

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING PAMELA BONNETT

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pamela Bonnett, who immigrated from British Guiana, South America to the United States in 1969 when there was an urgent need for Registered Professional Nurses. She graduated from St. Joseph's College with a bachelor of science in health administration and a masters degree in public health education from Hunter College, City University of New York.

Currently a patient service manager at the Visiting Nurse Service of New York, Inc., she is responsible for a team of registered professional nurses providing care to the chronically ill and the geriatric community. Prior to holding this position, Ms. Bonnett was an administrator/associate administrator with Nurse Referrals Inc., responsible for their license program, professional development, utilization and standards of care, to ensure agency compliance with the New York State Department of Health Regulations. She chaired the Quality Assurance Committee of Certified Home Health Care Agencies and other professional staff. Moreover she evaluated contract compliance and made recommendations to the NYC Health and Hospital Corporation and acted as a liaison and marketing agent between the Nurse Referrals Inc., and NYC Health and Hospital Certified Home Care Agencies.

Among other positions held were assistant director of nursing/director of in service education at the Woodland Rehabilitation Center, New Rochelle; executive director, Bushwick Stuyvesant Heights Home Attendant Agency; community health nurse, Beth Israel Hospital and; clinical manager of the Community Geriatric Clinic at the Brookdale Hospital Medical Center.

Pamela Bonnett is currently a member of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc., Member of the Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc., past member of the board of directors for the Boys and Girls of America, Hempstead Boys and Girls Club, and a past member of the community board of St. John's Episcopal Hospital in Brooklyn.

Madam Speaker, Pamela Bonnett epitomizes what is good about public health service and we should recognize her for being a role model to young boys and girls in the community. She is a person who is making a difference in people's lives.

HONORING KYLE E. BOWMAN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Kyle E. Bowman, a very

special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 314, and by earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Kyle has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Kyle started his journey with the Boy Scouts seven years ago earning 28 merit badges. Over the years Kyle has been involved in scouting, he has held many leadership positions such as historian, librarian, patrol and assistant patrol leader. Kyle is an Ordeal in the Order of the Arrow and is a Foxman in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Kyle has attended H. Roe Bartle Reservation for three years and has also camped at Camp Nash on four separate occasions. For his Eagle Scout project, Kyle designed and constructed two horse mounting platforms for Heartland Presbyterian Center.

Madam Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not mention the strong family foundation Kyle has supporting him. His proud parents Mark and Britt Bowman, as well as his sister, Amanda.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Kyle E. Bowman for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING DR. MARK KUSHNER

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Mark Kushner, a distinguished professor and Dean of the College of Engineering at Iowa State University on winning the Semiconductor Industry Association annual award for outstanding work and exemplary leadership by university researchers.

Dr. Kushner received his BA in Astronomy and BS in Engineering from the University of California at Los Angeles in 1976 and earned his MS and PhD in Applied Physics from the California Institute of Technology in 1977 and 1979. From 1986 to 2005, Dr. Kushner was the Founder Professor of Engineering in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In 2005, Dr. Kushner became the Dean of Engineering and the James Melsa Professor at Iowa State University with appointments in the departments of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Materials Science and Engineering, and Chemical Engineering.

For 18 years, Dr. Kushner has worked with the Semiconductor Research Corporation, and his work is widely recognized as the "Gold Standard" for the semiconductor industry. He has published more than 210 journal articles and delivered more than 170 invited symposia presentations on topics related to plasma and thermal materials processing, gas and solid state lasers, pulse power plasmas, chemical

lasers, and laser spectroscopy. Dr. Kushner has also trained dozens of Ph.D.s who continue to drive innovation and progress in microelectronics.

Dr. Kushner's efforts in research and training play a crucial role in expanding horizons in semiconductors and the field of engineering for the benefit of society. I consider it an honor to represent Dr. Kushner in Congress, and I wish him continued success in his groundbreaking efforts in the semiconductor industry and his academic work in the field of engineering.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the following letters of support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2008, be submitted for the record on the floor debate on this bill.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM DIRECTORS,
Alexandria, VA, February 29, 2008.

Hon. PATRICK J. KENNEDY,

Hon. JIM RAMSTAD,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES KENNEDY AND RAMSTAD: On behalf of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD). I am writing to offer our strong support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007. NASMHPD represents state and territorial mental health commissioners/directors and their agencies that provide public mental health services to over 6 million people annually. Our members manage community-based systems of care as well as inpatient care in state psychiatric hospitals for individuals with serious mental illness.

It has been over ten years since the Congress passed the Mental Health Parity Act, which prohibited annual and lifetime dollar limits for mental health care. This small but symbolically important first step left much work to be done; it is now the time to fill remaining gaps by prohibiting treatment limitations and eliminating inequitable financial requirements. An ever-growing body of research, advanced especially during and since the 1990-2000 Decade of the Brain, demonstrates that mental and behavioral disorders are brain disorders and benefit in the same way as other physical disorders from advances in science. Scientific knowledge of mental illness has removed all justification for the wide-spread difference in insurance coverage for mental health benefits.

An October 2006 NASMHPD study describes an alarming finding that people with mental illness experience twenty-five years of lost life. This is an unconscionable situation that demands immediate action, for all adults and children with mental illness who now

• 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.

face such terrible odds against living a long and healthy life. The harsh reality of poor health for those with mental illness requires new approaches to integrate mental health and general health. Enacting a strong mental health parity law has the potential to measurably improve the health status of individuals with mental illness who suffer other dire health consequences.

The states' mental health directors commend you for your leadership on this critical national priority. We are pleased to add our voice to the growing chorus of support that was so clearly demonstrated during your highly successful "Equity Campaign Tour" along with the 273 co-sponsors of H.R. 1424.

Sincerely,

ROBERT W. GLOVER,
Executive Director.

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION,
Arlington, VA, March 5, 2008.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: I am writing on behalf of the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the medical specialty representing more than 38,000 psychiatric physicians nationwide, and particularly on behalf of our patients and their families, to urge you to vote for passage of mental health "parity" legislation (H.R. 1424) on March 5, and to oppose any weakening amendments and/or motions to recommit.

Mental illnesses have a devastating impact on millions of Americans every day. The good news is that treatment works, but too many insurance plans impose discriminatory cost-sharing and treatment limits on mental health care that are not required for treatment of any other illnesses. For nearly a decade, the Federal Employees Benefits program has required insurers to provide parity coverage for mental health care. Research has shown that the parity requirement has not led to any significant cost increase for federal employees (including Members of Congress and their staff). Surely the public at large deserves the same coverage?

Opponents of the House bill are circulating outrageous and false claims about what the House bill does. I am attaching a brief fact sheet that sets the record straight. Please feel free to share this with your House colleagues.

The members of the APA have been pleased to work with the House Blue Dogs over the years, and look forward to a productive relationship in the years ahead. Please reject the blatant disinformation being circulated by parity opponents and vote for passage of H.R. 1424. It is long past time for Congress to act. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

CAROLYN B. ROBINOWITZ,
President.

AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION RESPONSE TO CONTROVERSY ABOUT DSM-IV AND MENTAL HEALTH PARITY—MARCH 2008

Business and insurance opposition to passage of H.R. 1424 in part involves opposition to the use of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) to define those conditions that must be covered by health plans under the terms of the bill. Let's look at a few of these claims:

DSM-IV obligates employers to cover jet lag, caffeine intoxication, and similar conditions:

Fact: This is nonsense. These claims typically refer to so-called "V Codes." These are not DSM diagnoses. The V Codes are developed by the World Health Organization for the International Classification of Diseases (or ICD), not by the APA for the DSM. They are listed in DSM as a courtesy to facilitate coding and cross-walking between DSM and the ICD, and they are intended to allow clinicians to identify the types of non-diagnostic problems that are brought to their attention.

Because it is "so broad," using DSM to set baseline coverage will force insurers and employers to pay for treatments for the most minor of conditions.

Fact: This argument is based on the false premise that diagnosis and treatment are one and the same. This is absolutely false. Simply because a diagnosis is made does not obligate insurers to pay for treatment, and nothing in H.R. 1424 changes that fact. Treatment would still be subject to the same medical necessity decision-making and utilization review that is in effect today. The appropriate treatment for jet lag would almost certainly be "get some sleep." Members of the House should demand that employers who argue about jet lag and caffeine intoxication provide data showing they have incurred any appreciable costs because they have been forced to pay for treatment.

DSM-IV will codify a treatment mandate. Fact: False. This claim confuses diagnosis with treatment. Once again, DSM-IV is not a treatment mandate, it is a diagnostic tool. In fact, employers and insurers don't want you to know that they use DSM every day to limit and in some cases deny treatment under terms of medical necessity.

The American Psychiatric Association has a vested interest in having DSM-IV written into federal law, creating an improper conflict of interest.

Fact: DSM-IV is widely recognized as the leading and internationally authoritative text for the diagnosis of mental illness. It is the product of exhaustive research and deliberation over a six-year period involving more than 1,000 individuals and numerous professional organizations, as well as agencies of the Federal Government. As a result, DSM-IV is referenced and has legal standing in more than 900 federal and state laws and regulations. The major legal reason why states and the Federal Government have used DSM-IV instead of ICD-9-CM is to insist on a higher and more precise standard for defining a mental disorder. Are employers and insurers proposing to ban any references to CPT-Codes in federal law, or use of ICD-9-CM codes for billing purposes? Of course not. Why is DSM-IV any different?

The House of Representatives is poised to take a truly historic step toward ending insurance discrimination against Americans seeking help for mental illnesses, including substance-related disorders. Please do not allow the deliberate distortions and outright falsehoods about DSM-IV asserted by business and insurance groups to influence your vote. The 38,000 psychiatric physician members of the American Psychiatric Association urge you vote for passage of H.R. 1424.

For additional information, please contact the APA's Department of Government Relations.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM
AND DRUG DEPENDENCE, INC.,

New York, NY, March 3, 2008.

Re support for HR-1424 the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Republican Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND LEADER BOEHNER: On behalf of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) and our National Network of Affiliates, I am writing to express our support for HR 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. HR-1424 would prohibit insurance discrimination against 80 million Americans suffering from addiction and mental illness! Pass HR-1424 without any amendments that would weaken the bill

and oppose any effort to substitute S-558. A vote for S-558 is a vote against addiction and mental health coverage that would count!

