policies may either fail to understand or simply disregard the practitioner perspective, at great harm to the nation's health.

Conclusions: Practitioner work is anchored on two premises that have stood the test of time: patient trust, which is necessary for essential communication, and the guarantee of confidentiality of information, which requires that the health care record be used exclusively for health care purposes. The National Academies of Practice recommends that information in the health care record should be exclusively available for health care purposes and that the record should be protected from access for any other use.

Maintaining privacy with an ever expanding and easily accessible electronic health care record, in an ever more complex health care delivery system, requires new approaches. These approaches must be integrated into the record keeping and service delivery systems themselves, through technological safeguards. Health care practitioners cannot control the privacy of the health record and do not control privacy policy, but our long experience with confidentiality issues and our pragmatic wisdom concerning the treatment process offer understanding that should be an essential part of policy development.

Some present trends in national privacy policy are threatening the integrity of the practitioner/patient relationship. A sensitive and sophisticated privacy policy for health care records that does not jeopardize the necessary trust of the patient is critical to assure the effectiveness of health service delivery. Health care professionals that represent the wisdom of the multidisciplinary practitioner community are an indispensable resource for such policy development. Failure to incorporate them, visibly and functionally, into the policy making process risks jeopardizing the millennia-long practitioner tradition of establishing consumer trust on which the effectiveness of health care depends.

THE POLICE UNITY TOUR

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2006

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Police Unity Tour. On May 9th, the Police Unity Tour will kick-off their 10th anniversary bicycle tour to our Nation's capitol.

For the past nine years, police officers have mounted their bicycles and cycled from New Jersey to Washington, DC, in memory of the men and women of the police force, who have sacrificed their lives while protecting our communities from harm. This year, the ride will begin on May 9 and end on May 13. The officers will depart from the Florham Park Police Headquarters, in Florham Park, NJ and will arrive at the National Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial in Washington, DC, culminating their journey with a candlelight vigil.

Established 10 years ago by Patrick P. Montuore of the Florham Park, NJ, Police Department, the Police Unity Tour started with 18 riders and has grown into a Nationwide project with participants and supporters from all over the country. The mission of the tour is to bring awareness to the lives of police officers who have died in the line of duty. The number of participants continues to grow with over 700 police officers participating last year.

In route to Washington, the tour will stop at Ground Zero, a place that will forever remind us of American heroes. The Police Unity Tour honors the heroes who lost their lives that day and reminds us that everyday our police officers, firefighters, and emergency service personnel devote their lives to protecting and serving our communities. Too many of these officers make the ultimate sacrifice and to them we are eternally grateful. We must never take their actions for granted and always remember the families and friends they leave behind.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the participants of the Police Unity Tour on their 10th anniversary and for the work they do honoring those police officers who have died in the line of duty.

CELEBRATING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF LA PERLA CAFE IN PHOENIX, AZ

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2006

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to pay tribute to La Perla Cafe, a Mexican food restaurant in Glendale, Arizona, and its owners, the late Joseph Peralta Pompa, his wife Eva Macias Pompa, and their family, on the occasion of the 60th Anniversary of their restaurant.

La Perla has been a popular family-operated restaurant in the west Valley since 1946. In an industry where small business owners sometimes struggle to survive, the Pompas have thrived by following one simple rule: Serving food as good as what you make at home.

The Pompa family history in Arizona dates back to the early 1900s. Joseph Pompa was born in Pierce, Arizona, the son of the Pompas from Sonora, Mexico. When he was one year old, his father abandoned the family, which included his mother and seven sisters. The family moved to Jerome, Arizona, and Joseph, or Joe, began working as a copper miner at the age of 14.

Eva Macias Pompa was born in Camargo, Chihuahua, Mexico, and immigrated to the United States at the age of 1, along with her widowed mother. They arrived in Clarkdale, Arizona, where Eva's mother made a living by cleaning houses. She eventually remarried and had five more children. Eva's stepfather later became very ill so Eva had to quit high school in order to work to support her family. She cleaned houses to help make ends meet.

Joseph and Eva Pompa met and married in 1935. When Joe married Eva, he was the Welterweight Champion for Arizona. Eva couldn't bear the violence of boxing, and Joe retired from the sport. He took correspondence courses on electronics when he had free

time, and received his degree. He was then hired as an electronic engineer at Goodyear Air Research.

The couple opened La Perla in 1946, determined to make their restaurant a success. Eva learned her cooking skills from her mother and had a passion for not only cooking Mexican food, but all ethnic foods. The Pompas were very kind, hard working people who wanted their children to have all the educational opportunities available, and to pursue a life defined by faith in God, pride in one's work, and happiness. As the restaurant took off, Joe and Eva had four children: Sylvia, Gloria, Joanne and Joseph. In 1961, Joseph senior passed away. Despite his sadness, the younger Joseph, also known as Butch, started working in the restaurant at the age of 13 to take his father's place. Butch grew up, married and had four sons and a daughter. Butch's son Gabe, a graduate of the San Francisco Culinary Art School, now is head of catering for La Perla and oversees cooking assistants.

La Perla has at one time or another employed aunts, uncles, cousins, and multiple generations of Pompa family members. The four generations of Pompas number into the hundreds and are part of the great American success stories woven into our U.S. history. Working as cooks, chefs, lawyers, teachers, salespeople, or real estate agents, all the Pompas have contributed to this country in their pursuit of the American Dream.

For this reason, I wish to honor The Pompas and I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the family on the occasion of La Perla Cafe's 60th Anniversary, and wishing them many more years of success.

COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, this is Cover the Uninsured Week. As we take this occasion to reflect on the ways in which we can cover the uninsured, I encourage my colleagues to address the issue head-on. We need a solution that will not only address the uninsured problem, but will also address the rising cost and inequities.

Consider that we pay almost twice as much for health per person than the average of other industrialized countries. Yet the World Health Organization ranks our health care system 37th in the world. The situation is worsening as costs continue to increase, employers continue to scale back coverage and the number of uninsured, now 46 million, continues to rise. Four out of five (82%) of the uninsured are in working families. 46% of all bankruptcies were either fully or partly caused by illness or medical bills according to a Harvard study. Three-quarters of those bankrupted by illness were insured when they first got sick. Our health care system based on private health plans gives us low quality, inefficiency, inaccessibility and is ultimately unsustainable.

The inefficiency of privately administered health care is especially stark. Between 1970 and 1998, total healthcare employment in the US grew 149 percent while the number of managers in health care grew 2348 percent.

Our businesses bear the burden of that inefficiency because they provide health care to most Americans lucky enough to have it. All other industrialized countries have universal health care that costs less. The result is that our businesses are losing competitive advantage. Ontario now makes more cars than Detroit. Canadian GM, Ford, and Daimler Chrysler signed a letter in support of their single payer health care system because of the advantage it gives them.

Managed care has failed. Employer based insurance is failing and dragging down American businesses. Consumer driven health care being trumpeted by right wing ideologues tries to control costs by providing less care, not more. Instead, we need to control costs by addressing the real inefficiencies, not by growing the uninsured and underinsured. We know exactly how to do it.

Traditional Medicare enjoys consistently higher satisfaction ratings than private insurance. Its overhead costs are about 3 percent compared to overhead costs of private health plans which average about 31 percent. Medicare's rates of cost increase have been significantly lower than in private health plans. We need such a time tested, rock solid model like Medicare to address our health care crisis. In fact, by addressing the inefficiencies, we could bring everyone in the U.S. under Medicare and they would pay no premium, no deductible, and no copayments.

Polls consistently find that Americans favor expanding government guaranteed health insurance like Medicare to all Americans. The Deans of medical schools including Harvard and Stanford, 14,000 doctors, including the former editor of the New England Journal of Medicine, and two former Surgeons General now support national health insurance like HR 676. Newspapers around the country are making the case for Medicare for All, including two recent editorials in the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal. Over 100 unions have officially endorsed it. HR 676 boasts the support of 69 members of Congress, including 9 ranking members of full committees and 28 ranking members of subcommittees.

Access the high quality health care is a right. I encourage my colleagues to support real health care reform that covers all of the uninsured and contains costs. Please support HR 676, the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act.

IMMIGRANTS ANSWER CALL TO SERVICE, CALL TO NEW LIFE

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a problem we're seeing the effects of all over the country, immigration.

As a former cop, I respect and appreciate those who've dedicated their lives to serving others as well as those who appreciate the rule of law and honor it. In my time in Congress, I've seen these two values come together in an interesting way as my office has assisted in immigration casework.

Abdullah Yousify contacted my office because he needed citizenship to continue his work in Iraq with Northwest Medical Teams.

Repeatedly, Yousify would travel at his own expense back to Seattle when CIS requested new fingerprints again and again and he once risked his life in Iraq to have fingerprints taken there. He was sworn in as a citizen last October and is now able to continue serving with the Northwest Medical Teams.

A neurologist from China who specializes in treating patients with multiple sclerosis contacted my office. This young doctor was trying to teach medicine in this country but was having trouble working with CIS. We tracked down her work authorization and it was sent to her and she is now poised to begin teaching medicine at Stanford.

Wade Bain from Trinidad wanted to join American Special Forces but couldn't get the national security check completed in order to do so. We were able to help him and he received his citizenship, allowing him to join Special Forces.

