

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD, MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SPEECH OF

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 23, 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to remember a pioneering woman, a fearless advocate for justice and equality, and a remarkable trailblazer who was dedicated to improving the lives of others. Congresswoman JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD embodied all that members of Congress strive to be: she was a masterful navigator of Washington politics; she was a tireless champion for her constituents in Southern California; she was a focused and determined activist for the less fortunate all over the world. She was also a dear friend and valued colleague to those of us in Congress, and to so many others who were fortunate enough to know her on both a personal and professional level.

As the first African-American woman ever to wield the gavel of a full Congressional committee, JUANITA was proof of the milestones that can be achieved through dedication, intelligence, and political acumen. Her steady rise through the hierarchy of California politics—from a seat on the Carson City Council to a position in the California State Assembly, and finally to the Halls of Congress—instilled in her an unshakeable allegiance to the people who repeatedly elected her.

JUANITA's intense loyalty to her constituents was reflected in their own well-placed faith that she would represent them in a principled and thoughtful manner. She never let them down; indeed, her record as a public figure was characterized by an attention to the needs of her constituents, by a single-minded focus on achieving equality, and by adherence to the principle that democratic government should help those most in need.

Everything JUANITA did was colored by her passionate quest for equality. She used this intensity to her advantage, emerging as an effective and authoritative advocate for women's rights at home and abroad. Never afraid to tackle controversial issues or to use her position as a bullhorn for reform, JUANITA's energy and enthusiasm for advancing the cause of women's rights propelled her into a leadership role from her earliest days in Washington.

Innovative ideas on this score seemed to emanate from JUANITA. She convened a first-of-its-kind meeting between women members of Congress and female Supreme Court justices to discuss women's issues. She carried the Families First Agenda to more than thirty states for the first time. She served as the first Democratic Chair of the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues. Through it all, JUANITA was masterful at marshaling well-known and influential individuals to her cause without ever losing sight of her goal, which was to help create a society committed to justice, fairness, and equality.

It is fitting that JUANITA was such an outspoken and effective advocate for women's rights, for perhaps her greatest strength lay in

her identity as a woman. She demonstrated for all of us—men and women alike—that being a member of Congress, a mother, and a grandmother at the same time was not merely a challenge. For JUANITA, it was a blessing to be embraced and cherished. As a grandmother myself, I looked to her as a role model for how to integrate the unique challenges of having a family with the equally exciting responsibilities that come from serving in Congress. Two of the most rewarding pleasures in life are raising a family and working for the public, and JUANITA's life is solid proof that a dedicated and forthright individual can accomplish both with poise, grace, and dignity.

I extend my deepest condolences to Congresswoman MILLENDER-McDONALD's family. While this week my fellow Members and I lost a trusted colleague, confidant, and friend, their loss resonates more deeply than we can know. Nonetheless, I know that I speak for all of the Congress when I say that JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD was someone we admired on a personal and professional level, someone whose absence will leave a void within us, and someone whose legacy of principled and determined leadership will not be forgotten.

NINETY-SECOND COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 23, 2007

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the victims of the Armenian Genocide.

Today marks the anniversary of the deliberate campaign of genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire in 1915. On April 24th, the Ottoman government arrested an estimated 250 Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders, which were taken to the interior of Turkey and murdered. From 1915–1923, 1.5 million Armenians were killed and more than 500,000 were forced from their homeland into exile.

In spite of overwhelming evidence, particularly American diplomatic records from the time, some continue to deny the occurrence of this brutal tragedy in human history. As a member of Congress, I represent a significant population of Armenian survivors who have proudly preserved their culture, traditions, and religion and have told the horrors of the genocide to an often indifferent world.

We must continue to ensure future generations know and understand the history of the Armenian Genocide in order to learn from the mistakes of the past and prevent future atrocities. For that reason, I have again cosponsored a resolution, H. Res. 106, that calls upon the president to make recognition of the Armenian Genocide an official position of United States foreign policy.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to fully recognize the Armenian Genocide in order to right the historical record. By doing so we pay tribute to the memory of all the individuals who suffered, their family members that remain, and vow to never forget their sacrifices.

PEPFAR: AN ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, this morning the Committee on Foreign Affairs held a hearing in anticipation of the reauthorization of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. I concur on the importance of examining the extraordinary successes of this program, as well as the means by which we can ensure that it continues to meet the needs of those impacted by the pandemic.

In my travels abroad, particularly in Africa and Vietnam, I have seen for myself how the intervention has transformed lives and infused hope in individuals, families and communities affected by HIV/AIDS. One experience that struck me, in particular, was in Uganda when I visited there last year. I had the privilege of meeting Mr. John Robert Ongole, who is 29 years old and the first person to benefit from the first treatment program funded by PEPFAR. I was told that when he first started receiving the anti-retroviral therapy, he looked like a walking skeleton. When I met him, he was healthy and energetic, leading an active life and caring for his family. I have recently learned that he has almost completed his bachelor's degree in teaching. He and countless others have expressed their profound gratitude to President Bush and the American people for giving them a new lease on life in the face of this devastating disease.

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of PEPFAR here in Congress is the requirement that one-third of prevention funding be expended on abstinence and fidelity programs, known as the A and B aspects of the ABC (abstinence, be faithful and condoms) prevention model. Some have called for the removal of this requirement in favor of an evidence-based approach, free from legislative constraints, that takes into account the particular situation of the individual country. What these people fail to take into account is that the ABC model is evidence-based, and those countries with generalized epidemics that have experienced declines in prevalence have emphasized behaviors of abstinence, and fidelity in relationships between uninfected partners.

In a statement published in 2004 in the prestigious scientific journal, *The Lancet*, over 160 scientists and the President of Uganda noted that "when targeting young people, for those who have not started sexual activity, the first priority should be to encourage abstinence or delay of sexual onset, hence emphasizing risk avoidance as the best way to prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted infections as well as unwanted pregnancies. After sexual debut, returning to abstinence or being mutually faithful with an uninfected partner are the most effective ways of avoiding infection."

In the past, even those considered "experts" on the ground have resisted implementing the ABC strategy with the proper emphasis on A and B, and so the spending requirement was necessary. I have met representatives of USAID who acknowledged that they were initially skeptical of the possibility of changing people's behavior as a key element