

freedom worldwide. Everyone who knew and worked with Joe found him to be a remarkably committed public servant."

"We have lost a uniquely talented leader, trusted counselor and beloved friend to each of the Commissioners," said Commission Vice Chair Preeta D. Bansal, who served as Commission Chair in 2004-2005. "I respected tremendously his commitment to the substance of our work and his appreciation for the critical issues at the juncture of religion and foreign policy at this unique period in our history. His sharp political and human instincts and his deep love for humanity were crucial to our work in this sensitive arena. We loved him and will miss him dearly."

"It was an honor to serve on the Search Committee that recommended Joe Crapa to be the Executive Director of the Commission," said Vice Chair Richard D. Land. "As a Republican appointee, I was most happy to enthusiastically endorse and commend this faithful Democrat who loved America and loved the freedom for which it stands. He was a tireless proponent of religious freedom around the world and was instrumental in making the Commission an extremely effective voice for religious freedom. It was an honor and a privilege to have known him and served with him. All of us who knew him will miss him."

"Joe Crapa took a newly established Commission, at a crucial time in U.S. history, and, during his tenure, turned it into a respected voice on post-9/11 foreign policy and a source of new research and insights into the influence of religious freedom and related human rights on world affairs," said Felice D. Gaer, Chair of the Commission in 2002-2003, when Mr. Crapa joined USCIRF, and in 2006-2007.

"Joe's great love of people and respect for religion transcended all differences. With ebullience and panache, he effectively directed the Commission through a transformative period when the salience of the universal and inalienable right of religious freedom has been demonstrated daily by world events," said Nina Shea, who has served as a Commissioner since USCIRF's founding in 1999. "He will always be an inspiration for me and those who had the privilege of working with him."

Prior to coming to the Commission, Mr. Crapa served as Chief of Staff to Senator Charles E. Schumer (D-NY). Mr. Crapa spent the four prior years as Assistant Administrator at the U.S. Agency for International Development. He also served as Assistant Secretary at the Department of Agriculture and Associate Administrator at the Environmental Protection Agency, where his portfolio included Congressional Relations and Public Affairs.

For 10 years, Mr. Crapa served as Chief of Staff to Rep. David Obey (D-WI), currently the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, and also as counsel to the House Appropriations Committee. He was an Adjunct Professor of Government at Georgetown University (1990-1995) and was a Stennis Fellow of Congress (1995-1997). He also was a Lecturer for the Washington Campus, a consortium of universities where he lectured on Congress and the policy process.

A native of Brooklyn, New York, Mr. Crapa graduated from Cathedral College Preparatory Seminary. He received a B.A. from St. John's University, an M.A. from Duke University, and a Ph.D. at the University of Arizona, where he was a National Defense Teaching Fellow.

The Commission extends its most sincere condolences to Mr. Crapa's wife Barbara, son

Judd, daughter-in-law Gretchen, grandsons Sebastian and Baird, and his extended family.

HONORING THE ORLINDA
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the Orinda Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

The Orinda Volunteer Fire Department was established in 1973 and today is made up of 20 brave, hardworking men and women. These firefighters also serve as medical first responders.

Without volunteer fire halls, like Orinda, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the state of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the Orinda Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Dusty Johnson Sr. Assistant Chief Nancy Johnson, Captain Dusty Johnson Jr. Captain Charlie Groves, Captain David Spivey, Clay Frey, Justin Barnhill, Bubba Dorris, Nick Poe, Jason Hemper, Ashley Johnson, Amanda Groves, Travis Garman, Mike Brinley, Jason Vanderheyden, Derrick Crossfield, Larry Phillips, Peter Pecori, Tommy Clowers, Judy Barnhill, John Barnhill, Rachael Payne, Paul Jones, Noah Payne, and Daniel Couch.

IN MEMORY OF HOWARD NEWTON

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Howard Newton of Dumas, Arkansas, who passed away September 25, 2007, at the age of 89.

Howard Newton was a decorated World War II veteran, a retired farmer and an inspiration to all who knew him. Upon graduating from Tillar High School, he enlisted in the Army where he honorably served his country earning numerous medals including the Silver Star, the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. His bravery and courage was exemplified by his selfless leadership in battles including the noted rescue of trapped Allied forces in Bastogne, Belgium, during World War II.

After the war, Howard Newton returned home to Desha County to pursue his true pas-

sion of farming the land that he loved. He worked thousands of acres of farmland in Desha County and was the first farmer in the area to irrigate cotton. He continued his work in agriculture by chairing the committee to build a Farm Bureau office in McGehee that would eventually benefit thousands of farmers from across the region.

In addition to his leadership in the field of agriculture, Howard Newton was also a man of devout faith. He was a member of the Newton Chapel United Methodist Church where he served as board member and Sunday School teacher, as well as a familiar face in the congregation, and always someone with open ears for conversation and fellowship.

Howard Newton will forever be remembered for his outstanding service to our country and his community. I extend my deepest condolences to his wife, Frances Rands Newton; his daughter, Gene Beard Curry of Pottsboro, Texas; his sister, Hazel Wheeler of Sulphur Springs; his stepchildren, Sarah Jones of Soldotna, Alaska and Allan Rands of Dumas; and to his numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews and friends. Howard Newton will be greatly missed in Dumas, Desha County and throughout the State of Arkansas, and I am truly saddened by this loss.

HONORING THE MT. VERNON
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the members of the Mt. Vernon Volunteer Fire Department for their selfless dedication and bravery in protecting our families, day and night.

In 2005, Mt. Vernon Volunteer Fire Department responded to 14 wild land, brush and grass fires. They ran 24 vehicle accidents and E.M.S. calls, eight residence fires, and 23 others for a total of 69 responses.

Without volunteer fire halls, like Mt. Vernon, many places in the Sixth District would lack effective fire protection. In the state of Tennessee, over 70 percent of fire service is provided by volunteers. Among these volunteers, almost 75 percent work other daily jobs.

Ensuring our families' safety is not without risk. Sadly, an average of two firefighters die each year in Tennessee in the line of duty. In 2005, the Tennessee Fire Services and Code Academy dedicated a memorial on their main campus in Bell Buckle to honor those Tennessee firefighters who have died in the line of duty.

For their willingness to serve, the following members of the Mt. Vernon Volunteer Fire Department deserve recognition: Chief Ray D. Hicks, Faye Hicks, David Dyer, Cheryl Dyer, Coel Bean, Rickey Bean, Randy Bean, Mary Bean, Harold Hatcher, Eddy Hatcher, Jason Rhoton, Shawn Hatcher, Shannon Hatcher, Johnny Young, Denise Rhoton, Crystal Key, Robert Cox, Adam Bryant, and Craig Copes.