These individuals didn't want to become Americans for personal gain; they wanted to become Americans to serve others. They embody the American ideal of helping others regardless of personal cost.

It is vitally important that we implement immigration reform. We need a bill that strengthens our borders and protects this nation, but that also makes it simpler for good people to become Americans. We need a bill that provides a way for immigrants who are in this country illegally to register and become documented, lawful immigrants. There must be penalties for individuals who've violated American immigration laws. However, we must encourage undocumented individuals to "get right" with our government and register.

We must face the reality of immigration in this country. In Washington State, the immigrant population has grown by 42 percent in the five years between 2000 and 2005—which is an increase from 8 percent to 10.6 percent of the overall population—and the jobless rate in the state has hit a 6 year low. Immigration is not just compatible with but is a necessary component of economic growth. Going forward, as we work to strengthen our border in the interests of homeland security, we must also recognize the economic importance of immigration reform. I look forward to voting for a bill that appreciates the importance of both when safeguarding the security and economic future of this country.

CONGRATULATING NANCY AMOS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Nancy Amos for being named the 2006 Woman of the Year by the Dallas-Fort Worth Chapter of Women in Transportation.

Ms. Amos attained her Bachelors in Business Administration from Texas Wesleyan University. She then went on to receive her Masters Degree from the University of Texas at Arlington. Ms. Amos is an avid member of the American Heart Foundation, the Fort Worth Chamber's Foundation Board, and the founding member of UTA Fort Worth's Advisory Council. She and her husband Charley reside in Arlington, Texas and have two children as well as two grandchildren.

Through her remarkable clout and ingenuity in her twenty-five years in the field of public transportation, Ms. Amos has definitely raised the bar for the advancement of women in this area. One of Ms. Amos' many highlights was her active involvement in the introduction of the Trinity Railway Express to the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex as the coordinator for the acquisition of the Rock Island and Pacific freight railroad. This laid the groundwork for the only commuter rail in Texas.

Mr. Speaker we are truly fortunate in my community to have the type of dedicated professional that Nancy Amos personifies, and I wish her every success during the continuance of her future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING BOB RUTLEDGE
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT AS HEADMASTER OF
ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, it is a real pleasure to rise today to honor Mr. Bob Rutledge, a man who has devoted practically all of his adult life to the benefit of literally thousands of young men and women who live in Mobile, Alabama. In just a few days, Bob will be stepping down as headmaster of St. Paul's Episcopal School in Mobile.

For the past 33 years, Bob has been an integral part of the school's history and development, and he leaves behind a rich legacy that has helped to make St. Paul's one of the finest schools in Alabama.

Bob began his career in education in the Florida public school system where he served as a teacher and coach of both the football and track teams. In 1971, he moved to Jackson, Mississippi, where he served at St. Andrew's Episcopal School as the director of the upper school, director of athletics, and varsity football coach.

In 1973, he joined the staff of St. Paul's, initially serving as the school's head football coach and athletic director. In no time, it became apparent that Bob Rutledge's influence and leadership extended far beyond the athletic field.

In 1984, Bob assumed the role of upper school director, and a few years later, he was tapped assistant headmaster as well as admissions and alumni director. And in 1994, the Board of Trustees appointed Bob headmaster, making him only the sixth person to hold this important position in the school's rich history.

Mr. Speaker, without a doubt, Bob Rutledge has worked tirelessly to help transform St. Paul's into one of the premier college-preparatory schools in the southeast. Moreover, he has worked hard to build a school that is recognized throughout the state for its top-notch staff and first-rate faculty.

Without question, Bob Rutledge is an outstanding example of the quality of individuals who have devoted their entire life to the field of education. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating Bob on his remarkable career and his many, many contributions. I know his lovely wife, Martha, as well as his family, friends, and the entire St. Paul's community join with me in praising

Bob for his accomplishments and extending our sincerest thanks to him for his many efforts over the years on behalf of the young men and women who have been a part of St. Paul's Episcopal School.

BAHIA GRANDE'S NATIONAL COOPERATIVE CONSERVATION AWARD

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Bahia Grande Restoration Project's 60 partners upon their receipt of the Department of the Interior's 2005 Cooperative Conservation Award. This award acknowledges the collaboration activity among diverse agencies working to restore our environment.

The legacy we leave our children and our grandchildren is the condition of the Earth beneath our feet. Some of the most fragile—and at the same time, most important—parts of that legacy are the delicate wetlands that buffer our continent.

The project's participants have demonstrated an understanding of this delicate intersection of wetlands and our continent by finding new and creative ways to sustain the Bahia Grande wetland in South Texas.

Through their teamwork and innovativeness, the Bahia Grande partners have managed to walk the line between environmental and economic prosperity to achieve an ecologically and economically successful community. Federal, state, local and tribal governments, as well as private groups, nonprofit institutions, and nongovernmental entities have worked together on discerning a path to solve what seemed to be an unsolvable problem, further exemplifying the cooperative spirit this award honors.

The Bahia Grande suffered from the construction of the Brownsville Ship Channel in the 1930s, which blocked the natural tide action necessary to maintain the basin under water. The basin eventually dried up and began blowing clouds of dust, jeopardizing the health of nearby residents and damaging area schools.

With the help of many people, these consequences were addressed and mitigated. By allowing the Port of Brownsville to flood the Bahia Grande, the moisture will prevent the dry sand from blowing around and affecting the health of those in the area.

What was once an idle dust bowl plaguing surrounding cities has now become the largest wetlands restoration effort in U.S. history. Once completed, more than 10,000 acres of the Bahia Grande wetland system will be permanently flooded and restored.

I ask the House of Representatives to join me today in honoring the active support and involvement of those contributors in the Bahia Grande Restoration Project. Mr. Speaker, they have recognized the importance of environmental conservation on our lives; and for that, we must recognize them.

IN TRIBUTE TO ART HEITZER'S 40
YEARS OF COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a noted Milwaukee community leader, Mr. Art Heitzer, as his colleagues, friends, and family gather to celebrate his 40 years of activism. Throughout his life, Art has maintained an unwavering commitment to improving the quality of life for everyone in Milwaukee, while never losing sight of Milwaukee's connections to the wider world.

Art emerged as a compelling student leader while studying at Marquette University in the 1960s. As President of the Marquette Student Government, he helped organize student demonstrations that led to the creation of the Equal Opportunities Program, which provides low-income students and students of color with the academic support, tutoring and mentoring they need to succeed. A whole generation of community leaders who have since been educated at Marquette—myself included—are indebted to Art for leading this charge.

Art Heitzer is nationally known for his path-breaking work in employment law, and has attained leadership positions in state and national professional associations as a result of his success. An active citizen, he has been a noted member of the Midtown Neighborhood Association, and a committed leader of Peace Action Wisconsin. He serves on the boards of the Fourth Street Forum and Ko Thi Dance Company, and is a member of Central United Methodist church.

A true citizen of the world, Art has been a longtime advocate for changes to U.S. foreign policy toward Cuba. A strong opponent of the travel ban, he has organized religious and civic delegations to visit Cuba, and has been instrumental in developing a sister city relationship between Milwaukee and Nuevitás. He has acted out of his passionate belief that increasing connections between U.S. and Cuban citizens can only improve the state of democracy and human rights in Cuba and at home. Mr. Speaker, it is truly a privilege to pay tribute today to Art, his wife Sandra Edlund and son Franz, and to thank all of them for their commitment to improving Milwaukee and our world.

LETTER TO PRESIDENT BUSH

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, on April 14, 2006, I sent the following letter to President Bush regarding reports of United States troops conducting military operations in Iran:

DEAR PRESIDENT BUSH: Recently, it has been reported that U.S. troops are conducting military operations in Iran. If true, it appears that you have already made the decision to commit U.S. military forces to a unilateral conflict with Iran, even before direct or indirect negotiations with the gov-

ernment of Iran had been attempted, without UN support and without authorization from the U.S. Congress.

The presence of U.S. marines in Iran constitutes a hostile act against that country. At a time when diplomacy is urgently needed, it escalates an international crisis. It undermines any attempts to negotiate with the government of Iran. And it will undermine U.S. diplomatic efforts at the U.N.

Furthermore, it places U.S. troops occupying neighboring Iraq in greater danger. The achievement of stability and a transition to Iraqi security control will be compromised, reversing any progress that has been cited by the Administration.

It would be hard to believe that such an imprudent decision had been taken, but for the number and variety of sources confirming it. In the last week, the national media have reported that you have in fact commenced a military operation in Iran. Today, retired Col. Sam Gardiner related on CNN that the Iranian Ambassador to the IAEA, Aliasghar Soltaniyeh, reported to him that the Iranians have captured dissident forces who have confessed to working with U.S. troops in Iran. Earlier in the week, Seymour Hersh reported that a U.S. source had told him that U.S. marines were operating in the Baluchi, Azeri and Kurdish regions of Iran.

Any military deployment to Iran would constitute an urgent matter of national significance. I urge you to report immediately to Congress on all activities involving American forces in Iran. I look forward to a prompt response.

Sincerely,

DENNIS J. KUCINICH,
Member of Congress.