The lives of millions of Americans are at stake. Last year, over 650,000 individuals and family members contacted NCADD seeking help for themselves or a family member! The lack of access to alcoholism and addiction specific treatment through insurance results in continued alcohol/drug use and insurance pays a fortune to treat all of the physical symptoms that result from alcoholism and addiction, accidents, gastritis, broken arms/legs, cirrhosis, etc. The financial cost of addiction and mental health problems is staggering. And, the best way to reduce those costs is by providing access to treatment! Each year, 1.3 billion work days are lost due to mental disorders, more than arthritis, stroke, heart attack and cancer combined. Moreover, workers with untreated depression cost their employers \$31 billion a year in lost productivity and workers with untreated alcoholism cost their employers \$135 billion in lost productivity each year.

The time to end the insurance discrimination faced by those with addiction and mental health issues is now! The Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act (H.R. 1424), introduced by Representatives Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and Jim Ramstad (R-MN), has the support of the majority of the House with 273 cosponsors. The bill has been favorably reported by the Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce and Education and Labor Committees. Lastly, fourteen Congressional field hearings in 2007 clearly documented the need for equity in health plans for the treatment of addiction and mental illness, parity is a priority and it must be passed now!

Because of the critical nature of this legislation, we urge you to vote in support of HR 1424. On behalf of those who will benefit from access to life-saving treatment, thank you for support!

Sincerely,

ROBERT J. LINDSEY,
President/CEO.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL
HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Mr. Ramstad. Mr. Speaker, I would like to have the following letters of support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, submitted for the record on the floor debate of this bill.

HAZELDEN,

Center City, MN, March 3, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Capitol Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Republican Leader, House of Representatives,
Capitol Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND LEADER BOEHNER: On behalf of the Hazelden Foundation, I am writing to express our strong support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. This landmark legislation would prohibit insurance discrimination against 80 million Americans suffering from addiction and mental illness.

I am writing because our country cannot afford the continued burden of untreated addiction and mental illness. Untreated addiction costs Americans \$400 billions annually

and is more expensive than 3 of the Nation's top 10 killers: 6 times more expensive than America's number one killer: heart disease (\$133.2 billion/year), 6 times more than diabetes (\$130 billion/year), 4 times more than cancer (\$96.1 billion/year).

The time for the passage of parity is now. Over 25 million people need mental health and addiction treatment but are not getting it. Legislation to bring full equity to mental health coverage has been introduced in the House in every Congress since the 107th session but until this year, it never received consideration in committees or on the floor despite bipartisan majority cosponsorship. Now, H.R. 1424, introduced by Representatives Patrick Kennedy (D-RI); and Jim Ramstad (R-MN), has the support of the majority of the House with 273 cosponsors. The bill has been favorably reported by the Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce and Education and Labor Committees. In 2007, fourteen different field hearings were held around the country and included testimony from employers and insurers. These hearings documented the need for equity in health plans for the treatment of addiction and mental illness. The record shows parity is a priority that must be passed now.

We are hopeful the House of Representatives will pass H.R. 1424 this week with a strong bipartisan majority. The Hazelden Foundation stands ready to assist you toward the goal of achieving access to treatment for addiction in health plans for all Americans.

Sincerely,

NICHOLAS T. MOTU,
Senior Vice President and COO Publishing.

FEDERATION OF AMERICAN HOSPITALS,
Washington, DC, March 3, 2008.

Speaker NANCY PELOSI,
U.S. Congress,
Washington, DC.
Minority Leader JOHN BOEHNER,
U.S. Congress,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND LEADER BOEHNER: The Federation of American Hospitals (FAH), representing America's investor-owned and managed hospitals and health systems, supports swift passage of the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007 (H.R. 1424). This legislation will provide greatly needed access to mental health treatment for Americans who need it most.

This bipartisan legislation would end prevalent forms of health insurance discrimination against patients with debilitating chronic mental illnesses. Additionally, H.R. 1424 will assist millions of Americans in obtaining the necessary hospital care they need and were previously denied because of inadequate mental health coverage.

H.R. 1424 is paid for, in part, by prohibiting physician self-referral to a hospital in which a physician has an ownership interest. Physician self-referral presents an inherent conflict of interest, creates an unlevel, anti-competitive playing field; threaten patient safety; fall low-income and uninsured patients; and, has resulted in the overutilization of limited Medicare resources. We strongly support this provision.

We deeply appreciate Congress' ongoing commitment to mental health parity and strengthening the Medicare program.

Sincerely,

CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT/HYPERACTIVITY DISORDERS,

Landover, MD, March 4, 2008.

Hon. PATRICK J. KENNEDY,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN KENNEDY: On behalf of Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders (CHADD), we write in strong support of the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007, which will be debated this week in the U.S. House of Representatives. We write to urge all Members of Congress to vote for passage of this legislation.

Currently, 113 million Americans face higher payments and stricter coverage limits for some illnesses than for others because their health plans discriminate against them. For example, many health plans pay more of the expenses for diabetes than for depression or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD), though all can be serious, chronic conditions requiring intensive, long-term treatment. Of they pay more for Parkinson's and Alzheimer's than for schizophrenia, though all affect the structure and function of the brain. We cannot let this continue.

Disparity in mental health coverage disproportionately affects low-income and minority populations who may not have access to care, in part because they can't afford to pay the extra out-of-pocket expenses, or because they cannot access health care providers. Some families have to relinquish custody of their children in order to get needed treatment. We all pay the price when mental health and substance abuse issues are not addressed.

The Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007 will end insurance discrimination by providing equal coverage for health and mental health/substance abuse treatment, including days/visits covered, cost caps, coinsurance, co-payments, deductibles and out-of-pocket costs.

This legislation will help many children and adults—including children and adults with AD/HD—to access the mental health and substance abuse treatment they need. We strongly support this legislation, and urge all Member of Congress to vote YES on this important bill.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

E. CLARKE ROSS,
CEO.

Hon. PATRICK J. KENNEDY,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JIM RAMSTAD,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES KENNEDY AND RAMSTAD: I am writing on behalf of the American Counseling Association (ACA) to express our strong support for your legislation H.R. 1424, the "Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act." ACA is the Nation's largest non-profit membership organization representing the counseling profession, which includes more than 100,000 professional counselors licensed in 49 states and the District of Columbia.

Mental and addiction disorders are real, and are treatable. For decades, millions of American families experiencing such disorders have had their access to care limited by discriminatory health insurance policies. Your legislation would help end this practice, closing major loopholes in the 1996 federal parity law. By requiring group health plans that cover mental health and substance use benefits to do so without different

duration limits and financial requirements, this legislation will help millions of people with mental disorders get the care they need.

Importantly, your legislation also prohibits plans from declining to cover care for certain mental or addictive disorders, giving privately-insured Americans coverage for the same range of conditions for which members of Congress and other federal employees enjoy protection under Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) policies. Your legislation also requires health plans to cover out-of-network care for these disorders if they cover out-of-network care for general medical conditions. Patient choice of provider is critically important in mental health treatment, and a plan can hardly be said to be providing parity of coverage if they restrict choice of provider for mental and addictive disorders but don't do so for general medical services.

We applaud your consistent leadership in championing this landmark legislation, and we urge all House members to vote for H.R. 1424 and against any amendments to weaken its protections. Congress has a chance to take an historic step forward in passing this legislation. We hope that House passage of your strong, bipartisan bill will spur to completion the negotiations with the Senate on legislation that can become law later this year.

Sincerely,

BRIAN CANFIELD,
President,
American Counseling Association.

EATING DISORDERS COALITION,
Washington, DC, March 4, 2008.

Hon. PATRICK J. KENNEDY,
House of Representatives
Washington, DC.

Hon. JIM RAMSTAD,
House of Representatives
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES KENNEDY AND RAMSTAD: I am writing on behalf of the Eating Disorders Coalition which represents 36 different organizations and constituents in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Our researchers, therapists, prevention experts, and families understand that eating disorders are life-threatening—often deadly—and can linger, diminishing one's quality of life for decades. Unfortunately, our members also know how difficult it is to access care, even under policies that supposedly include mental health coverage.

We urge House members to bring H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health & Addiction Equity Act to the floor on March 5, 2008 and vote YES on this important bill.

Millions of American families face structural discrimination against the mental health benefits in their health coverage. For example, people with eating disorders are often denied services as managed care companies and health care providers struggle with arbitrary interpretations of medical necessity. Your proposed legislation will strengthen the appropriate role of managed care as it also expands access to life-saving mental health services.

We hope that House passage of your strong bipartisan bill will lead to the completion of negotiations with the Senate on a bill that can become law this year. Additionally we urge that the broad-based definition of mental disorders that is a cornerstone of H.R. 1424 remain intact as it will ensure that people with eating disorders receive appropriate care.

It is time that our great nation takes the next step to advance care for people with mental health needs.

We thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

MARC LERRO,
Executive Director.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL
HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to have the following letters of support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, submitted for the RECORD on the floor debate of this bill.

THE BETTY FORD CENTER,
Rancho Mirage, CA,
MARCH 3, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Capitol Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Republican Leader, House of Representatives, Capitol Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND LEADER BOEHNER: On behalf of the Betty Ford Center, I am writing to express my strong support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. This landmark legislation would prohibit insurance discrimination against 80 million Americans suffering from addiction and mental illness.

I am writing because our country cannot afford the continued burden of untreated addiction and mental illness. Untreated addiction costs Americans \$400 billion each year. Moreover, each year, 1.3 billion work days are lost due to mental disorders, more than arthritis, stroke, heart attack and cancer combined and workers with untreated alcoholism cost their employers \$135 billion in lost productivity annually.

The time for the passage of parity is now. Over 25 million people need mental health and addiction treatment but are not getting it. Legislation to bring full equity to mental health coverage has been introduced in the House in every Congress since the 107th session but until this year, it never received consideration in committees or on the floor despite bipartisan majority cosponsorship. Now, H.R. 1424, introduced by Representatives PATRICK KENNEDY (D-RI) and JIM RAMSTAD (R-MN), has the support of the majority of the House with 273 cosponsors. The bill has been favorably reported by the Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce and Education and Labor Committees. In 2007, the Betty Ford Center was pleased to join with families, providers, employers and state and local officials at fourteen different field hearings held around the country. These hearings documented the need for equity in health plans for the treatment of addiction and mental illness. The record shows parity is a priority that must be passed now.

I am hopeful the House of Representatives will pass H.R. 1424 this week with a strong bipartisan majority. The Betty Ford Center stands ready to assist you and your colleagues in the Senate in making equitable treatment for addiction and mental health in health plans a reality for all Americans in 2008.

