

firm. He was the senior vice president of Merchants Marine Bank in Port Isabel for two decades, and as a public relations liaison for Linebarger Goggan Blair and Sampson, LLP Law Office . . . explaining the law long before he took the bench.

Judge Vega was also an educator. The Point Isabel Independent School (PIISD) District Junior High School complex bears his name to honor his role for his 33 years (1969–2001) as a PIISD school board trustee. He was also a trustee for the South Texas Independent School District since Feb. 2005.

He had also been inducted into the Rio Grande Valley Walk of Fame in February 2005 and the Point Isabel Independent School District Hall of Fame in 2002.

As a civic leader, Vega served as an officer or member of many economic, education, and public service organizations including: the Port Isabel/South Padre Island Chamber of Commerce, Port Isabel Urban Development Board, Texas Association of School Boards, National Association of School Boards, Salvation Army Service Unit, Port Isabel Jaycees, Port Isabel Volunteer Fire Department and the Port Isabel/South Padre Island Lions Club. He was also a lifetime member of Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church.

Judge Vega was married to Olga Medina Vega, who was his boss for 40 years, and the love of his life. The couple had six children and ten grandchildren. The children are: Joe Eliseo, Albert, Nelda, Armando, Olgaisela, and Arlene.

Madam Speaker, Members of the House, I ask you to join me in expressing our condolences to Judge Vega's family—and the larger South Texas family—who lost a giant of a man in Judge Vega.

TRIBUTE TO TRUDY OWENS

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, over the 92 years that she lived, my dear friend and legendary political activist Trudy Owens witnessed some of America's most important watershed moments and milestones. She was a political trailblazer, and her accomplishments stand as a reflection of the times in which she lived.

Trudy was born on the eve of woman's suffrage. In the aftermath of World War II, she helped organize the Palos Verdes Democratic Club. In the 1960's, she witnessed the expansion of civil rights and women's liberation while serving as the women's chair of the California Democratic Party. An opponent of the Vietnam War, Trudy worked on the campaigns of my political mentor, former California Senator John Tunney, and on Robert Kennedy's 1968 presidential campaign. She was a delegate to the Democratic convention in Chicago that same year.

In 2000, as a testament to her long service in Democratic politics, I chose Trudy as an Electoral College elector for Al Gore. Few people deserved this opportunity more. While the outcome of the election may not have been what she had hoped, Trudy still called this the culmination of her political life. She traveled to Sacramento, cast her vote, and broke her hip.

Trudy passed away last week, but not before the first female Speaker of the House was sworn in. And while she will not be with us during the 2008 Presidential election, she was no doubt thrilled to know that a woman has a genuine chance to become President of the United States.

Trudy's enthusiasm for politics and the Democratic Party was infectious. She was the consummate volunteer. And she naturally balanced her political passions with a gentle graciousness towards everyone around her.

Today, I honor her memory, her dedication, and her long, rich life.

CONGRATULATING BRUCE HEIDEN FOR RECEIVING THE 2006 HARRY S. BAKER DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD FOR COTTON

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Mr. PASTOR. Madam Speaker, I rise before you today to congratulate Bruce Heiden for receiving the 2006 Harry S. Baker Distinguished Service Award for Cotton. This award, presented by the National Cotton Council, is given annually to an individual who has provided extraordinary service, leadership, and dedication to the U.S. cotton industry. Mr. Heiden exemplifies all of these qualities.

When talking about agriculture, Mr. Heiden says it's not just an occupation, but a way of life. Born in Buckeye, Arizona, Mr. Heiden grew up watching his father work on his cotton farm. After graduating from high school, he chose to continue his family legacy and began working on the farm full time. After his father's death in the 1970's, he took over the family business—H Four Farms, which produces cotton, wheat, and alfalfa, and the Heiden Land and Cattle Company, a cattle feeding business. Today, he handles the management and operations of the two companies, with his four children.

In addition to growing his successful family business, Mr. Heiden has been a leader in the agriculture industry not only in the Southwest, but in our Nation. As a former National Cotton Council President and Chairman, Mr. Heiden oversaw the successful drafting and passage of the 1990 farm law, helped expand funding for the trade, and directed a significant expansion in program activities and funding for Cotton Council International. For his efforts, Mr. Heiden was named the 1990 Progressive Farmer Magazine "Man of the Year" in Southwest agriculture and was inducted into the National Cotton Hall of Fame in 1996.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize Bruce Heiden for being a recipient of this award and to thank him for his leadership and dedication to our Nation's agriculture.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CARIBBEAN AMERICAN POPULATION OF THE UNITED STATES

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to enter into the RECORD an opinion editorial published in the Carib News newspaper the week ending February 27, 2007, titled "Black History Month: The Hand of People From the Caribbean Seen in Every Aspect of Human Development"; as well as an article appearing the same week in the CaribNews paper, entitled, "A Celebration of the Caribbean-American Contribution to Black History: Achievement and Hard-Won Successes Caribbean-Americans Have Added to the Rich Cultural Tapestry of the United States," by Michael D. Roberts. I cannot agree more with the author. Now is the time to reflect on past achievements of immigrants of Caribbean descent and their impact on our country, as well as look to the future with an abundance of hope that their continual contributions to the United States will resonate through eternity.

Since the abolition of slavery in 1834, the Caribbean has provided the primary source of the growth of the Black population in the U.S. Today many Caribbean workers residing in the U.S. are entrepreneurs and small business owners. They can be found working in hospitals, at construction sites and in technology and communication industries. They act as agents of social change in this country by participating in local, State and Federal Government, representing their communities while simultaneously inspiring others abroad to strive for stability and democracy in the homeland. Caribbean-Americans represent a large part of my district and have made a substantial contribution to the fabric of New York City's economy and they contribute to the diversity that characterizes the United States of America.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognition of the contributions of the Caribbean-American population in the U.S.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: THE HAND OF PEOPLE FROM THE CARIBBEAN SEEN IN EVERY ASPECT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

"When the great day of our liberation comes, we will find the West Indian foremost in the ranks of those fighting with his armor on and his sword raised aloft."

Fenton Johnson, an African-American editor, poet and political activist in Chicago was looking back while keeping his eyes on the prize ahead of him in 1919.

"In every industry, in every profession, in every trade, we find this son of the islands holding aloft the banner of Ethiopia," he added.

Although much of what he had in mind: the black political, cultural and economic awakening, has been achieved, a lot remains to be done.

But as we celebrate Black History Month and the achievements of African-Americans, some things are quite clear: African Americans and people from the Caribbean have been consistent allies. Secondly, there is need for even more trust in each other.

Frederick Douglass, the ex-slave and the golden trombone of the 19th century anti-slavery movement and one of the leaders of the abolition crusade recognized the need for this united effort when more than 170 years