CONGRATULATING REV. JOHN S.
KRAFCHAK ON THE OCCASION OF
HIS 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF OR-
DINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to the Rev. John S. Krafchak, pastor of St. Mary of Czestochowa Church, Nanticoke, Pennsylvania, who is celebrating his 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood on May 26, 2006.

Father Krafchak was born in Old Forge, Pennsylvania, in 1931, a son of Ann Marie Potempa and John Krafchak. He graduated from St. Ann's Monastery High School in West Scranton. He attended St. Mary's College, Orchard Lake, Michigan; St. Mary's Seminary and University, Baltimore, Maryland. He was ordained on May 26, 1956, in St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton, by then Bishop Jerome D. Hannon.

Father Krafchak was first assigned as assistant pastor at Holy Name of Jesus Church, Swoyersville, Pennsylvania. He was later transferred to St. Mary's Church, Nanticoke and then to St. Hedwig's Church, Kingston. Following that assignment, he was transferred to St. Mary's Church of the Maternity in Wilkes-Barre. In 1974, he was named administrator at Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Sugar Notch and, in 1983, was named pastor at St. Mary's Church in Nanticoke, where he is presently.

Over the years, he taught at Marymount High School in Wilkes-Barre and West Side Central Catholic High School in Kingston.

Father Krafchak is well known as a "people's priest" because of how intensely he has worked with his parishioners on a myriad of projects and issues.

Over the years, Father Krafchak was especially interested in building his parish's religious education programs as well as the marriage preparation and family life programs. He was also very concerned about parish restoration and expansion projects as well as stabilizing parish finances. At his present parish, he oversaw the construction of a new rectory in 1986.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Father Krafchak on a remarkable priestly career. His devotion to his chosen vocation and his commitment to the people he served is an inspiration for others in the value of selfless service. Father Krafchak has left an indelible mark on the lives of thousands in northeastern Pennsylvania and, in the process, has earned their eternal love and respect.

TRIBUTE TO SYBYL ATWOOD

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a remarkable woman, Sybyl Atwood. For the past 40 years Sybyl has been the linchpin of the social services community in my hometown, Flint, Michigan. On May 11 she will be honored for her selfless work on behalf of the less fortunate at a dinner hosted by the Resource Center in Flint.

Relocating to the Flint area after earning her Baccalaureate Degree in Community Development from Central Michigan University, she gathered together a group of volunteers on February 14, 1966 and founded the Volunteer Bureau. Serving as the chief executive officer of the Bureau for more than 20 years, Sybyl defined its direction as an organization promoting volunteerism, grassroots community involvement and expanded delivery of social services in the Flint area. The Bureau evolved into the Voluntary Action Center in 1989 and Sybyl continued at its helm. After merging with United Way, the Voluntary Action Center became part of the Resource Center. Sybyl continues to head the Volunteer Services at the Resource Center.

Thousands of volunteers have benefited from her training and guidance. She compiled the Genesee County Community Sourcebook, a reference book listing over 400 service agencies in Genesee County. Sybyl is also responsible for assembling the information and the publishing of the "Emergency Assistance Directory," the "Youth Volunteer Opportunities Directory," and the "Reduced Income Planning Guide." She also coordinates the weekly "Volunteer Here" column in the Flint Journal and runs the Information and Referral Program. This program receives about 350 calls per month from persons seeking emergency assistance.

For her service to the community Sybyl has received the American Society of Training and Development Chapter Award for Service, City of Flint Human Relations Commission People's Award, Genesee County Bar Association

Liberty Bell Award, Toastmaster International Regional Communication and Leadership Award, the YWCA of Greater Flint Nina Mills Women of Achievement Award, the Rotary Club's Paul Harris Award, Citizen of the Year Award from the National Association of Social Workers, and earlier this week Michigan State University named her the 2006 Outstanding Field Educator for the Flint Program.

In addition to her work with Volunteer Services, Sybyl is also a founding member of the Emergency Services Council, the Genesee County Service Learning Coalition, the local Americorps collaborative, and has found time to work toward a master's degree in Public Administration. As a member of the Committee Concerned with Housing, she is currently studying the gaps in service in the emergency housing sector. Sybyl works within her neighborhood promoting the historic Carriage Town area and the propagation of Michigan's indigenous plants and grasses.

Mr. Speaker, Sybyl Atwood embodies the sentiments in her favorite quotation, "While there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free." She is a champion of the poor, the helpless, and the innocent. I am proud of my association with her, grateful for the good that she does, and treasure her inspiration, commitment and wisdom. The Flint community is a more humane place because of Sybyl Atwood. I ask the House of Representatives to rise today and join me in honoring this exceptional woman.

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solidarity with Jews across this nation and around the world to pay tribute to those who perished at the hands of the Nazis during the Holocaust. Today in the Nation's Capital, we gather to pay our respects at the National Commemoration of the Days of Remembrance. I would like to thank the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum for arranging this important and emotional event.

My district, the 9th Congressional District of Illinois, is home to perhaps the largest concentration of survivors in the country and certainly in the state, and this day holds deep meaning for those individuals and the entire community.

Recent events in the Middle East and around the world underscore the importance of this day. Anti-Semitic and anti-Israel rhetoric and demonstrations continue in numerous countries. And the President of one of these countries, Iran, has threatened to use nuclear weapons to wipe Israel off the face of the map.

With anti-Semitism on the rise we must be reminded that "Never Again" is not a guarantee, but a pledge that we must uphold through education, dialogue, and determination. It also reminds us that we must continue to strengthen the U.S. commitment to the security of Israel. Moreover, we must redouble our efforts to bring lasting peace to the Middle East.

"Never Again" means that we must combat hate wherever it exists. While the Holocaust was a unique incident, a genocide is taking place right in front of our eyes in the Darfur region of Sudan. I recently traveled to Darfur where President Bush and the U.S. Congress have officially acknowledged "genocide" is taking place. According to official estimates, out of an estimated pre-conflict population of 7 million in Darfur, anywhere between 180,000 and 400,000 Darfurians have already died and over 2 million have been displaced. The conflict has spilled across international borders and hundreds of thousands have fled into Chad. The window to provide security and hope is narrowing. According to the Commander of the African Union forces who briefed the participants of my Congressional Delegation in Darfur, "There is no sense of urgency outside."

As a Jew I cannot sit idle while these atrocities continue to unfold in Darfur. The lessons from the Holocaust have taught us that we must never turn a blind eye to terror or discrimination. We must demand that our government hold those who carry out acts of needless brutality accountable. I believe that everyone should take a moment today to consider the role of the U.S. in the prevention and prosecution of genocide.

We must honor those who were lost during the Holocaust by carrying on and living honorable and productive lives. At the same time we must also honor them by carrying out measures to bring to justice those who were implicated and who profited from their suffering. And we must do everything within our power to provide the utmost measure of restitution for those who survived the Nazi's evil plan.

The Holocaust was the most horrific human atrocity the world saw during the last century and perhaps in the history of the planet. Millions of Jews and others were brutalized, raped, beaten, dehumanized, enslaved, robbed, and murdered. While it is hard to grasp how terrible those events must have been, what all of our children, and us must do is to listen to the stories of those few remaining survivors of the Holocaust and ensure that their stories and their suffering are a permanent part of history.

Today we honor and mourn those who perished. We vow to live our lives in a way that pays tribute to their memory and ensures others will not suffer their fate.

CONGRATULATING CHARTER SCHOOLS

SPEECH OF

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 3, 2006

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Charter Schools across the country and in the 21st District of Florida for their continuing work to educate our country's youth. Charter schools are a great asset for our children and for our public school system. By providing flexible programs, community outreach, and specialized training, charter schools serve the ever changing needs of our students. The City of

Pembroke Pines Florida Charter School, located within the 21st District of Florida, stands as an exemplary model of excellence among all charter schools.

Under Governor Jeb Bush's A-plus plan, the Pembroke Pines charter elementary and middle schools have all earned an "A" for the past two years for exceptional student achievement. The Pembroke Pines Charter School standardized test scores are outstanding. By all measures, this charter school has exceeded its goals and reached beyond expectations.

The City of Pembroke Pines Florida Charter School is exceptional for another reason: its specialized training for autistic students. At Pembroke Pines, autistic students receive training tailored to their unique and individual needs. Not only do these students receive the personal attention that they need, they also are assimilated into the general school population. This innovative program brilliantly serves both needs of our autistic students by expanding their academic ability while fostering good social skills among the general student body.

I wholeheartedly commend our charter schools for their hard work and devotion to our children. With creative solutions and selfless dedication, these schools provide an invaluable service to the next generation of Americans. On the occasion of National Charter Schools week, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest support for this resolution. Most of all, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the teachers, administrators, and students of our Nation's charter schools.

TRIBUTE TO EDWARDSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Edwardsville Public Library of Illinois as we celebrate its 100th anniversary. For the last 100 years, the library and staff have served the residents of Edwardsville and the surrounding area.

The first library in Edwardsville was established in 1819; just one year after Illinois was admitted into the Union. In 1823, the Edwardsville Library Association was chartered and it was again revived in 1879. In 1903, through the efforts of the Library Board President Charles Boeschstein, Edwardsville was given a gift of \$12,500 from Andre Carnegie. On June 26, 1906 the library building was dedicated.

The library has gone through several structural changes over the years, including growing from 8,000 square feet to 20,000 square feet. No matter the structural changes, the library patrons still have access to a wealth of information and resources.