Sincerely,

MRS. BETTY FORD.

BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA,
Vienna, VA, March 3, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Republican Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND LEADER BOEHNER: On behalf of the Brain Injury Association of America, I am writing to express our support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, which would prohibit insurance discrimination against 80 million Americans suffering from addiction and mental illness.

An intricate and intertwined relationship exists between substance abuse, mental health, and traumatic brain injury (TBI). Substance use and abuse is often both an antecedent to and a consequence of TBI. Incidence data indicate that substance abuse significantly raises an individual's risk of sustaining a brain injury. TBI is one of the most common and tragic consequences of substance abuse, especially by teenagers and young adults. In addition, neurobehavioral problems commonly arise as a direct result of TBI, and psychotherapeutic services are integral to successful neurorehabilitation programs. Access to comprehensive and specialized addiction and mental health services is critical to maximizing the recovery of individuals with brain injury.

The time for the passage of parity is now. More than 25 million people need mental health and addiction treatment but are not getting it. Legislation to bring full equity to mental health coverage has been introduced in the House in every Congress since the 107th session but until this year, it never received consideration in committees or on the floor despite bipartisan majority cosponsorship. Note, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act (H.R. 1424), introduced by Representatives Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) and Jim Ramstad (R-MN), has the support of the majority of the House with 273 cosponsors. The bill has been favorably reported by the Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce and Education and Labor Committees. Remarkably, 14 different field hearings documenting the need for equity in health plans for the treatment of addiction and mental illness were held around the country in 2007. The record shows parity is a priority that must be passed now.

Because of the critical nature of this legislation, the Brain Injury Association of America urges you to pass H.R. 1424 when it comes to the floor this week. Our organization stands ready to assist you toward the goal of achieving fairness in health plans for all Americans.

SINCERELY,
SUSAN H. CONNORS,
President/CEO,

Brain Injury Association of America.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY
BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE,
March 3, 2008.

Hon. PATRICK J. KENNEDY,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. JIM RAMSTAD,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES KENNEDY AND RAMSTAD: I am writing on behalf of the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare to urge House Members to vote YES on your bill H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health & Addiction Equity Act.

Millions of American families who face structural discrimination against the mental health and addiction treatment benefits in

their health coverage will welcome passage of this legislation. It is designed to close loopholes in the 1996 Federal parity law that has too often been evaded. By requiring group health plans that provide mental health or substance use benefits to include them without different duration limits and financial requirements, this legislation will help people with mental and addiction disorders without a costly burden on employers.

We hope that House passage of your strong bipartisan bill will spur to completion the negotiations with the Senate on a bill that can become law this year. Further delay is not acceptable.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

LINDA ROSENBERG, MSW, CSW,
President and CEO.

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
ADDICTION MEDICINE,
Chevy Chase, MD, March 4, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Republican Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND LEADER BOEHNER: On behalf of the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), I am writing to express our strong support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. This landmark legislation would prohibit insurance discrimination against 80 million Americans suffering from addiction and mental illness.

ASAM's mission is to increase access to and improve the quality of addiction treatment; to educate physicians (including medical and osteopathic students), other health care providers and the public; to support research and prevention; to promote the appropriate role of the physician in the care of patients with addiction; and to establish addiction medicine as a specialty recognized by professional organizations, governments, physicians, purchasers and consumers of health care services, and the general public.

I am writing because our country cannot afford the continued burden of untreated addiction and mental illness. Over 25 million people need mental health and addiction treatment but are not receiving it and the costs are staggering. Left untreated, addiction costs Americans \$400 billion dollars each year. Moreover, 80 percent of trauma admissions in emergency departments are alcohol and drug related.

The time for the passage of parity is now. Legislation to bring full equity to mental health coverage has been introduced in the House in every Congress since the 107th session but until this year, it never received consideration in committees or on the floor despite bipartisan majority co-sponsorship. Now, H.R. 1424, introduced by Reps. PATRICK KENNEDY (D-RI) and JIM RAMSTAD (R-MN), has the support of the majority of the House with 273 co-sponsors. The bill has been favorably reported by the Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce and Education and Labor Committees. In 2007, fourteen different field hearings were held around the country and included testimony from employers and insurers. These hearings documented the need for equity in health plans for the treatment of addiction and mental illness. The record shows parity is a priority that must be passed now.

We are hopeful the House of Representatives will pass H.R. 1424 this week with a strong bipartisan majority. The American Society of Addiction Medicine stands ready to assist you toward the goal of achieving

access to treatment for addiction in health plans for all Americans.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL M. MILLER,
President and Board Chair.

SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION
NETWORK USA,
Washington, DC, March 3, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER AND LEADER BOEHNER: On behalf of the Suicide Prevention Action Network USA (SPAN USA), I am writing to express our support for HR 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. This landmark legislation would prohibit insurance discrimination against 80 million Americans suffering from addiction and mental illness.

Our country cannot afford to wait to pass this legislation. The cost of doing nothing to help people with their mental health and addiction problems is staggering. Each year, more than 31,000 individuals die by suicide and 1.3 billion work days are lost due to mental health and substance abuse disorders, more than arthritis, stroke, heart attack and cancer combined. Moreover, workers with untreated depression cost their employers \$31 billion a year in lost productivity and workers with untreated alcoholism cost their employers \$135 billion in lost productivity each year.

The time for the passage of parity is now. Far too many individuals who complete suicide have never seen a mental health professional. Legislation to bring full equity to mental health coverage has been introduced in the House in every Congress since the 107th session but until this year, it never received consideration in committees or on the floor despite having over 218 bipartisan cosponsors. Now, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act (H.R. 1424), introduced by Representatives PATRICK KENNEDY (D-RI) and JIM RAMSTAD (R-MN), has the support of the majority of the House with 273 cosponsors. The bill has been favorably reported by all three committees of jurisdiction. Lastly, fourteen field hearings documenting the need for equity in health plans for the treatment of addiction and mental illness were held in 2007.

Because of the critical nature of this legislation, we support passage of H.R. 1424. SPAN USA stands ready to assist you toward the goal of achieving fairness in health plans for all Americans.

Sincerely,

JERRY REED, PH.D., M.S.W.,
Executive Director, Suicide Prevention
Action Network USA.

HONORING LORNA MULLINGS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Lorna Mullings, a remarkable woman who after a 13-year career in banking, pursued her real passion of nursing. So in 1986, as a new immigrant, an active church worker, a wife and mother of two small children, Lorna Mullings decided to return to school and become a Registered Nurse.

In June of 1992, she graduated from St. Joseph College with a bachelors degree in nurs-

ing. Amid the cheers of her now teenage children, she graduated Hunter College with a double masters in nursing and public health in 2002. However, midway through pursuing her masters degree which was focusing on HIV/AIDS, she was doing course work on health disparities among developed and developing countries when "something hit home." There was a definite connection with a previous paper in her undergraduate studies in which she documented her life's goal to work among the poor people of Somalia. This was also a time of defining professional and personal dreams and because her belief in God was so strong, she knew that becoming a missionary nurse was her special calling.

With her pastor's/husband's approval, blessing, and backing, she formed the Dorcas Medical Mission in 1999. In 2000, Lorna planned and implemented the mission's first outreach to Kingston, Jamaica. Since that time, she has led 15 medical missions to nine countries, bringing free dental, medical, surgical, food and clothing to thousands of needy families worldwide. In addition to these missions, she is currently in the process of opening an orphanage in Alexandria, South Africa for the caring of children left orphaned by parents who were victims of HIV/AIDS.

Lorna Mullings has worked as a nurse for over 15 years in the areas of medical, surgical, endoscopy, recovery, psychiatry, administration and community health. Today, she works as a nurse manager at the Interfaith Medical Center, managing the pediatric and medical surgical units.

Madam Speaker, Ms. Mullings is well deserving of our respect for her humanitarian works and charitable outreach—she went on to initiate the Rugby Feeding Program, which now feeds over 70 homeless people with hot meals 4 days a week and heads the Rugby Family Services. Her compassion for the less fortunate is indeed noteworthy, and I am proud to recognize her today.

KATHERINE HOFFMAN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Katherine Hoffman of Trenton, Missouri. Katherine is a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, and earning the most prestigious award of Girl Scout Gold Award.

Katherine has been very active with her troop, participating in many scout activities. In order to receive the prestigious Gold Award, Katherine has completed all seven requirements that promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values and leadership skills.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Katherine Hoffman for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Girl Scout Gold Award.

HONORING CORN BELT POWER COOPERATIVE

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Corn Belt Power Cooperative of Humboldt, Iowa, on the occasion of their 60th anniversary.

Before 1947, electric cooperatives were unable to keep up with farmers' additional need of electricity to power their homes and farms, and power companies in the cities were wary of selling electricity to rural Iowa. As a result of the increased demand, two smaller power cooperatives merged to create a partnership that could build a larger coal-fired generation, thus forming Corn Belt Power.

In the early years, Corn Belt Power was a source for electric lights, storing and preparing food in rural homes, pumping water, and bringing ease to daily farm chores. Today Corn Belt Power is a source of power for sophisticated livestock systems and computers, heat pumps and efficient heating and cooling systems for homes. Corn Belt Power has withstood many ups and downs, including the energy crisis in the 1970s, the farm crisis of the 1980s, and our need for energy efficiency today.

Corn Belt Power Cooperative of Humboldt is dedicated to benefiting rural Iowa and the agricultural community, and for this I offer them my utmost congratulations and thanks. It is an honor to represent the employees of Corn Belt Power, the board of directors, and President Donald Feldman in the U.S. Congress, and I wish them continued success in serving the people of rural Iowa.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. DIANA DEGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Ms. DeGETTE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to have the following letters of support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2008, submitted for the RECORD on the floor debate of this bill.

AMERICAN CORRECTIONAL ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, February 29, 2008.

Hon. PATRICK J. KENNEDY,
Cannon HOB,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE KENNEDY: On behalf of the American Correctional Association and our 18,000 members I'd like to express our full support for your bill, H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007.

The health care system in our country has neglected the mentally ill long enough and it must change. We in criminal justice and more specifically the corrections profession know first-hand the effect inadequate mental health care has on our communities. Jails and prisons have become defacto mental health hospitals wherein a high prevalence of mental health problems and addiction among inmates is common and recidivism rates are high.

