

## HONORING NANDO GOMEZ

**HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 23, 2008*

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of my most trusted staff members, my Chief of Staff, Fernando P. "Nando" Gomez, Jr. After working in Congress for 7 years, the past 2 as my chief of staff, Nando will be joining the private sector.

Nando's dedication to and interest in public service has led him from the small town of Gregory, TX, to the corridors of two Capitols. During his senior year at the University of Texas in 1994, he began working for the Texas House Speaker James E. "Pete" Laney. Nando worked for Speaker Laney for nearly 5 years and was appointed the House reading clerk during the 74th and 75th Legislative Sessions.

He then moved to Washington, DC, in 2001 and worked for Congressman Martin Frost, serving as legislative assistant and then as legislative director. He joined my staff in 2005 and rose from legislative director to chief of staff.

Words cannot begin to describe what Nando has meant to me, my staff, and the people of the 27th District of Texas. I have relied on Nando for his professionalism, work ethic, and friendship. He takes pride in his work, which is especially personal to him because he was born and raised in the district I represent. For him, it has not just been about serving as my chief of staff—it is about advocating for the issues of his hometown, his family, and his roots.

Nando has also taken an active role with local youth. He serves in Brothers/Big Sisters Mentor program, where he has had the honor of serving as big brother to his little brother, Franklin, for nearly 5 years. Nando is an avid sports fan whose allegiances lie with the Texas Longhorns, Houston Astros, San Antonio Spurs, and the Dallas Cowboys.

Though I bid Nando a sad farewell from my office, it will certainly not be a good-bye. I look forward to seeing him around the Capitol when he comes up to catch up with old friends.

Nando remains a trusted member of my family, and I will always seek his counsel on matters political and personal. I wish him, his wife Kristy and son Dominic the best of luck during the new phase of his life.

## FREEDOM FOR RAUDEL MARTINEZ GOMEZ

**HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 23, 2008*

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about Raudel Martinez Gomez, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Martinez Gomez is a member of the Plantados Movement for Cuban Freedom. He along with fellow dissidents Victor Yunier Ferenandez Martinez and Joenny Alonso Asiz, were arrested in February 2006 for a crime the Cuban dictatorship calls "dangerousness."

In sham trials they were each convicted, with Mr. Martinez Gomez sentenced to 3 years in prison.

Unfortunately, his imprisonment for what is really political dissent is nothing new for his family. While Mr. Martinez Gomez was facing trial before the dictatorship's facade of a judicial system, his father was imprisoned in a Cuban gulag for nothing more than participating in a peaceful pro-democracy protest outside the French embassy in Havana. The Cuban regime released his father this past May without formally charging him with any crime.

Shortly after his father's arrest, the local chief of the so-called "Committee for the Defense of the Revolution" came to the home Mr. Martinez Gomez shared with his father. Mr. Martinez Gomez was forced out of his home along with his wife, who was 7 months pregnant at the time. But these local vigilance committee goons were not content with forcing Martinez Gomez and his pregnant wife from their home, they wanted to add insult to injury. So they sent a group of ruffians to shout insults and obscenities at Martinez Gomez and his wife as they left the home they had known for the last 11 years.

What exactly did Mr. Martinez Gomez do to cause his conviction for the so-called crime of "dangerousness?" This is impossible to fully know in the totalitarian circus of present day Cuba but perhaps the regime was afraid of the courage repeatedly demonstrated by Mr. Martinez Gomez.

Madam Speaker, this is just another condemnable occurrence in the constant pattern of brutality by the totalitarian tyranny just 90 miles from our shores. And yet, though the tyranny has attempted to stop Mr. Martinez Gomez, he will never cease in his commitment to freedom for Cuba. My colleagues, we must demand the immediate release of Raudel Martinez Gomez and all prisoners of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS A MORAL RESPONSIBILITY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THOSE PERSONS, GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES THAT ARE IMPOVERISHED, DISADVANTAGED OR OTHERWISE IN POVERTY

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOE BACA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 22, 2008*

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 1 minute.

I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 198.

Poverty is all too real an issue in America today.

As a co-chair of the Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus, I have worked with my colleagues to create a world where no child goes to bed hungry, and where every parent can put a roof over their family's heads.

We have made progress this Congress—but we still have a long road ahead of us.

And while poverty disproportionately affects our minority communities—it does not discriminate on a basis of color.

We must remember poverty is not just a Hispanic, or a Black, or an Asian issue—it is a "people" issue.

Whether it's a family trying to put food on the table, or a child in need of basic health care—when poverty affects one of us, it affects all of us.

I urge my colleagues to join the Out of Poverty Caucus in voicing their dedication to creating a better America for everyone, not just the privileged few.

I ask my colleagues to vote in favor of H. Con. Res. 198.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. PHIL HARE**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 23, 2008*

Mr. HARE. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, January 22, 2008, I was unavoidably detained. I ask for unanimous consent that the RECORD reflect had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall No. 19, H.R. 4211—To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 725 Roanoke Avenue in Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, as the "Judge Richard B. Allsbrook Post Office"; and I would have vote "aye" on rollcall No. 20, H. Res. 866—Honoring the brave men and women of the United States Coast Guard whose tireless work, dedication, and commitment to protecting the United States have led to the Coast Guard seizing over 350,000 pounds of cocaine at sea during 2007, far surpassing all of our previous records.

## HONORING DALLAS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. JEB HENSARLING**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 23, 2008*

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, today I would like to rise to recognize Dallas Christian School and join with them in celebrating their 50th anniversary.

In 1957, Dallas Christian School was established with a mission to train students academically, physically, and spiritually. Five decades later, this nationally recognized Blue Ribbon School continues to accomplish its mission by supplementing its academic curriculum with daily Bible classes and chapel services, college courses, extracurricular activities, and an athletic department.

Located in Mesquite, Texas, 90 percent of Dallas Christian School graduates attend institutions of higher education, and since 1992, 20 seniors have qualified for the National Merit Scholarship.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Fifth District of Texas, I am honored to recognize Dallas Christian School's 50th anniversary, and I would like to commend the students, board of directors, faculty, and staff for helping to shape a brighter future for our community and our country.