It is my pleasure to congratulate the people that have made the Edwardsville Public Library a sanctuary of intellectuality for 100 years and I wish all the best for the years to come.

CONGRATULATIONS TO REBEKAH
NASTAV

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this means to congratulate 15-year-old Rebekah Nastav of Amoret, Missouri. Miss Nastav's design for a new stamp won the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest on April 20, 2006.

Miss Nastav's acrylic painting of a redhead duck, entitled "Morning Swim," will be featured on the 2006–2007 Junior Duck Stamp. More than 34,000 Junior Duck Stamp designs were submitted from all 50 states. Miss Nastav's stamp will be made available by the Fish and Wildlife Service for \$5.00 to the general public on June 1, 2006. Proceeds from the Junior Duck Stamp sales will be used to support environmental education efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I am certain that the Members of the House will join me in congratulating Miss Rebekah Nastav and in wishing her luck in all her future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING BRUCE FITCH

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Mr. Bruce Fitch of Frisco, Colorado, who recently retired from his post as Executive Director of Outward Bound Wilderness. As a friend and former Executive Director of Outward Bound, I am honored to have the opportunity to congratulate Bruce on his contributions to Outward Bound and to wish him well on his future endeavors.

Bruce Fitch began his stellar career at Outward Bound with a simple love of the outdoors and a desire to provide young people with a strong outdoor education. These passions led him first to a position as a river instructor for the Colorado Outward Bound School, then to a variety of administrative positions within the organization. Bruce's leadership skills and devotion to outdoor education became obvious, and he climbed the ranks until he landed at the top of the organization as Executive Director, COBS. His responsible and forward-thinking stewardship as separate Outward Bound entities merged to become Outward Bound Wilderness provided a visionary path for the organization, and ensured that young people would continue to have the opportunity to participate in Outward Bound's life-changing programs.

With the same devotion to outdoor education that Bruce showed as a young instructor and administrator for Outward Bound, he has accepted a position as the Executive Director of the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Program. I have no doubt that he will provide this organization with the same leadership and vision that he contributed to Outward Bound over the years, and I look forward to seeing what the BOEP accomplishes with Bruce at the helm.

As Bruce and his family begin this new chapter in their lives, I hope my colleagues will

join me in congratulating him on his continuing service to the outdoor education community and to those that it serves.

THE HARLEM CONGREGATIONS
FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT,
INC. AND THE NEW YORK STATE
ASSEMBLY CITATION

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, again I rise to offer yet another much deserved tribute to the Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI) and to also enter into the RECORD the wording directly from a New York State Assembly Citation proudly bestowed upon the HCCI in recognition of the HCCI's exemplary contributions to the citizens of Harlem.

The HCCI, founded in 1986, is a diverse inter-faith consortium of more than 90 congregations established to revitalize the Central Harlem community. Needless to say, the HCCI continues to make a substantial impact in Harlem. To sing the praises of this dynamic organization I will reiterate some of the initiatives they have successfully launched and maintained over the last twenty years. The HCCI is responsible for developing low and moderate income housing, creating supportive health and human services facilities and programs, providing commercial development opportunities for local businesses, expanding cultural programs, and providing assistance to families and individuals living with disabilities by providing housing and support facilities.

On April 27, 2006 during the HCCI's 20th anniversary gala dinner celebration held at the Rockefeller Center's Rainbow Room in New York City, HCCI honored the Bank of New York with their "Community Development Award" recognizing the bank's support of HCCI's comprehensive community development initiatives in Harlem, in particular, the bank's operating support for the organization and mortgage financing to HCCI clients. The Bank of New York offers affordable mortgage loan products for first time homebuyers, homeowners seeking refinancing, home renovation, reverse mortgages and also provides construction loans to both not-for-profit and for-profit housing developers. The bank, through its program support, has been instrumental in contributing to the remarkable revitalization initiatives in Harlem.

As Lloyd Brown, executive vice president of the Bank of New York stated during the award acceptance speech . . . "We congratulate HCCI on its 20th year of community service in Harlem . . . (HCCI) is an organization that is successful in building affordable housing, creating commercial and job opportunities and providing health and social services to the people of Harlem." I join Mr. Brown to add my heartfelt congratulations.

Mr. Speaker, lastly, I would like to acknowledge and enter into the RECORD the wording from the prestigious citation bestowed upon the Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. by the New York State Assembly.

NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY CITATION

Whereas, Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement (HCCI) was founded in

1986 as a consortium of 16 Harlem Churches, whose first president was the late Bishop Preston R. Washington, Sr. and today has a membership of over 90 Churches, Mosques and a Synagogue;

Whereas, HCCI began as a grassroots planning and organizing initiative, that has raised millions of dollars through ecclesiastical, entrepreneurial, and educational partnerships throughout the years. HCCI's interminable drive to improve the quality of life of all Harlemites, and dedication to community service is evidenced in the reversal of urban blight and deterioration concurrently, block by block;

Whereas, quality affordable housing has been the centerpiece of HCCI's services to the community from the beginning and to date has over 2,000 units of truly affordable housing built through innovative cross sector collaborations including elected officials, housing departments and banking institutions;

Whereas, HCCI has enhanced the livelihoods of many through adult education programs, welfare to work training literacy, trades and construction and computer technology and programming with proven success in job readiness and placement;

Whereas, HCCI has taken the leadership in addressing health issues affecting the community, most notably is the pilot program Community Organizations and Congregations for Health that offers technical assistance to faith based institutions to start non-profits that sustain HIV/AIDS prevention services;

Whereas, a Great State is only as great as those persons who give exemplary service to their community, whether through participation in voluntary programs, through unique personal achievement in their professional or other endeavors or simply through a lifetime of good citizenry; and

Whereas, such services, which is truly the lifeblood of the community and state, so often goes unrecognized and unrewarded; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that as a duly elected Member of the State Assembly of New York, I recognize that in Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement we have outstanding citizens, ones who are worthy of the esteem of both the Community and the great State of New York.

RECOGNIZING THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE CITY OF MONMOUTH, OR

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city and citizens of Monmouth, Oregon, as they prepare to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the city's foundation. Monmouth is a city that understands the meaning of words like history, tradition, and most of all, community.

Since its incorporation in 1856 by members of what became the First Christian Church, the people of Monmouth have held firm to the values that make it an outstanding example of the All-American city. The city is home to Western Oregon University which was founded in the same year and is the oldest public university in Oregon, as well as Campbell Hall, the oldest building in the state's public higher education system. The campus of Western Oregon University is also home to one of the tallest Christmas trees in the U.S., a giant Sequoia planted by the students in 1879 that has

been nominated for inclusion in Oregon's Heritage Tree Program.

Monmouth is home to the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training which provides training facilities for both local and state law enforcement officers along with the Oregon Military Academy. The partnerships forged between the town and these institutions shows the dedication of the citizens to not just a safe community, but safe communities across Oregon and the nation.

Beautiful parks in Monmouth are large enough for city-wide festivals such as the annual Western Days Fourth of July celebration—which draw 10,000 visitors annually for the largest and longest patriotic festival in Oregon, yet intimate enough for families to gather and enjoy a day of recreation. Family-friendly activities are available year-round, from active sports programs to dance recitals to high school plays where the whole town comes out to show their support.

And so tomorrow, on this town's 150th birthday, I join the residents of Monmouth, Oregon, in celebrating the wonderful community that they have created.

APRIL 18, 2006 LETTER TO
PRESIDENT BUSH

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, On April 18, 2006, I sent the following letter to President Bush regarding the United States' use of Iranian anti-government insurgent groups in fomenting opposition and supporting military operations in Iran:

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Last week I wrote to you regarding reports that U.S. troops are conducting military operations in Iran.

There are also reports, however, that the U.S. is fomenting opposition and supporting military operations in Iran among insurgent groups and Iranian ethnic minority groups, some of whom are operating from Iraq.

The Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan (PEJAK) is one such group. PEJAK is based in the Kurdish region of Iraq, a few miles from the Iranian border, and has staged attacks across the border in Iran since 2004 on behalf of Iranian Kurdish interests, according to an April 3, 2006 article in the Washington Times. PEJAK claimed to kill twenty-four Iranian soldiers in three raids against army bases in March. Iran's official news agency also reported that three Republican Guard soldiers were killed in a gun battle near the Iraqi border in late March. Iran has denounced PEJAK as a terrorist group and has accused the U.S. of funding PEJAK. According to an April 15, 2006 article in the Economist, Iranians and Turks both believe that the U.S. is supporting PEJAK. It is hard to believe that PEJAK is operating successfully from Iraq without U.S. knowledge, support and coordination.

The Mujahedin e-Khalq (MEK), an Iranian anti-government group which has been listed as a "terrorist group" by the State Department since 1997, is another anti-government group that has received U.S. support. An article by Jim Lobe published on Antiwar.com on February 11, 2005 claims that Pentagon civilians and Vice President Cheney's office

are among those in the U.S. government who support the MEK. His article further describes how according to Philip Giraldi, a former CIA official and a source in an article about this subject in the American Conservative magazine, U.S. Special Forces have been directing members of the MEK in carrying out reconnaissance and intelligence collection in Iran from bases in Afghanistan and Balochistan, Pakistan since the summer of 2004.