A report issued by the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics in September 2006 revealed that more than half of all prison and jail inmates had a mental health problem. BJS also reported that more than two-fifths of state inmates and more than half of jail inmates showed symptoms of mania, 23% of state prisoners and 30% of jail inmates suffer from depression and that 15% of state prisoners and 24% of jail inmates met the criteria for psychotic disorders. 24% of state prisoners and 19% of jail inmates suffered from substance dependence or abuse and an estimated 42% of inmates in state prisons and nearly half of those in local jails were found to have both a mental health problem and a substance dependence or abuse problem.

Without proper care and treatment in a mental hospital, these individuals will never recover or be healthy again nor will they ever be able to live a normal life. Most likely they will continue to recidivate, crowd our facilities, drive up costs throughout the entire criminal justice system and cause harm to others and unto themselves. Quite simply, correctional facilities are not equipped and corrections personnel are not trained to handle the mentally ill individuals.

We appreciate your leadership on this issue and offer you our full support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007.

Sincerely,

GARY D. MAYNARD,
President.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ANOREXIA
NERVOSA AND ASSOCIATED DIS-
ORDERS,

Highland Park, IL, March 3, 2008.

Re the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007.

Hon. PATRICK J. KENNEDY and Hon. JIM
RAMSTAD,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES KENNEDY AND RAMSTAD: I am writing on behalf of ANAD, the National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, to urge House Members to vote YES on your bill H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health & Addiction Equity Act. ANAD is the nation's oldest organization dedicated to alleviating the problems of eating disorders, with an active membership composed of professionals, sufferers, and their families.

More than 8 million Americans suffering from eating disorders who face overwhelming obstacles to health insurance coverage for mental health treatment fully embrace the passage of this legislation. Eating disorders kill. Anorexia nervosa has the highest mortality rate of any mental illness. By closing the loopholes in the 1996 federal parity law and requiring equity in eating disorders coverage, treatment, and financial requirements, this legislation will greatly assist Americans with these potentially deadly illnesses without a costly burden to employers.

ANAD hopes that passage of your strong bipartisan bill will hasten the completion of negotiations with the Senate on a bill that will cover the full range of mental illnesses and become law this year. Further delay is unacceptable, especially for those whose lives are in peril.

We thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

VIVIAN HANSON MEEHAN,
President.

EASTER SEALS,
Washington, DC, March 3, 2008.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: Easter Seals urges you to vote to support the passage of H.R.

1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007. Access to mental health services is essential for anyone to live a healthy life.

Mental health disorders are the second leading cause of disability and premature death in the United States and are often experienced by people with disabilities. Many health insurance plans set cost limits on mental health treatment, but do not impose similar cost limits on other medical and surgical benefits. It is critical that access to mental health services be on par with access to services for other medical conditions. Breaking down barriers to accessing mental health services improves the lives of people with disabilities, strengthens families and saves lives.

We look forward to continuing to work with you as the process moves forward. Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

KATHERINE BEH NEAS,
Vice President, Government Relations.

SERVICE EMPLOYEES
INTERNATIONAL UNION,
Washington, DC, March 4, 2008.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) urges you to vote "yes" on H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. Millions of American families are touched by mental illness and substance abuse disorders, and our workplaces are less productive when mental illness is untreated and stigmatized. H.R. 1424 would require that group health plans cover mental illness on the same terms that it provides for medical and surgical coverage. There is a growing body of evidence that supports the effectiveness of various treatments for people suffering from mental illness and substance abuse disorders. High co-pays and deductibles can discourage access to treatment, and arbitrary limits can result in discontinued therapies that would otherwise be effective. Better screening and early treatment is often the most cost-effective treatment. It is time to pass H.R. 1424 and give new hope and treatment to millions of patients and families struggling with mental illness.

Votes on this legislation will be added to the SEW scorecard found at www.seiu.org. If you have any questions, please contact Ann Kempfski, Deputy Director of Legislation.

Sincerely,

ANNA BURGER,
International Secretary-Treasurer.

AUTISM SOCIETY OF AMERICA,
Bethesda, MD, March 2, 2008.

Hon. PATRICK KENNEDY,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN KENNEDY: On behalf of the Autism Society of America, we write in strong support of the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007. This legislation will go a long way to end discrimination by private health insurers by mandating parity in the treatment of mental health coverage.

Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum disorder" that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees. There is no known single cause for autism, nor is there a single treatment.

While there is no single treatment for autism, intensive, sustained special education programs and behavior therapy does improve the function of children with autism, allowing them to increase their communication

skills and learn. Individuals with autism often benefit from mental health treatments including the prescribing of medication and counseling. Beyond these, there are new treatments and interventions on the horizon, and it is important that individuals with autism can access breakthrough therapies.

Your legislation provides equal treatment of mental health insurance benefits compared to medical and surgical benefits specifically with respect to cost sharing requirements, financial requirements, and treatment limitations. Many individuals with autism have co-morbid mental illnesses and would greatly benefit from enactment of this legislation.

ASA, the nation's leading grassroots autism organization, exists to improve the lives of all affected by autism. On behalf of our 200,000 members and supporters across the nation, we thank you for your leadership on this issue, and strongly support you in your efforts.

Sincerely,

LEE GROSSMAN,
President and CEO.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL
HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to have the following letters of support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, submitted for the record on the floor debate of this bill.

MARCH 4, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
*Speaker of the House of Representatives, Capitol
Building, Washington, DC.*

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
*Republican Leader, House, Capitol Building,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND LEADER BOEHNER: Consumers Union, the nonprofit publisher of Consumer Reports, urges you to support HR 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, to prohibit insurance discrimination against 80 million Americans suffering from addiction and mental illness.

Over 25 million people need mental health and addiction treatment but are not getting it. Each year, 1.3 billion work days are lost due to mental disorders, more than arthritis, stroke, heart attack and cancer combined. Moreover, workers with untreated depression cost their employers \$31 billion a year in lost productivity and workers with untreated alcoholism cost their employers \$135 billion in lost productivity each year. The need for equity in health plans for the treatment of addiction and mental illness is well documented—14 field hearings were held around the country in 2007. The time to pass this legislation is now.

H.R. 1424, introduced by Representatives Patrick Kennedy and Jim Ramstad, has the support of the majority of the House with 273 cosponsors. Because of the critical nature of this legislation, we urge you to support HR 1424 and move it to the full floor for a vote as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

GAIL SHEARER,
*Director, Health Policy
Analysis, Consumers
Union Washington
Office.*

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNCILS
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES,
Alexandria, VA, March 2, 2008.

Hon. PATRICK KENNEDY,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN KENNEDY: On behalf of the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities we write in strong support of the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007.

Research from the past 10 to 20 years has resulted in a fundamental change in the way mental illnesses are viewed and treated. We know now that people can improve and recover from many serious mental illnesses. Yet, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's (SAMHSA) Resource Center to Address Discrimination Stigma Associated with Mental Illness (ADS Center), only 1 in 5 of children in need is receiving appropriate treatment. Two-thirds of the roughly 54 million Americans with mental illnesses do not receive treatment.

Your legislation provides equal treatment of mental health insurance benefits compared to medical and surgical benefits specifically with respect to cost sharing requirements, financial requirements, and treatment limitations. Without parity, millions of Americans will continue to go without groundbreaking treatment leading them to suffer more emotional pain, disability, and financial burden, and resulting in greater morbidity costs—the loss of productivity in usual activities.

As you work to move this legislation across the finish line, the Councils strongly support your efforts. Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

KAREN F. FLIPPO,
Chief Executive Officer.
LISTENING SAGE ASSOCIATES,
Santa Fe, NM.

Hon. PATRICK J. KENNEDY,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JIM RAMSTAD,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES KENNEDY AND RAMSTAD: I am writing to urge House Members to vote YES on your bill H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health & Addiction Equity Act.

Insurance coverage has been grossly inadequate for mental health services and many families have not been able to afford services. Insurance companies often give false impressions about the real mental health benefits they offer. Often the client pays three fourths of the bill and the insurance company pays a small co-pay. This is unfair and dishonest. I hope your bill will be supported and passed. It needs to cut out the loop holes in former mental health acts.

Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

LEONA STUCKY-ABBOTT.
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE
DUALY DIAGNOSED,
Kingston, NY, February 29, 2008.

Hon. PATRICK J. KENNEDY,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. JIM RAMSTAD,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES KENNEDY AND RAMSTAD: I am writing on behalf of the National Association for the Dually Diagnosed (NADD) to urge House Members to vote YES on your bill H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health Addiction Equity Act.

Millions of American families who face structural discrimination against the mental health benefits in their health coverage will

welcome passage of this legislation. It is designed to close loopholes in the 1996 Federal parity law that has too often been evaded. By requiring group health plans that provide mental health or substance use benefits to include them without different duration limits and financial requirements, this legislation will help people with mental disorders without a costly burden on employers.

We hope that House passage of your strong bipartisan bill will spur to completion the negotiations with the Senate on a bill that can become law this year. Further delay is not acceptable.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

ROBERT J. FLETCHER,
Chief Executive Officer and Founder.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL
HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the following letters of support for H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2008, submitted for the RECORD on the floor debate on this hill.

PARTY NOW COALITION,
March 3, 2008.

Hon. PATRICK KENNEDY,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.
Hon. JIM RAMSTAD,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE KENNEDY AND REPRESENTATIVE RAMSTAD: The undersigned organizations applaud you for your commitment to mental health and addiction parity legislation. We wish to thank you and your staffs for the countless hours you have dedicated to this bill thus far and look forward to working with you towards enacting the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007 into law.