Seymour Hersh's April 10, 2006 article in the New Yorker also confirms that the U.S. troops are establishing contact with anti-government ethnic-minority groups in Iran. According to a government consultant with close ties to civilians in the Pentagon, American combat troops now operating in Iran are "working with minority groups in Iran, including the Azeris, in the north, the Baluchis, in the southeast, and the Kurds, in the northeast." The consultant further says, "The troops are studying the terrain and giving away walking-around money to ethnic tribes, and recruiting scouts from local tribes and shepherds."

U.S. support for insurgent activity in Iran is not tolerable. You have claimed numerous times that the object of the so-called "War on Terror" is to target lawless insurgent groups.

Previously I asked you to immediately report to Congress on the extent of U.S. military operations currently in Iran. Now, in light of the evidence described above, I urge you to report to Congress on U.S. support for military operations in Iran by anti-Iranian insurgent groups.

It is a great breach of public trust to set this country on another path of war while keeping the Congress and the American people in the dark. I am demanding that you respond.

Sincerely,

DENNIS J. KUCINICH,

Ranking Democrat, Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations.

14TH ANNUAL "STAMP OUT HUNGER FOOD DRIVE" FEEDS HUNGRY, RAISES PUBLIC AWARENESS OF PROBLEM

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in praise of the 14th annual letter carriers food drive, "A Family Affair", which will occur on May 13th 2006. This is the Nation's largest one-day food drive. Last year the food drive raised 750,000 lbs of food and the letter carriers have set an even bigger goal this year. For the 14th year, they would like to raise 1,000,000 lbs of food. 60 percent of the food raised goes to children.

The "Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive" was organized in 1993 by postal employees, members of the National Association of Letter Carriers and rural carriers to collect food to raise public awareness and combat hunger. Since its inception, over 658 million pounds of food has been collected in more than 10,000 cities and towns across America and delivered to food banks by letter carriers and other Postal Service employees. Their commitment to feeding America's hungry is as unceasing as their

other commitments extolled in the Postal Service's unofficial motto: "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds." In this case, postal service employees have included feeding America's hungry in their "appointed rounds". God bless them for it.

Working in partnership with Campbell Soup Company and America's Second Harvest, as well as local offices of the United Way and the AFL-CIO, the Postal Service's commitment to fighting hunger is admirable.

IN HONOR OF ROBERT JAMES
WIDMER, SR.

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a man who can only be described as truly American, Robert James Widmer, Sr. who passed away on Monday, May 1, 2006, in Newark, Ohio, under the care of hospice.

Mr. Robert James Widmer, Sr., 84, of Granville, Ohio, retired in 1985 after 38 years in sales and management with Lederle Laboratories. Born July 9, 1921, in Toledo, Ohio, to the late Elsie Hollice Pace Rubin and Girard Winfield Widmer, Mr. Widmer attended Toledo University, Columbia University and graduated from Haverford College.

During World War II, Mr. Widmer served in the U.S. Army Air Corps from 1943 to 1946, and achieved the rank of Captain. He was assigned to the 454th Bombardment Group stationed in Italy and was shot down on his 13th mission on April 13, 1944, over Budapest and became a POW in Stalag Luft III. For his dedication and bravery, Mr. Widmer received the following medals for service to his country: two purple hearts with two clusters, Presidential Unit Citation for 454th Bombardment Group, Prisoner of War Medal, WWII Victory Medal, and the European African Middle East Campaign Medal with four battle stars.

Mr. Robert James Widmer, Sr., was a member of the Atlantis Country Club and Atlantis Golf Club, a founder and member of the 454th Bombardment Group, member of the Caterpillar Club, VFW, American Legion, Disabled American Officers, Former Prisoners of War at Stalag Luft III, Ex-Prisoners of War, Licking County SCORE, and a member and Elder of the First Presbyterian Church (USA).

This all-American man is survived by his loving wife Janet Clark Widmer; his daughters, Deborah A. Lewicki, Judith N. Widmer, and Nancy J. Freeman; his son, Robert J. Widmer, Jr. of Argyle, Texas in the 26th Congressional District; and five grandchildren, Aaron and David Lewicki, and Jay, Jocelyn and Jimmy Widmer.

Today, we honor Robert James Widmer, Sr., for his commitment to the safety of his country, his passion for life and the love of his family. He will always be remembered for his kindness and generosity to others. May he continue to serve as a role model for others in the future.

CONGRATULATING MR. CHARLES McDONALD ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, it is with a tremendous amount of pride that I rise today to honor Mr. Charles McDonald on the occasion of his retirement after serving as president of the Alabama Retail Association for 35 years.

Charlie McDonald has been a devoted advocate for the retailers and business community of Alabama all of his life. Moreover, Charlie is a worker, not a talker, and he knows how to get the job done.

He served the Alabama Council of Association Executives for over three decades. In 1987, he served as chairman of the Alabama Civil Justice Reform Committee, and in 1992, he chaired the Alabamians for Workers' Compensation Reform.

A graduate of the University of Alabama, Charles received the School of Commerce and Business Administration's Retailer of the Millennium Award in 1999. He was also honored by the Food Marketing Institute with the Donald H. MacManus Retail Association Executive of the Year Award, and the American Society of Association Executives awarded him the Grand Award for Management Achievement. This year, the National Retail Federation honored Charles with the prestigious J. Thomas Weyant Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating a dedicated community leader and friend to many throughout Alabama.

I know Charles's colleagues, his wife Elaine, his children, and grandchildren, and his many friends from throughout the country join me in praising his accomplishments and extending our heartfelt thanks for his many efforts over the years on behalf of the state of Alabama.

THE PORTER COWBOYS' 5A
SOCCER TITLE

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Porter Cowboys, winners of the University Interscholastic League Class 5A boys' soccer state championship. These young players came painstakingly close to defeat, but rose to victory in a 2-1 double-overtime win, earning Brownsville's first 5A state championship, and the pride of South Texas.

The Cowboys came back from a 1-0 deficit against the highly regarded team of Coppell in a match that went to two 10-minute overtime periods. The agility and perseverance of this team gained the recognition of even the rival coach who could not deny the heart the Cowboys put forth.

Less than a minute later, Porter tied up the game 1-1, after Coppell's only goal. The winning shot scored with 3:42 left on the stadium scoreboard, leaving the Cowboys' solid defense squad to protect the lead. The team left it all on the field to earn the Rio Grande Valley's first 5A title in soccer.

With such dedicated players and skilled coaching, it seems only right that their remarkable qualities led them to this year's championship. Their triumph is significant to both the team and their fans because it tells the story of how the road to victory is paved by those who never give up.

The Cowboys' success comes from sheer persistence and true teamwork. These young men have learned the supreme principles of both sports and life. They have experienced that winning is great but success is sweeter when teamwork and faith defy expectations and confront challenge.

These are the young champions: Eric Chapa, Edgar Sanchez, Aldo Sierra, Juan Razo, Jose Alvarado, Peter Ruiz, Victor Vela, Cristian Sierra, Wilfredo Fernandez, Edgar Acuna, Jorge Briones, Jovanny Briones, Alex Lara, Humberto Lopez, Gerardo Herrera, Mario Perez, Gerardo Martinez, Diego Rodriguez, Michael Cedillo, Angel Cardenas, Jesus Sanchez, Miguel Vasquez, Jose Mojica, Jorge Gandara, Abpsa Cardenas, Jose Sosa, and Abel Perez.

The coaches who led them to victory are Luis Zarate, Arturo A. Puig Jr., Pedro Valdez, and Miguel Marroquin.

I congratulate the Porter Cowboys who through their unwavering endurance and determination have brought great pride and joy to all of South Texas. I ask the House of Representatives to join me today in commending this outstanding band of champions who have learned the most important lessons of competition, faith, and commitment. Mr. Speaker, these young men have inspired us and made us exceptionally proud.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, April 25 and Wednesday, April 26, I was absent for votes on rollcall numbers 100 through 108. Had I been present, I would have voted "Yes" on rollcall number 100, "Yes" on rollcall number 101, "No" on rollcall number 102, "No" on rollcall number 103, "Yes" on rollcall number 104, "Yes" on rollcall number 105, "No" on rollcall number 106, "Yes" on rollcall number 107, and "No" on rollcall number 108.

CONGRATULATING RAYMOND S. ANGELI ON THE OCCASION OF RECEIVING THE B'NAI B'RITH AMERICANISM AWARD

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Raymond S. Angeli, of Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania, who will be the recipient of the B'nai B'rith's annual "Americanism Award" on May 7.

The honoree of this prestigious accolade is traditionally selected by past award recipients

and the presidents of various service organizations.

Mr. Angeli, who serves as president of Lackawanna College, was previously a member of the late Pennsylvania Gov. Robert P. Casey's cabinet. He served as secretary of the Department of Community Affairs after having served as Deputy Secretary for Programs at the agency and as Director of its Northeast Regional office.

A veteran of the United States Army, Mr. Angeli retired with the rank of lieutenant colonel. He served two combat tours in Southeast Asia, one as commander of a helicopter company. He also served as a Department of Defense inspector general and as foreign area officer in the U.S. Embassy in Paris, France.

While in military service, Mr. Angeli was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal, the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, The Air Medal and the Pennsylvania Meritorious Service Medal.

Active in state, regional and community affairs, Mr. Angeli served as chairman of the board of the National Institute for Environmental Renewal, the state's Interagency Task Force on affordable housing and the Pennsylvania Housing and Finance Agency.

Mr. Angeli serves on the boards of the Great Valley Technology Alliance, St. Joseph's Center, Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority and the Delaware and Lehigh Corridor Authority.

Mr. Angeli is a past recipient of the Boy Scouts of America's Outstanding Citizen Award in Northeastern Pennsylvania, UNICO's Man of the Year Award and the University of Scranton's Distinguished Alumnus Award.

A native of Blakely, Pennsylvania, Mr. Angeli earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Nebraska and a master's degree in education from Scranton University.

Mr. Angeli and his late wife, Nancy, are the parents of two daughters, Ms. Emy Angeli and Mrs. Tracy Barone.

On a personal note, I want to express my own appreciation for the commitment Ray has made to his community. Although I met him during his tenure in Governor Casey's Cabinet, it has only been since my Congressional district expanded to include Scranton that I have had the opportunity to work closely with Ray on several projects. I know that I can count on him to have thought carefully about every project he undertakes and to have determined that it is in the best interest of the Northeastern Pennsylvania. We are indeed fortunate to have him in our community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Angeli on this auspicious occasion. Mr. Angeli's commitment to service and excellence has earned him the respect and admiration of the greater Scranton community. It is fitting that such an award would be presented to him.

APRIL 5, 2006 LETTER TO
SECRETARY RUMSFELD

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I sent the following letter to Secretary Rumsfeld requesting

records pertaining to Pentagon plans to use U.S. Special Forces to advise, support and train Iraqi death squads:

Hon. DONALD RUMSFELD,
Secretary of Defense,
The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY RUMSFELD: I am writing to request a copy of all records pertaining to Pentagon plans to use U.S. Special Forces to advise, support and train Iraqi assassination and kidnapping teams.

On January 8, 2005, Newsweek magazine first published a report that the Pentagon had a proposal to train elite Iraqi squads to quell the growing Sunni insurgency. The proposal has been called the "Salvador Option," which references the U.S. military assistance program, initiated under the Carter Administration and subsequently pursued by the Reagan Administration, that funded and supported "nationalist" paramilitary forces who hunted down and assassinated rebel leaders and their supporters in El Salvador. This program in El Salvador was highly controversial and received much public backlash in the U.S., as tens of thousands of innocent civilians were assassinated and "disappeared," including notable members of the Catholic Church, Archbishop Oscar Romero and the four American churchwomen. According to the Newsweek report, Pentagon conservatives wanted to resurrect the Salvadoran program in Iraq because they believed that despite the incredible cost in human lives and human rights, it was successful in eradicating guerrillas.

Mr. Secretary, at a news conference on January 11, 2005, you publicly stated that the idea of a Salvador option was "nonsense." Yet mounting evidence suggests that the U.S. has in fact funded and trained Iraqi assassination and kidnapping teams and these teams are now operating with horrific success across Iraq.

We know that the Pentagon received funding for training Iraqi paramilitaries.

About one year before the Newsweek report on the "Salvador Option," it was reported in the American Prospect magazine on January 1, 2004 that part of \$3 billion of the \$87 billion Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill to fund operations in Iraq, signed into law on November 6, 2003, was designated for the creation of a paramilitary unit manned by militiamen associated with former Iraqi exile groups. According to the Prospect article, experts predicted that creation of this paramilitary unit would "lead to a wave of extrajudicial killings, not only of armed rebels but of nationalists, other opponents of the U.S. occupation and thousands of civilian Baathists." The article further described how the bulk of the \$3 billion program, disguised as an Air Force classified program, would be used to "support U.S. efforts to create a lethal, and revenge-minded Iraqi security force." According to one of the article's sources, John Pike, an expert of classified military budgets at www.globalsecurity.org, "the big money would be for standing up an Iraqi secret police to liquidate the resistance."

We know that some of the Pentagon's Iraq experts were involved in the Reagan Administration's paramilitary program in El Salvador.

Colonel James Steele, Counselor to the U.S. Ambassador for Iraqi Security Forces, formerly led the U.S. Military Advisory Group in El Salvador from 1984-1986, where he developed special operating forces at brigade level during the height of the conflict. The role of these forces in El Salvador was to attack 'insurgent' leadership, their supporters, sources of supply, and base camps. Currently Colonel Steele has been assigned to work with the new elite Iraqi counter-in-

surgency unit known as the Special Police Commandos, operating under Iraq's Interior Ministry.

Director of National Intelligence, John Negroponte, was U.S. Ambassador to Iraq from June 2004 to April 2005. From 1981 to 1985, he was ambassador to Honduras where he played a key role in coordinating U.S. covert aid to the Contras, anti-Sandinista militias who targeted civilians in Nicaragua. Additionally, he oversaw the U.S. backing of a military death squad in Honduras, Battalion 3-16, which specialized in torture and assassination. The U.S. had similar programs of supporting paramilitary groups set up in Nicaragua and Honduras as its program in El Salvador. In a Democracy Now interview on January 10, 2005, Allan Nairn, who broke the story about U.S. support of death squads in El Salvador, suspected that Ambassador Negroponte would most likely be involved in the economic side of U.S. support to death squads in Iraq.

We know that a wave of abductions and executions, in the style of the death squads of El Salvador, and with ties to an official government sponsor, and to the U.S., has hit Iraq.

News reports over the past 10 months strongly suggest that the U.S. has trained and supported highly organized Iraqi commando brigades, and that some of those brigades have operated as death squads, abducting and assassinating thousands of Iraqis. Some news highlights:

May 1, 2005—Los Angeles Times reports that the U.S. is providing technical and logistical support to the Maghawir (Fearless Warrior) brigades, the Interior Ministry's special commandos, according to Major General Rasheed Flayih Mohammed. Iraqi authorities plan to increase deployment of the 12,000-strong Maghawir (Fearless Warrior) brigades, which are composed of well-trained veterans who have worked closely with U.S. forces in Najaf, Fallujah and Mosul and include the Wolf, Scorpion, Tiger and Thunder brigades.

May 16-20, 2005—Los Angeles Times and New York Times reveal discovery of 46 bodies, all Iraqi men abducted and slain execution-style, in various locations: floating in the Tigris, dumped in ditches and garbage-strewn lots, and buried at a poultry farm.

June 15, 2005—Washington Post reports that U.S. forces had knowledge of secret and illegal abductions of hundreds of minority Arabs in Kirkuk. The abductions were by forces led by Kurdish political parties and backed by the U.S. military.

June 20, 2005—Los Angeles Times reports that Saad Sultan, of Iraq Human Rights Ministry said that police and security forces attached to the Iraqi Interior Ministry, thousands of whom have been trained by American instructors, are responsible for abusing up to 60% of estimated 12,000 detainees in prison and military compounds. He says the units have used tactics reminiscent of Saddam's secret intelligence squads.

July 3, 2005—Reuters News reports that the government of Iraq publicly acknowledged that the new security forces were using torture. Article further says that accounts are common of people being seized by armed men in the uniforms of the police, army or special units like Baghdad's Wolf Brigade police commandos, and then disappearing without trace or being found dead.

July 28, 2005—Los Angeles Times reports that members of a California Army National Guard company, the Alpha Company, who were implicated in a detainee abuse scandal, trained and conducted joint operations with the Wolf Brigade, a commando unit criticized for human rights abuses. In an online Alpha Company newsletter, Captain Haviland wrote, "We have assigned 2nd Pla-

toon to help them transition, and install some of our 'Killer Company' aggressive tactical spirit in them." The article further states that despite the Wolf Brigade's controversial reputation for human rights violations, it is regarded as the gold standard for Iraqi security forces by U.S. military officials.

August 31, 2005—BBC reports that on the night of August 24, a large force of the Volcano Brigade raided homes in Al-Hurriyah city in the Baghdad, kidnapping and then executing 76 citizens. The victims were all shot in the head after their hands and feet had been tied up. They suffered the harshest forms of torture, deformation and burning.

November 16, 2005—Reuters News reports the discovery of 173 malnourished men, some of whom were tortured, imprisoned in a secret jail run by Shi'ite militias tied to the Interior Ministry.

November 17, 2005—Newsday reports that in the past year, the U.S. military has helped build up Iraqi commandos under guidance from James Steele, a former Army Special Forces officer who led U.S. counterinsurgency efforts in El Salvador in the 1980s. The brigades built up over the past year include the Lion Brigade, Scorpion Brigade and Volcano Brigade.

February 15, 2006—Associated Press reports that the Interior Ministry has launched a probe into death squad allegations.

February 19, 2006—BBC reveals that morgues in Baghdad receive dozens of bodies picked up daily from rivers, sewage plants, waste burial sites, farms and desert areas. Most of the bodies are handcuffed and blindfolded civilians with a bullet or more in the forehead, indicating that they were executed. The handcuffs used on the victims are like those used by the Iraqi police.

February 26, 2006—The Independent reports that outgoing United Nations' human rights chief in Iraq, John Pace, revealed that hundreds of Iraqis are being tortured to death or summarily executed every month in Baghdad alone by the death squads working from the Ministry of Interior. He said that up to three-quarters of the corpses stacked in the Baghdad mortuary show evidence of gunshot wounds to the head or injuries caused by drill-bits or burning cigarettes.