We hereby lend our formal support to this invaluable piece of legislation.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- AFL-CIO
- AIDS Action Council
- Alliance for Children and Families
- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
- American Academy of HIV Medicine
- American Academy of Neurology
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry
- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
- American Association for Psychological Rehabilitation
- American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence
- American Association of Children's Residential Centers
- American Association of Pastoral Counselors
- American Association of Suicidology
- American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine
- American Counseling Association
- American Federation of Teachers
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- American Group Psychotherapy Association

- American Hospital Association
- American Medical Association
- American Mental Health Counselors Association
- American Music Therapy Association
- American Nurses Association
- American Occupational Therapy Association
- American Psychiatric Nurses Association
- American Psychoanalytic Association
- American Psychotherapy Association
- American Probation and Parole Association
- American Public Health Association
- American School Health Association
- American Society of Addiction Medicine
- Anna Westin Foundation
- Anxiety Disorders Association of America
- Association for the Advancement of Psychology
- Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare
- Association for Psychological Science
- Association of American Medical Colleges
- Association of Jewish Family & Children's Agencies
- Association of Recovery Schools
- Association of University Centers on Disabilities
- Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
- Betty Ford Center
- Bradford Health Services
- Caron Treatment Centers
- Center for Clinical Social Work
- Center for Science in the Public Interest
- Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
- Child Welfare League of America
- Clinical Social Work Association
- Clinical Social Work Guild 49, OPEIU
- Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)
- Cumberland Heights
- Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
- Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund
- Easter Seals
- Eating Disorders Coalition for Research, Policy and Action
- Eating Disorder Referral and Information Center/EDReferral.com
- Entertainment Industries Council
- Faces and Voices of Recovery
- Families for Depression Awareness
- Families USA
- Family Voices
- Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
- First Focus
- Hazelden Foundation
- HIV Medicine Association
- Housing Works, Inc
- Human Rights Campaign
- Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research
- Johnson Institute
- Kids Project
- Legal Action Center
- Mental Health America
- NAADAC—The Association for Addiction Professionals
- National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
- National Advocates for Pregnant Women
- National Alliance of Methadone Advocates
- National Alliance to End Homelessness
- National Association for Children of Alcoholics
- National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers
- National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders—ANAD
- National Association of County and City Health Officials
- National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors

National Association of Mental Health Planning & Advisory Councils
 National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
 National Association of School Psychologists
 National Association of Social Workers
 National Association of State Directors of Special Education
 National Association on Alcohol, Drugs, and Disability, Inc.
 National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
 National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
 National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD)
 National Council on Independent Living
 National Development and Research Institutes, Inc. (NDRI)
 National Eating Disorders Association
 National Eating Disorders Coalition
 National Educational Alliance for Borderline Personality Disorder
 National Education Association
 National Hispanic Medical Association
 National Mental Health Awareness Campaign
 National Physicians Alliance
 National Recreation and Park Association
 National Research Center for Women & Families
 National Rural Health Association
 Northamerican Association of Masters in Psychology
 Obsessive Compulsive Foundation
 PACER Center
 Partnership for a Drug-Free America
 Presbyterian Church (USA) Washington Office
 Recovery Network Foundation
 School Social Work Association of America
 Society for Research on Child Development
 Society of Professors of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
 Students for Sensible Drug Policy
 Suicide Prevention Action Network USA
 State Associations of Addiction Services (SAAS)
 Therapeutic Communities of America
 TII CANN—Title II Community AIDS National Network
 Tourette Syndrome Association, Inc.
 Union for Reform Judaism
 United Jewish Community
 United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society
 United Neighborhood Centers of America
 U.S. Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association
 Wellstone Action

LOCAL AND STATE ORGANIZATIONS

622 Communities Partnership, Inc., Minnesota Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc
 AA Safe Haven
 Abilities in Motion
 Addiction Recovery Institute
 Addiction Resource Council
 Addiction Treatment Providers of New Jersey
 Advocates for Recovery
 Alabama Voices for Recovery & Drug Education Council
 Alcohol and Addictions Resource Center
 Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of Delaware County, Inc.
 Alcohol and Drug Council of North Carolina
 Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Providers of New York State
 Alcoholism Council of New York
 Alcoholism Council of the Cincinnati Area, NCADD
 Alliance for Eating Disorders Awareness

Alliance for Recovery
 Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention, Inc.
 Alpha Project for the Homeless
 A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing)
 Anacostia Young Peoples Club
 Arizona Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors
 Arizona Council of Human Service Providers
 Arkansas Association of Substance Abuse Treatment Programs
 Association of Persons Affected by Addiction
 Association of Substance Abuse Programs of Texas
 Aspire of Western New York, Inc.
 Barbara Schneider Foundation
 Behavioral Health Services Association of South Carolina
 BRIDGEs, Madison County Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, Inc.
 Bucks County Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence
 Burke Council on Alcoholism & Chemical Dependency, Inc.
 California Association of Addiction Recovery Resources
 California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives
 California Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors
 Chautauqua Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Council (CASAC)
 Childrens Health Initiative
 Chemical Dependency Center of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Inc.
 Coalition of Louisiana Addiction Prevention and Service Providers
 Coastal Horizons Center, Inc.
 Colorado Association of Alcohol & Drug Service Providers
 Community and Family Resources
 Compassionate Women of the World
 Connecticut Association of Addiction Professionals
 Connecticut Association of Non-Profits
 Council on Addictions of New York State (CANYS)
 Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse for Greater New Orleans
 Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse of Sullivan County
 Council on Substance Abuse—NCADD
 The Council on Substance Abuse & Mental Health
 County Alcohol and Drug Program Administrators Association of California
 Dads and Daughters
 Delaware Association of Rehabilitation Facilities
 DePaul's National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence—Rochester Area
 Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance
 Detroit Recovery Project
 Division for Learning Disabilities of the Council for Exceptional Children
 Dora Weiner Foundation
 Drug and Alcohol Service Providers Organization of Pennsylvania
 Drug and Alcohol Treatment Association of Rhode Island
 The Elisa Project
 Employee & Family Resources, Inc.
 Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Inc.
 Exponents
 Faces and Voices of Recover—Greenville, SC
 Faces and Voices of Recovery—Pee Dee
 Faces and Voices of Recovery—South Carolina
 Faces and Voices of Recovery—Westchester
 Feeling Blue Suicide Prevention Center
 Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association

Focus on Community
 Friends of Delaware and Otsego Counties, Inc.
 Friends of Recovery—Monroe County
 Friends of Recovery—Vermont
 Gail R. Schoenbach/FREED Foundation
 Gateway Foundation
 Georgia Council on Substance Abuse
 GLAD House, Inc.
 Greater Flint Project Vox
 Greater Macomb Project Vox
 Gurze Books
 Hanley Center
 Harbor Hall, Inc.
 Hope4you
 Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association
 Indiana Association of Substance Abuse Providers
 Iowa Substance Abuse Program Directors Association
 Jawonio, Inc
 Kansas Association of Addiction Professionals
 Kingdom Recovery Center
 Kristin Brooks Hope Center
 Long Island Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence
 Maine Alliance for Addiction Recovery (MAAR)
 Maine Association of Substance Abuse Programs
 Maine Substance Abuse Foundation
 Maryland Addictions Directors Council
 Maryland Chapter of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence
 Maryland NAMA
 Massachusetts Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors
 Massachusetts Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors
 McHenry County Mental Health Board (IL)
 McShin Foundation
 Mental Health and Substance Abuse Corporations of Massachusetts
 Methadone Support Org.
 Michigan Association of License Substance Abuse Organizations
 Mississippi Association of Addiction Services
 Missouri Addiction Counselor Association
 Missouri Association of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Programs
 Missouri Recovery Network
 Missouri Recovery Network—Jefferson City Chapter
 Montana Addiction Service Providers
 Montana Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors
 M-Power, Inc.
 Mountain Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence
 Nantucket Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention, Inc.
 Nantucket Behavioral Health
 National Alliance on Mental Illness, Minnesota
 National Alliance on Mental Illness, Rhode Island
 NCADD, Greater Kansas City
 NCADD, Michigan
 NCADD, South Bay
 NCADD, Greater Detroit Area
 NCADD, Long Beach
 NCADD, Middlesex County Inc.
 NCADD, New Jersey
 NCADD, Northwest Florida
 NCADD, Orange County
 NCADD, Phoenix
 NCADD, Sacramento Region Affiliate
 NCADD, San Fernando Valley
 NCADD, Silicon Valley
 NCADD, St. Louis Area
 NCADD, Tulare County, Inc.
 National Council on Alcoholism/Lansing Regional Area, Inc.

Nebraska Association of Behavioral Health Organizations

Nevada Alliance for Addictive Disorders Advocacy, Prevention & Treatment Services
New England National Alliance of Methadone Advocates

New Hampshire Alcohol & Other Drug Service Providers Association

New York AIDS Coalition
NJ Advocates—NJ Chapter of NAMA
Nicks Place

North Carolina Association of Alcoholic Residential Facilities

North Carolina Substance Abuse Providers Association

North Dakota Addiction Treatment Providers Coalition

Northern California Chapter of the National Alliance of Methadone Advocates

Northern Michigan Project Vox
Northpointe Council, Inc.

Ohio Citizen Advocates for Chemical Dependency Prevention & Treatment

Ohio Council of Behavioral Healthcare Providers

Oklahoma Faces and Voices of Recovery
Oklahoma Substance Abuse Services Alliance

Ophelia's Place
Oregon Prevention, Recovery, and Education Association

PAR—People Advocating Recovery
Parent-To-Parent, Inc.

Pennsylvania Recovery Organization—Achieving Community Together (PRO-ACT)
Punkte de Vida

The RASE Project Buprenorphine Coordinator Program

Recovery Center
Recovery Consultants of Atlanta, Inc.

Recovery Resource Center
Volunteers of America Alaska

Royal Oak (Michigan) Save Our Youth Task Force

Recovery Resources
Rockland Council on Alcoholism and Other

Drug Dependence
Samaritan Village

Seaway Valley Prevention Council
The Second Road, Inc.

Society of Addiction Counselors of Colorado

South Carolina Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors

South Dakota Association for Addiction Professionals

South Dakota Council of Substance Abuse Providers

Spirit Works Foundation Center for the Soul

Substance Abuse and Addiction Recovery Alliance (SAARA) of Virginia

Substance Abuse Directors Association of Alaska

Substance Abuse Recovery Alliance of Utah

Suicide Awareness Voice of Education
Tennessee Association of Alcohol, Drug, &

Addiction Services
Townsend Recovery, LLC

Transformation Center
Turning Point Recovery Center

Upstate Cerebral Palsy (NY)
Utah Behavioral Healthcare Network

Vericare Management
Vermont Association of Drug & Alcohol

Programs
Virginia Association of Alcohol and Drug

Counselors
Virginia Association of Drug and Alcohol

Programs
Washington Association of Alcoholism &

Addiction Programs
Western Massachusetts School Substance

Abuse Counselors Association
West Virginia Association of Alcohol and

Drug Abuse Counselors, Inc.
MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA,

Alexandria, VA, February 27, 2008.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of Mental Health America and our 320 affiliates

across the country, I am writing to express our strong support for House passage of the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act of 2007, H.R. 1424, at the earliest possible date. House passage of this historic legislation is a critical step toward enactment this year of a strong mental health parity law.

Mental health conditions are the leading cause of disability in the U.S. for individuals ages 15–44, and a leading cause of premature death, implicated in 90% of the more than 30,000 suicides annually in this country. While scientific advances have led to the development of a range of effective treatments, millions of Americans who need mental health care are routinely denied access to those treatments, with often tragic results.

Despite a compelling body of science documenting that such practices are anachronistic and costly to employee health and to the “bottom line,” employer-sponsored health plans routinely continue to set strict, arbitrary treatment limits and financial requirements on mental health coverage, while imposing no such limitations, or far less onerous limitations, on coverage for other illnesses. It is shocking, more than 40 years after the passage of civil rights laws and 15 years after passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, that federal law still permits insurance discrimination on the basis of mental illness. Our polling has consistently shown that Americans abhor such discrimination and support the enactment of a strong mental health parity law. Congress can and must pass such legislation this year.

Please support improved access to needed mental health treatment. Please support H.R. 1424.

Sincerely,

DAVID L. SHERN,
President and CEO.

HONORING GEORGIA MILLER-MCCORKLE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Georgia Miller-McCorkle, who immigrated to the United States in 1980 from Trinidad, West Indies, where as a child she always excelled in school, getting merit cards along with excellent report cards. As a child, she was asked, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Her answer was always, “I want to be a teacher.”

At first, Ms. McCorkle settled in this country, got married, and raised five children: Sherwin, Vonetta, Fredericka, Tristan, and Robmesh. During that time, she worked at jobs fulfilling the basic home needs and helping to pay the bills, but something was missing.

Subsequently, she attended Brooklyn College, receiving her bachelor of arts, BA, degree in special education and her master's degree in special education from Long Island University. She joined the Department of Education in 1989, where her teaching skills included student-centered instruction, educational technology, parental involvement in student learning, critical thinking, individual learning plans, student motivation strategies, and active and meaningful learning activities.

Georgia Miller-McCorkle has worked with students from kindergarten through 12th grades, teaching science, music, and art, and was dean of students for 6 years. Further, she

counseled mild to profoundly mentally challenged young adults, supervising their daily activities and developing long- and short-term goals at a group home for mentally challenged adults for 3 years.

She provides cognitive and motor development skills for babies with developmental delays from birth to 3 years old in the Early Intervention Program and has been doing so for almost 12 years.

This remarkable woman is certified in: LSCI, Life Space Crisis Intervention; TCI, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention; FBA, Functional Behavioral Assessment; CPR, Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation; beginning sign language; and first aid.

Madam Speaker, it behooves us to recognize this woman who exhibits such passion for the teaching profession and still teaches the early childhood grades, K–2, enjoying her job to the fullest. She is indeed living out her dream.

MELISSA FUERST

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Melissa Fuerst of Blue Springs, Missouri. Melissa is a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, and earning the most prestigious award of Girl Scout Gold Award.

Melissa has been very active with her troop, participating in many scout activities. In order to receive the prestigious Gold Award, Melissa has completed all seven requirements that promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values and leadership skills.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Melissa Fuerst for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Girl Scout Gold Award.

HONORING DONNA EASTMAN

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Donna Eastman for reaching an important milestone as a public servant to the citizens of Callender, Iowa.

For the past 25 years, Donna, a life-long resident of Callender, has served as the city clerk. As city clerk of a small town, Donna performs many diverse tasks for the community. She handles the utilities, budget, public records, city water, sewer, garbage and electric fees. Donna also files information for the mayor and city council and serves as a liaison between city residents and their elected officials. She has a strong understanding of the needs and desires of the community. With her experience and knowledge of the town she has become the town's unofficial ambassador.

I know that my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in commending

Donna Eastman for her years of leadership and service to the people of Callender. I consider it an honor to represent her in the United States Congress and I wish her the best in her future endeavors.

HONORING TWO-TIME STATE
CHAMPION IOTA LADY BULLDOGS

HON. CHARLES W. BOUSTANY, JR.

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. BOUSTANY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Iota Lady Bulldogs basketball team, who again finished their season with a state championship after defeating Capitol 60–49 in strong fashion.

The March 1st win capped the season for Iota, who finished with an impressive 36–4 record. Even more remarkable, the Lady Bulldogs competed in the larger Class AAA for the first time. Capitol had previously dominated the class with five championships in the past 7 years. Over the course of their career, Iota's senior class won an impressive 225 games.

Madam Speaker, as a member of the House Education and Labor Committee, I applaud these student athletes who demonstrated a strong work ethic, determination, and teamwork. The people of Iota share their pride in this team and each of these girls who continue to play so admirably.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating the two-time champion Iota Lady Bulldogs for their latest achievement.

CALLING FOR PASSAGE OF THE
FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION ACT

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, two recent events make it clear—the time has come for Congress to enact a Federal media shield.

Yesterday, the House passed legislation to create an independent ethics panel with the stated purpose of holding Members of Congress accountable to the highest ethical standard. Our Founders would have scoffed at the notion that a political panel, appointed by politicians, could hold the national legislature accountable. Our Founders knew the only agency in society with the power to hold the national government accountable is a free and independent press.

Last year, the House acknowledged this fact and passed the Free Flow of Information Act, creating a Federal media shield, with overwhelming bipartisan support. That bill now awaits action by the full Senate. The need for action by the Senate is also evident with the news that another reporter is facing court sanctions based on her unwillingness to disclose confidential sources.

Former USA Today reporter Toni Locy is facing financial ruin as the result of a ruling that she must pay fines that will escalate to up to \$5,000 per day unless she discloses her confidential sources for stories she wrote about the 2001 anthrax attacks. Her case and

the need for greater ethics scrutiny in Congress argue forcefully for the need for a Federal media shield statute.

The one, time-tested way of holding the Government accountable is ensuring the free flow of information to the American people. Threatening reporters or creating an ethics panel of politicians to police politicians will not do it.

Congress must enact a Federal media shield to ensure that those charged with the duty of holding Government accountable have the freedom and independence to do just that.

It is time for the Senate to vote on the Free Flow of Information Act.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL
HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1424, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act. This legislation is named in tribute to Minnesota Senator Paul Wellstone, whose work on behalf of the vulnerable was well known and well respected.

I also rise to thank my colleague from Minnesota, Congressman JIM RAMSTAD, for continuing Senator Wellstone's fight on behalf of those who the stigma too often attached to the issues of mental health and substance abuse has left voiceless. Mr. RAMSTAD's courage in sharing his experience with substance abuse and his dedication to passage of this legislation is the reason we are here today. This bill will help end the pattern of senseless and immoral discrimination against those suffering from mental illness and put to rest the outdated notion that these challenges are less legitimate or severe than physical ailments.

Mental illness left untreated affects all facets of our society and costs our economy over \$150 billion annually. Mental illness affects 50 percent of the homeless population in Minnesota, 70 percent of those in our juvenile justice system, and those with the highest unemployment rates. Health care costs double when diabetes and heart disease patients have co-morbid depression, and patients with mental illness and substance abuse disorders are often less responsive to treatment.

In addition, the burden that mental illness places upon the health and productivity of our Nation has long been underestimated. One in five adults and one in ten children have a mental illness. And over one-third of our returning servicemembers from Iraq and Afghanistan suffer from mental health problems.

The costs of untreated substance abuse are also high for families and our health care system. Studies have shown that 1 in every 5 Medicaid dollars spent on hospital care is related to substance abuse; health care costs for those dependent on drugs or alcohol is 100 percent higher than those without an addiction; and the costs to law enforcement and to employers are significant. Treatment makes a difference. A recent study showed that after treatment, family health care costs dropped 50 percent.

H.R. 1424 requires parity with co-payments, deductibles, and out-of-pocket expenses, and requires that limits on mental health and addiction care are no more restrictive than those on physical health. This legislation requires equality in out-of-network care and ensures coverage for mental illness and substance related disorders included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, DSM.

It is time to pass this bill. We have all been affected in some way—ourselves, a family member, a friend, or colleague—by mental health or substance abuse. As we look to reform our health care system, mental health and physical care can no longer be looked at as separate entities. It is morally right and good for both our economy and our health care system. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for this important bill.

HONORING THE OCCASION OF THE
50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EU-
ROPEAN PARLIAMENT

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the creation of the European Parliament.

As chair of the U.S. delegation of the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue, I would like to congratulate the European Parliament on its remarkable evolution. Fifty years ago, it was a small assembly with non-elected members, just four official languages, and only consultative powers; today it is a directly elected parliament with members speaking 23 languages, wide decisionmaking powers over legislation and budgeting, as well as control and scrutiny of the European Commission. The Lisbon Treaty, which is currently awaiting ratification, could enlarge the powers of the European Parliament even further.

Members of the European Parliament have also broadened their sphere of influence beyond domestic European affairs, engaging vigorously in our Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue. That dialogue has contributed to bringing the European Union and the United States closer together and continues to be of utmost importance, enhancing national security and stimulating economic growth on both sides of the Atlantic. The Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue has held bi-annual interparliamentary meetings since 1972, when a U.S. congressional delegation visited the European Parliament for the first time. Over 60 meetings later, I am proud to have played a role in enhancing and strengthening the ties between the European Union and the United States.

As a long-time advocate of transatlantic relations, I was delighted to host our latest interparliamentary meeting this past October in Las Vegas. During our meeting, we discussed a number of important transatlantic issues, including regulatory initiatives under the Transatlantic Economic Council, the rise of global anti-Semitism, and foreign policy challenges, such as the Middle East, Kosovo, Russia, and China.

I look forward to continuing our transatlantic dialogue at the next TLD meeting—in Ljubljana, Slovenia in May—and to continue following the future development of the European Union. Fifty years after its birth, the European Parliament is growing stronger each

year, and I once again congratulate the Parliament and the European Union as a whole on its achievements.

HONORING TERESA KAY-ABA
KENNEDY

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognizing Teresa Kay-Aba Kennedy, a business and lifestyle expert who holds certifications in yoga, fitness, weight management and offers unique multidisciplinary approaches to an authentic, healthy and successful life. She has a dual B.A. magna cum laude in Sociology and Design from Wellesley College, an MBA from Harvard Business School, and a Ph.D. in World Religions. Born in Ghana, schooled in Australia and Italy, she comes from a family of high achievers. Her parents Janie Sykes-Kennedy and Dr. James Scott Kennedy were international media pioneers. Her great uncle, James Atkins, was a member of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Black Cabinet."

Nationally recognized as a motivational speaker and leader in wellness and empowerment, Dr. Kennedy is on the faculty of the Institute of Integrative Nutrition and is Chair of the Board and Interim President/CEO of Yoga Alliance—the non-profit organization that sets standards for yoga teaching in the United States and offers support to its registry of over 18,000 yoga teachers and almost 800 yoga studios.