March 9, 2006—Los Angeles Times reports that Iraqi police officers who worked at the Interior Ministry's illegal prison had received American training, and that U.S. trainers have also given extensive support to 27 brigades of heavily armed commandos accused of a series of abuses, including the death of 14 Sunni Arabs who were locked in an airtight van last summer.

March 10, 2006—Sidney Morning Herald reports that men wearing the uniforms of U.S.-trained security forces, which are controlled by the Interior Ministry, abducted 50 people in a daylight raid on a security agency. Masked men who are driving what appear to be new government-owned vehicles are carrying out many of the raids.

March 27, 2006—The Independent reports that while U.S. authorities have begun criticizing the Iraqi government over the "death squads," many of the paramilitary groups accused of the abuse, such as the Wolf Brigade, the Scorpion Brigade and the Special Police Commandos were set up with the help of the American military. Furthermore, the militiamen were provided with U.S. advisers some of whom were veterans of Latin American counter-insurgency which also had led to allegations of death squads at the time.

Mr. Secretary, in light of this evidence of U.S. support for and the existence of death squads in Iraq, what is the basis for your January 11, 2005 statement, that the idea of a Salvador option in Iraq is "nonsense"?

I request a copy of all records pertaining to Pentagon plans to use U.S. Special Forces to

advise, support and train Iraqi assassination and kidnapping teams. I look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

DENNIS J. KUCINICH,
Member of Congress.

TRIBUTE FOR THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAACP BAY CITY BRANCH

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to honor the Bay City Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as it celebrates 50 years as a dedicated champion of civil rights. On June 2, 2006 the members of the Bay City Branch will come together to revere its founding members and renew its commitment to justice for all.

Roy Wilkins chartered the first branch of the NAACP in Bay City in 1918. This was at a time when the NAACP was instrumental in convincing President Woodrow Wilson to publicly denounce lynching. The Branch was disbanded but it was re-chartered in 1938 by Attorney Oscar Baker Sr. and chartered a third time in 1946.

In 1955, NAACP member Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a Montgomery Alabama bus and one of the largest grassroots civil rights movements was born. The NAACP was at the forefront of this struggle and Reverend Obie Matthew, Pastor of the Second Baptist Church, organized the present Bay City Branch the following year on October 8, 1956. 50 years later the Branch is still fighting for equality of all citizens.

The Bay City Branch has led the fight against discrimination in housing, education, employment, healthcare, and the criminal justice system. Some of its notable fights were the Migrant Negroes from Georgia Case, the Bay County Skating Rink Case in the 1960s, the Woolworth 5&10 Store Sit-in, the hiring of the first African American teachers by the Bay City School District, and the inclusion of a Black History Class in the Bay City Central High School curriculum. The Branch has given away more than 70 scholarships to high school students. They have supported CORY Place, sponsored a summer USDA Food and Activity program for children, and worked with other local agencies to improve the living conditions in Bay City.

The hymn, Lift Every Voice and Sing, was written by James Weldon Johnson in 1900. In it he wrote, "Sing a song full of hope that the present has brought us; Facing the rising sun of our new day begun, Let us march on till victory is won." Under the current leadership of President Idella White, the Bay City Branch is marching on in the fight to remove barriers to racial equality. The Bay City Branch remains committed to educating citizens about their constitutional rights, and the adverse effects of racial discrimination.

Mr. Speaker, I am asking the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating the Bay City Branch of the NAACP for 50 years of commitment to social justice. The members are to be commended for their steadfast fight against racial hatred and I pray that together

we will eliminate this scourge from our nation and the world.

IRAN FREEDOM SUPPORT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 26, 2006

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 282, the Iran Freedom Support Act, which has 360 bipartisan cosponsors who represent approximately 216 million Americans.

Following continued Iranian threats to develop and deploy nuclear weapons, increasing evidence that Tehran is interfering with stabilization efforts in Iraq, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's denial of the Holocaust and comments that Israel should be wiped off the map, and ongoing Iranian support of international terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah, it is time for the United States to take concrete steps to hold Iran accountable for its actions.

I am a co-sponsor of H.R. 282 because I feel it is a priority to ensure that Iran is not abusing the basic rights of its people, endangering the well-being of its neighbors, or destabilizing the region. H.R. 282 strengthens existing United States sanctions against Iran, authorizes support to democratic reformers within Iran, and calls for American investors to divest their holdings of companies invested in Iran's energy sector. The legislation is designed to deny Iran the necessary funds to advance its quest for nuclear weapons.

Iran is a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and has foresworn acquiring nuclear weapons. Yet, it operated a clandestine nuclear program for nearly two decades before it was exposed in 2002.

Iran's continued behavior has led to the decision by the International Atomic Energy Agency to report Iran to the United Nations Security Council. Late last month, the Security Council issued a unanimous statement reiterating calls by the IAEA and members of the international community for Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment efforts and permit U.N. inspectors to reenter Iranian nuclear facilities. Now the United States Congress must use every diplomatic and economic tool at its disposal to address this situation.

While Iran must be held accountable for its actions, I will be demanding that the President of the United States seek the consent of Congress before any military plans are considered. There is no military solution to resolving this conflict. The only solution is to use diplomacy, work with the international community, and promote change in Iran from within.

Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons threatens the stability of the entire Middle East and could spark a dangerous and unprecedented nuclear arms race. I urge all of my colleagues to act now and support H.R. 282.

FREEDOM FOR ALFREDO MANUEL PULIDO LÓPEZ

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind my colleagues about Alfredo Manuel Pulido López, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Dr. Pulido López is a dentist, an independent journalist and a member of the Christian Liberation Movement. He believes in writing and speaking the truth about the nightmare that is the Castro regime. As a dentist, trained in protecting and nurturing human life, he could not tolerate the tyrant's incessant abuse of Cuban people. He understood the human condition and he knew that freedom is infinitely superior to the ills of tyranny and repression.

On March 18, 2003, as part of the dictator's condemnable crackdown on peaceful pro-democracy activists, Dr. Pulido López was arrested because of his belief in liberty over repression. In a sham trial, he was sentenced to 14 years in the inhuman, totalitarian gulag.

On April 18, 2006, Dr. Pulido López's wife Rebeca Rodriguez Sauto visited him and found that his health has significantly worsened. According to the report that she filed with Cubanet, Dr. Pulido López is dangerously malnourished, deeply depressed and distraught. She reports that he is afflicted with chronic bronchitis and dark bruises of an unknown origin have appeared on his skin.

Despite his seriously declining health, Dr. Pulido López stated in the Cubanet report that he has no real reason to ask for a medical parole since he is an innocent man to begin with and what the dictatorship's officials really have to give him is freedom. He continued telling his wife, "I am more firm in my convictions every day. I am not going to renounce them. They know that my health is affected. They can do what they want."

Dr. Pulido López's commitment to freedom, in the face of declining health in the grotesque gulag, is a brilliant example of the heroism of the Cuban people. It is a crime against humanity that Castro's totalitarian gulags are full of men and women, like Dr. Pulido López, who represent the best of the Cuban nation.

Mr. Speaker, we must speak out and act against this abominable disregard for human rights, human dignity, and human freedom just 90 miles from our shore. My colleagues, before it is too late, we must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Alfredo Manuel Pulido López and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

TRIBUTE TO THE VILLAGE OF BREESE

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Breese, Illinois upon her sesquicentennial. The Village of Breese was formed in 1856 and will celebrate her sesquicentennial on June 2-4, 2006.

Breese was settled in 1822 by way of the Goshen Road. The first Post Office was established at Shoal Creek in 1855. Breese then continued to prosper by establishing roots into electrical generation in 1905 and water treatment in 1937.

Chief Justice Sidney Breese, for whom Breese is named, was an outstanding early National and State figure. He is recognized as a Speaker of the Illinois House of Representatives, Chief Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court, and a United States Senator. A statue representing him now stands in Springfield, Illinois.

I am pleased to congratulate the citizens of Breese on 150 years of history in their community. I thank them for their contributions to our great Nation. May God bless Breese and may He continue to bless America.

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING COLONEL
SHARON S. DERUVO

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this opportunity to recognize the long and distinguished career of Colonel Sharon S. DeRuvo, who is retiring after serving our Nation's military with distinction for over 20 years.

Colonel Sharon S. DeRuvo was commissioned through the Walter Reed Army Medical Center Institute of Nursing in 1989. She graduated from the University of Maryland with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing and received a Master of Science Degree from the University of Arizona in 1992. She also earned a Master of Strategic Studies Degree in 2003 from the Army War College.

Colonel DeRuvo has held a variety of positions culminating in her current assignment as Commander, General Leonard Wood Army Community Hospital, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Past assignments include staff nurse positions at Fitzsimons Army Medical Center, Denver, Colorado and Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. She also held positions as Head Nurse, Hematology-Oncology, Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas; Director, Quality Assurance, Brooke Army Medical Center, Texas; Assistant Chief, Department of Clinical Investigation, Tripler Army Medical Center, Hawaii; Chief, Medical Nursing Section and Chief Clinical Nursing at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany; and Deputy Commander for Health Services, Fort Carson, Colorado.