After almost dying from Crohn's Disease ten years ago, she has personal experience with transformation serving as a role model for healthy living. Her mission is to help people from all walks of life live better lives and has worked with a variety of clients from senior executives and entrepreneurs to people with specific ailments, ranging from Asthma, Anorexia, Diabetes, Hypertension, Obesity, Adult ADD and Leukemia.

Dr. Kennedy has a long record of success in both the business and creative worlds consulting and writing case studies on Fortune 500 companies for Harvard Business School, working as a creative consultant for Universal Studios, and spending seven years as an executive at MTV Networks.

Her wellness and empowerment work has been featured in media around the world from CNN, NBC, Martha Stewart Living Radio, ARD TV in Germany to The New York Times, Yoga Journal, and O: The Oprah Magazine. Dr. Kennedy is the producer of the Power Living: Mini-Escapes relaxation CD, author of "40 Days to Power Living: Think Eat and Live on Purpose", "The Power Living Pledge: An Affirmation for a Purposeful and Powerful Life" as well as three case studies published under the Harvard Business School. She has received a number of awards, including The Network Journal's 40 Under Forty Achievement Award.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor to pay tribute to this outstanding woman who has an unparalleled career of leadership, motivation and dedication on behalf of others, Dr. Teresa Kay-Abe Kennedy deserves our profound thanks.

STACEY ELLIOTT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Stacey Elliott of Liberty, Missouri. Stacey is a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, and earning the most prestigious award of Girl Scout Gold Award.

Stacey has been very active with her troop, participating in many scout activities. In order to receive the prestigious Gold Award, Stacey has completed all seven requirements that promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values and leadership skills.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Stacey Elliott for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Girl Scouts Gold Award.

TRIBUTE TO THE WURZER FAMILY

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Duane, Joann, Kelli, Staci, Amy, Brooke and Andy Wurzer of Chickasaw County, Iowa for being named the 2007 Outstanding 4–11 Family.

Duane has been involved with the local 4–11 club by coaching softball, conducting service projects and helping with livestock projects. Joann has been a leader of the Lawler Lassies and Lads club for 16 years. All five of their children started in 4–11 as Little Clovers in the second grade. They have all held various leadership positions, earned awards for their efforts in a variety of areas, volunteered in numerous service projects and have had many projects selected at the Iowa State Fair.

4–H's mission is to "empower youth to reach their full potential, working and learning in partnership with caring adults." Duane and Joann have been compassionate adults who continue to strive to empower more children to reach their goals each day. As parents and mentors they have touched the lives of many children who have then gone on to inspire others, to continue the cycle for generations to come.

I know that my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in commending the Wurzer family's leadership and donation of time and talent for the benefit of Chickasaw County's youth. I consider it an honor to represent Duane, Joann, Kelli, Staci, Amy, Brooke, and Andy Wurzer in Congress and I wish them the best in their future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, due to family obligations in Arizona that required my attention, I missed the following votes and had I been present, I would have voted against rollcall vote No. 111, the Motion to Adjourn; rollcall vote No. 112, the Motion to Adjourn; rollcall vote No. 113, the Motion to Adjourn; and rollcall vote No. 114, the Motion to Adjourn.

I would have voted in favor of rollcall vote No. 115, H. Res. 924; rollcall vote No. 116, the Motion to Table the Appeal of the Ruling of the Chair; rollcall vote No. 117, the Vote to Override the President's Veto of H.R. 2082; rollcall vote No. 118, H. Res. 948; and rollcall vote No. 119, H. Res. 493.

I would have voted against rollcall vote No. 120, the Motion To Adjourn.

I would have voted in favor of rollcall vote No. 121, on Ordering the Previous Question; rollcall vote No. 122, H. Res. 1031; and rollcall vote No. 123, the Motion to Adjourn.

IN COMMEMORATION OF WOMEN'S
HISTORY MONTH

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I wish to commemorate the month of March 2008 as Women's History Month in honor of the female trailblazers and unsung heroes in American history.

Historically, women have contributed significantly to the greatness of our Nation. American women from diverse origins have transformed and revolutionized politics, law, business, social service, civil rights, education, music, athletics, science and technology, as well as the military. Together, their dedication, perseverance and courage has generated a wave of opportunities for entire generations of women. The contributions of notable women such as Susan B. Anthony, Clara Barton, Harriet Tubman, Dorothy Height, Coretta Scott King, Sally Ride and many others have sparked an unstoppable momentum for women's rights and others.

In government, trailblazers such as Hattie Wyatt Caraway, the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate (1932), and Jeannette Rankin, the first woman in Congress (1917), paved the way for 16 female Senators and 70 female Representatives to be elected to the 110th Congress, which is the highest number ever in congressional history. More importantly, the House of Representatives elected Nancy Pelosi, the first woman to serve as the third most powerful official in America. In the legal sector, women such as Arabella Mansfield Babb, the first woman admitted to the bar (1869), and Belva Ann Lockwood, the first woman to practice law before the U.S. Supreme Court (1879), have opened doors for women to enter the professional workforce as legal experts. Similarly, Lucy Brewer, the first woman marine (1812), inspired her predecessors to defend their Nation with pride and valor.

These women and many others are legends today. Therefore, it is essential that all Americans acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of women throughout our Nation's history. In addition, as America's arms stretch out across the seas, we must honor women in the international community that have challenged, changed and improved the condition of women and others in their native countries. That is why on March 8, 2008, America celebrated International Women's Day.

I urge my colleagues and all Americans to commemorate women for their contributions to the advancement of our great Nation.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call to the attention of my colleagues the 50th anniversary of the European Parliament—the legislative body of the European Union. It is a great pleasure to celebrate this very special day in the history of the European Union. Seldom in so short a period as 50 years do we have the opportunity to witness the birth and evolution of such an important democratic institution.

In the 25 years that I have served as a Member of the United States Congress, the European Parliament has undergone a dramatic transformation. It began as an institution whose members were appointed by national parliaments, and it played a minor role in the policy-making process. Today, the European Parliament is a truly democratic legislature whose members are elected by the popular vote of the people in all member states of the European Union. Furthermore, it has a key role in approving the members of the European Commission and in adopting the EU budget. As the United States Congress, the European Parliament also has significant responsibility for conducting oversight of EU executive governmental institutions.

Madam Speaker, the first half of the 20th century was marked by two bloody World Wars that devastated the European continent and produced deep divisions between European countries. World War I produced sharp national differences among the Europeans, which continued to fester even after that war was concluded. At the end of World War II, Europe was divided by the "Iron Curtain," which ideologically, and politically separated the continent's peoples. During the era of the Cold War, the unification of the Western and Eastern Germany seemed like an impossible dream let alone the unification of Western and Eastern Europe. However, the last half-century has seen the remarkable growth of an ever closer union of people and states.

Indeed, the success of the European Union has produced significant changes in the make up of Europe. The European Union began as an institution for economic cooperation among six Western European nations in 1951, but it has evolved into a political and economic union that now embraces 27 European nations, including 10 former communist states of Central and Eastern Europe. The European

Union has brought peace, stability and prosperity to almost 500 million people.

In 1951, Madam Speaker, the Treaty of Paris, which created the European Coal and Steel Community provided a minor rule for a Parliamentary Assembly. This body evolved and was institutionalized as the European Parliamentary Assembly in the Treaty of Rome that was signed seven years later. The Assembly held its first meeting on March 19, 1951, under the leadership of its first president and one of Europe's great visionaries, Robert Schuman. At that time the parliament was only a consultative body composed of 142 members appointed by the national parliaments of the member states. The members conducted their business in four official languages.

In 1962, the body became the European Parliament, and in 1979, its members were chosen for the first time through direct elections. Over time, treaty revisions have expanded the powers of the European Parliament over legislation, the budget and executive oversight. The European Parliament now has 785 members who work in 23 official languages, and it represents the 492 million citizens of the 27 member states of the European Union.

Madam Speaker, I am delighted that the United States House of Representatives has a cooperative working relationship with the European Parliament. For the last three decades, delegations of our respective legislatures have met twice a year to discuss our common goals and have endeavored to bring the United States and the European Union ever closer together. Currently this exchange—the Trans-Atlantic Legislators Dialog, TLD—is led on the United States side by Chairwoman SHELLY BERKLEY of Nevada and Vice Chairmen CLIFF STEARNS of Florida and JIM COSTA of California. The European Parliament delegation is ably led by Jonathan Evans, a member of the European Parliament from the United Kingdom.

Over the last half-century, Madam Speaker, the United States has worked with our European allies to promote democracy, the rule of law, free market economies and human rights around the world. The 50th anniversary of the European Parliament provides an excellent occasion for all of us to reflect upon our friendship with our colleagues in the European Parliament and to celebrate with them this successful trans-Atlantic cooperation. The ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon and the parliamentary elections in June 2009 should further reinforce the European Parliament's critical role in the European Union decision-making process. I congratulate the European Parliament on its first half-century and look forward to continued collaboration in the future.

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE LAURA HILL UPON BEING NAMED CITIZEN OF THE YEAR BY THE SOUTHLAKE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Honorable Laura Hill, a Southlake City Councilwoman, commu-

nity and civic leader, as recipient of the Citizen of the Year Award presented by the Southlake Chamber of Commerce.

Laura Hill has been a tireless public servant with a strong sense of stewardship to the entire Southlake community. Ms. Hill's public service truly speaks for itself. She is not only a City Councilwoman, but the Founder and President of SPARKS (Students and Parents Against Risks to Kids in Southlake), Co-founder and Vice President of the Southlake Angel Society, a member of the Southlake Historical Society, and a graduate of Southlake's DPS Citizens Academy and Southlake's fire rehab team. Somehow, she finds additional time for involvement in numerous other community organizations, as well.

Of the many examples of Ms. Hill's selfless service, one story in particular stands out. Not long ago, a Southlake firefighter had a baby with significant medical problems. Due to the high medical costs, the firefighter's family was struggling to keep up. Upon hearing about the situation Laura immediately volunteered and created a fund raiser with her friends. The event raised approximately \$16,000 entirely for the family of the Southlake firefighter.

Whether it is creating fund raisers for those in need, preserving the city's history, solving zoning problems, caring for the children in the community, or volunteering for the city's emergency response team, Ms. Hill is always willing to go above and beyond to serve her community.

I proudly commend the Honorable Laura Hill for her tireless passion and commitment to the betterment of Southlake, Texas. Many community members are grateful for her service and I congratulate her for receiving this prestigious award.