Colonel DeRuvo has earned numerous decorations and badges for her outstanding service in the military. Her awards include the Meritorious Service Medal with Four Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Commendation Medal, and the Army Achievement Medal with Four Oak Leaf Clusters. She has received several Tri-Service Nursing Research Grants, and was awarded the Orthopedic Surgeons and Nurses National Research Award. She is a member of the Order of Military Medical Merit and the Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Honor Society.

Mr. Speaker, I know the Members of the House will join me in paying tribute to Colonel Sharon S. DeRuvo for her exceptional service to the United States and will wish her and her family all the best in the days ahead.

LOBBYING ACCOUNTABILITY AND
TRANSPARENCY ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 3, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4975) to provide greater transparency with respect to lobbying activities, and for other purposes:

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Chairman, I am disappointed and regretful that I must vote against this bill, for two reasons—first, because it fails to adequately address the need for real reform of the lobbying rules, and, second, because the Republican leadership has insisted on adding unrelated, unnecessary and undesirable restrictions on political speech.

The bill does include some good reform provisions, but they fall short of what is needed.

For example, it would add some transparency regarding appropriations earmarks. I support that, which is why I am cosponsoring H.R. 4964, the Earmark Transparency and Accountability Act of 2006, introduced by Representative FLAKE. That bill would require all earmarks to be included in the texts of bills, so they would be known and could be debated and also would bar consideration of a conference report unless it includes a list of all earmarks and the name of the Member who proposed each earmark and was available to the general public on the Internet for at least 72 hours before its consideration.

Unfortunately, the earmark provisions of this bill do not meet that standard.

Similarly, the bill takes a step toward greater ethics training for Congressional staff. I also support that, which is why I have joined my Colorado colleague, Representative HEFLEY, in sponsoring H.R. 4988, the House Ethics Reform Act of 2006. That bill not only would require mandatory annual ethics training for Members of the House and House officers, it also includes provisions that would strengthen the ethics committee and enable it to carry out the job of ensuring compliance with the House's rules and standards of conduct.

So, unfortunately, here too the bill falls short of what is needed.

Similarly, the bill would do nothing meaningful to tighten the current House gift rule or curb meals from registered lobbyists. It would do nothing meaningful to curb the abuse that can come from the availability of corporate jets for Members. And it would do nothing to slow the revolving door, retaining the current 1-year period in which former Members are prohibited from lobbying their former colleagues.

Those shortcomings would have been corrected by adoption of the motion to recommit, which would have added provisions from H.R. 4682, the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act, which I am cosponsoring. However, unfortunately, that motion was not adopted.

But the worst part of all is that the bill, already watered down, was corrupted by the addition of H.R. 513, dealing with so-called "527" organizations—a bill that I strongly opposed when the House considered it last month.

That legislation would bring independent groups under the jurisdiction of the Federal

Election Commission (FEC) and subject them to the full scope of federal election law regulation—even though this not necessary to remove any appearance of public corruption—and it would restrict the freedom of speech of people who band together to express themselves about federal candidates and issues of national importance. It also would lift limits on coordinated expenditures, allowing national party committees to completely underwrite individual campaigns.

I cannot support these provisions—and so I cannot support the overall bill.

HONORING MRS. BONNIE SCOTT
GENDASZEK AND MS. LOIS ELIZABETH
LYONS

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Mrs. Bonnie Scott Gendaszek, an eighth grade mathematics teacher at John Witherspoon Middle School in Princeton, New Jersey and Ms. Lois Elizabeth Lyons, a high school science teacher at High Technology High School in Lincroft, New Jersey. Mrs. Gendaszek and Ms. Lyons are the two New Jersey recipients of the 2005 Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching.

The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching program is administered by the National Science Foundation to recognize and reward outstanding mathematics and science teachers who serve as role models for their colleagues, and to encourage these talented individuals to remain in the teaching field. We must, as Members of Congress, celebrate these fine individuals.

Each of us is in Congress today because we had along the journey of our education, teachers who inspired us to achieve, to inquire, to excel, and to dream.

Teaching today is different than when we were in eighth grade or high school. It is not just the content of mathematics and science courses that is different. Additionally, there is more valid scientific research in the area of how students learn and how to integrate mathematics and science knowledge into their intellect, and into their lives. We know that students must be engaged in the learning process, actively involved in the lesson, not just listening to the teacher.

Mrs. Gendaszek's classroom is one of questioning for deeper understanding. She has created a learning community of inquisitive middle-schoolers who seek to understand mathematics in their everyday lives. This is no small accomplishment, Mr. Speaker. To create such an environment requires daily dedication to her students.

Ms. Lyons' classroom is also one of questions and exploration. She has learned how to make chemistry less intimidating to her student by connecting the concepts to her students' lives first, thus engaging their curiosity. Research into student motivation tells us that relevance is key to facilitating intrinsic motivation in students and creating life-long learners.

Teachers in our Nation do not receive enough respect or recognition for the work that they do each day of the school year for

our youth and for our Nation. As I work to pass the Congressional Teacher Award Act, I am happy to celebrate these mathematics and science teachers through the Presidential awards. As the United States seeks to find its place in the emerging global knowledge economy, our attention has turned to those who educate our youth, for teachers truly can change the future. I look forward to the leadership in the classroom, in New Jersey, and in the United States of Mrs. Gendaszek and Ms. Lyons to help maintain the leadership of the United States in the global economy.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF EARL WOODS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Earl Woods, a gentleman who was more determined to raise a good son than a great golfer. As a testament to his legacy I submit that he achieved both goals. Sadly, Earl Woods passed away today at the age of 74.

Earl Woods was born March 5, 1932, in Manhattan, Kansas, the youngest of six children. His parents died by the time he was 13. His father wanted him to play for the Kansas City Monarchs in the Negro Leagues, and his mother stressed education. He eventually attended Kansas State, graduating in 1953 with a degree in sociology and he also fulfilled his obligation to play baseball.

More than a dedicated father, Earl was a true mentor, a dedicated soldier, an author and a coach extraordinaire. During his lifetime, Earl Woods played catcher for Kansas State; the first black to play baseball in the Big Eight Conference. He was also a Green Beret in the U.S. Army Special Forces. He served for two tours in Vietnam rising to the rank of lieutenant colonel. His second tour shaped the latter part of his life.

He met his soon-to-be second wife Kultida Punsawad, a receptionist in Thailand and they wed in 1969. He fought alongside a Vietnamese friend who he nicknamed because of

his courage and bravery. Earl promised Tiger Phong that he would name a son after him.

Eldrick "Tiger" Woods was born December 30, 1975.

Earl Woods was instrumental in helping his son establish the Tiger Woods Foundation and he also wrote a book, "Training a Tiger: A Father's Guide to Raising a Winner in Both Golf and Life" to share his experiences of guiding and nurturing his son.

Most people identify with Earl Woods as Tiger Woods' father. Yes it is true that Earl Woods had done a remarkable job raising a son who was empowered to chose his direction, accept responsibility, and stay committed, focused and honest as he journeyed into becoming a role model with great character. Earl Woods made sure that Tiger had tools essential to his development as he grew into a good person first and a championship golfer second.

Earl Woods was extremely proud of his youngest son. I know he can rest assured that his legacy will live on. He devoted countless hours to shaping and molding his son's character and making sure that Tiger was "mentally strong." He told Tiger, when he was a young man, "You'll never run into another person as mentally tough as you." Tiger believes his dad. In a statement made by Tiger today he admits, "I wouldn't be where I am today without (my father), and I'm honored to continue his legacy of sharing and caring." This statement is a true testament to how the love and dedication of Earl Woods was the reason for Tiger Woods' success.

Mr. Speaker: I send heartfelt condolences to Kultida, Tiger, and the rest of the Woods family as they mourn the passing of their loved one. I pay tribute to an extraordinary man who left an indelible impression in his own right.

RECOGNIZING THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF MONMOUTH, OR

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 4, 2006

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the First Christian Church of Mon-

mouth. In the past 150 years, the members of this church have proven again and again the depth of their caring and giving, not just to their community, but to all those in need.

From 1850 to 1853, pioneers like Elijah Davidson, Ira F.M. Butler and others came to the Oregon Territory from their homes in Monmouth, Illinois—the inspiration for what became Monmouth, Oregon. These settlers, members of the Disciples of Christ Church, came to create a new community and school steeped in their religion and their values, tenets that they shared with the long history of pioneers going back to the Pilgrims. In 1856, Monmouth University (present-day Western Oregon University) was chartered, and it became the first home for the church.

The First Christian Church has long since outgrown its small beginnings, a single 20 by 30 foot room on the corner of Monmouth Avenue and Church Street. The church moved to its current location in 1913 and remains there today, where it still acts as a staple of town fellowship and camaraderie.

Just as the buildings that house this faith community have changed and grown over the years, so has the church's congregation. Active in the community, their good works include a teen center for local youth as well as the home for the Monmouth chapter of Meals on Wheels. This congregation represents the heart of the community and the goodness in people which we should all strive to achieve.

I want to take this opportunity to honor this church for the efforts that they have made on behalf of the residents of Monmouth and students of Western Oregon University. On this, their sesquicentennial anniversary, I acknowledge and honor the First Christian Church of Monmouth for their service and dedication to their community.