TAMARA CASH

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Tamara Cash of Kansas City, Missouri. Tamara is a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, and earning the most prestigious award of Girl Scout Gold Award.

Tamara has been very active with her troop, participating in many scout activities. In order to receive the prestigious Gold Award, Tamara has completed all seven requirements that promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values and leadership skills.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Tamara Cash for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Girl Scouts Gold Award.

HONORING SHEILA JOSEPH

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sheila Joseph, a native New

Yorker, daughter of Haitian immigrant parents and raised in public housing, Ms. Joseph conducted her undergraduate studies at the University of California at Berkeley where she double majored in psychology and legal studies, with a minor in education, earning her Bachelor of Arts degree in just three years. After graduating from Berkeley in 1994, Sheila began her legal studies at Georgetown University Law School in Washington, DC. While a student at Georgetown, she worked as a student attorney handling juvenile delinquency cases in the District of Columbia Superior Court.

Upon completing her legal studies in 1997, Ms. Joseph returned to her native New York and spent the next four years working as an attorney for indigent clients, first as a staff attorney with the Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, then as a law guardian with The Children's Law Center of New York. Based on her experiences as a law student and lawyer, she became increasingly frustrated by the limitations of the law as an instrument for empowering young people and communities. She determined that the best long term course was to be an educator and have a positive impact on children and impoverished communities.

In 2001, Sheila Joseph applied for, and was accepted into, the New York City Teaching Fellows Program and taught math and science at P.S. 40 in Queens while earning a Master of Science degree in Elementary and Early Childhood Education from Queens College. In September 2004, Ms. Joseph began a one-year residency with Building Excellent Schools, a prestigious and rigorous Boston-based program that trains and supports aspiring charter school founders. She founded the East New York Preparatory Charter School in August 2005.

East New York Prep, ENYP, opened its doors to 100 kindergarten and first grade students in September 2006 to ensure that boys and girls growing up in East New York would have the same opportunity for a good life as children in wealthier communities. ENYP's mission is to address the specific needs and challenges of children in East New York to ensure that students achieve or exceed grade-level mastery of academic content, knowledge and skills.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Sheila Joseph and her impressive accomplishments in academia. Her passion and concern for inner-city children's educational needs is noteworthy indeed.

ESTABLISHING AN OFFICE OF
CONGRESSIONAL ETHICS—CON-
TINUED

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2008

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House passed H. Res. 895, a resolution establishing an independent Office of Congressional Ethics within the House of Representatives. I believe it is a long overdue, although partial, step to protect the public trust and bring greater transparency and accountability to the people's House.

At the beginning of the 110th Congress, the Speaker said we must drain the swamp. We

made some changes to the House Rules and passed legislation that mandated more extensive limits on gifts and travel, greater disclosure of activities by lobbyists, helped slow the revolving door of Members of Congress and staff to lobbying on behalf of private interests and brought greater transparency to the earmark process. Yesterday, following painstaking drafts, we took further steps.

The scandals that have embroiled this institution over the last few years because of the unethical conduct of certain Members of Congress have eroded the faith that Americans have in our legislative branch of government. What has only deepened this cynicism is the belief that Congress does a very poor job in investigating the ethical lapses of its own Members. The contentious nature of the current ethics process has too often led to deadlock and an inability to truly investigate claims concerning Members of both parties. While I commend the leadership and the membership of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct for the work they have done under trying circumstances, it is clear that the process has been missing an independent voice that can help us get above the partisanship and rancor that too often accompany these types of investigations. This bill is a step toward creating that independent voice.

The legislation establishes an Independent Office of Congressional Ethics, composed of six members jointly appointed by the Speaker and the Minority Leader. Three of the members of the office will be nominated by the Speaker with the concurrence of the Minority Leader; three members would be nominated by the Minority Leader with the concurrence of the Speaker. The members, who cannot be current Members of the House, Federal employees or lobbyists, would serve four-year terms with one reappointment possible. The Office would have the ability to initiate review by written notice provided by two Office members, one of which must be appointed by the Speaker, the other by the Minority Leader. The Office would have the ability to refer a matter if three members affirmatively vote to move it to the Ethics Committee.

The legislation has the support of a number of groups that have called for strong reform of the ethics process, including Common Cause, U.S. PIRG and recognized public policy experts such as Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute and Thomas Mann at the Brookings Institute. They recognize that in the past, the principle of Congress policing itself has just not worked. They have played a vital role in making sure that today's resolution comes to a vote so that all of us live up to the oath of office we take the first day of every new Congress. I also want to commend the Speaker who has promised and delivered on her pledge to bring vigorous, ethical leadership to this institution. Without taking action, we will only allow public cynicism about government to continue to grow. This important resolution will bring real ethics reform to Congress. It will help reestablish the trust and confidence of the American people in this institution and in the principle of honest and open government.

PAUL WELLSTONE MENTAL
HEALTH AND ADDICTION EQUITY
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2008

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concerns with a provision contained in H.R. 1424, the "Paul Wellstone Mental Health Addiction and Equity Act of 2007." I find it ironic that the House passed a bill intending to provide access to treatment for those with mental illnesses, but did so at the expense of the pharmaceutical researchers who we look to treat many of these conditions.

This legislation provides for more than a 30-percent increase in Medicaid prescription drug rebates. This will do significant damage to domestic manufacturers. You read the headlines—one pharmaceutical company after another is laying off thousands of employees. This industry, like so many others in manufacturing, is facing significant challenges. We want these companies to continue to invest in America and create the research jobs, which find tomorrow's cures. We want to continue to be known as the innovators of the world, and we should not outsource this intellectual capital. Therefore, I urge that the bill's sponsors strike this provision from the bill at conference committee and look to find solutions that do not jeopardize American jobs.

HONORING 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF
HARRISVILLE LIONS CLUB

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate the members of the Harrisville Lions Club as they celebrate their 60th Anniversary this year.

For over half a century, the Harrisville Lions Club has been dedicated to helping the less fortunate. As a Lions Club, the organization is part of the world's largest service organization with over 1.3 million members worldwide.

They have provided aid for those in need, whether it is helping local residents obtain eyeglasses or assisting families after disasters. The Club has been involved in several children's programs, including supporting a camp for local blind children and sponsoring a drug poster program aimed to raise awareness among elementary students of the problems associated with drug use.

I commend Harrisville club president, Lion Connie Rider, for her leadership and dedication to the organization. I'd also like to recognize Lion Leroy Montgomery, who at the age of 99, remains a very active member of the Harrisville Lions Club. I applaud Mr. Montgomery for his lifetime of dedication to helping the less fortunate in his community. His efforts have certainly not gone unnoticed.

I hope my colleagues will join me at this time in recognizing the accomplishments of these individuals as well as all of the other members of the Harrisville Lions Club. Congratulations on 60 years of service.

TRIBUTE TO THE LEE COUNTY COALITION FOR A DRUG-FREE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

HON. CONNIE MACK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. MACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Lee County Coalition for a Drug-Free Southwest Florida for spreading awareness about the dangers of drug use and underage drinking at its second annual Drug House Odyssey. Over 10 community agencies have partnered with the Coalition to inform children, teenagers and parents about substance abuse at this year's event. Last year's Drug House Odyssey attracted over 3,000 students, teachers, and parents, and I'm confident that this year's event in Cape Coral will be an even bigger success.

For nearly 20 years, the Lee County Coalition has educated tons of thousands of students in Southwest Florida about substance abuse. From school visits to conferences, community celebrations to professional counselor training, the Lee County Coalition has been empowering teenagers and families to make the right choices about drug and alcohol use. Their work is just a vital part of what makes Southwest Florida a great place to live, work and visit.

The focus of the Lee County Coalition's annual Drug House Odyssey is prevention: teaching children and teenagers about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and encouraging them to make smart decisions about their health. It's appropriate that this year's event will be held during National Alcohol Awareness Month. The facts are staggering: according to a recent Florida Youth Substance Abuse survey, over 35 percent of teenagers in Lee County have reported using alcohol in the last 30 days; nationally, the average is 16 percent.

That's why the good work that the Lee County Coalition performs every day to help children and teenagers make smart decisions about drugs and alcohol is so important, and why I ardently support their mission.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege to represent the staff and volunteers of the Lee County Coalition for a Drug-Free Southwest Florida in Congress, and I wish them all the best at their second annual Drug House Odyssey.

HONORING DENISE JONES

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Denise Jones who was born and raised in Brooklyn. Ms. Jones' commitment to public service originated from her mother and role model, Rosalie Jones, who showed her the benevolence of charitable kindness to others. Her mother is currently a retired New York City public school teacher who served her community for dedicated thirty-five years.

Denise Jones started her career in human services seventeen years ago working with

MRDD at Catholic Charities as a per diem weekend counselor. Even though she held a printing job, she went to work at the Odyssey House as a counselor making half the salary. She remembers saying that the moment she took that job, she knew it was her life's work.

Ms. Jones has worked with the following agencies: Project Return now known as Padilla; FEGS; The Fortune Society; AHRC; PSI Samaritan; The Partnership for the Homeless with the United Way of New York City; Innerforce; CAMBA and Ella Place. Denise has worked with youth at risk for incarceration, substance abuse MICA patients, mentally-challenged and ill, ex-offenders, senior citizens, homeless, people that suffer with HIV and AIDS.

She has been honored in the New York Nonprofit Press May 2007 issue as "Hero of the Year" and by the Elliot Tomlin Foundation with the vision award for outstanding community service. Denise Jones has marched on Washington to represent all the people that has died from lack of funding for HIV and AIDS research for a cure. Moreover, she is a certified rapid HIV tester and has completed a WORC program at Columbia University that addresses the delivery of vocational services for consumers with serious mental health conditions.

Denise attends a food and hunger conference to support world food aid once a year and currently serves Community Board #5 as a cabinet member. Dedicating her life to addressing social problems and assisting in reconstructing individual lives is Denise Jones' life's work and even now, she is working as a project coordinator on a SPICE pilot program to reduce disparities in childbirth through education and support services.

Madam Speaker, it is incumbent upon this body to acknowledge Denise Jones' achievements and her spirit of volunteerism on behalf of the betterment of our community.

EMILY BUNGE

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Emily Bunge of Saint Joseph, Missouri. Emily is a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, and earning the most prestigious award of Girl Scout Gold Award.

Emily has been very active with her troop, participating in many scout activities. In order to receive the prestigious Gold Award, Emily has completed all seven requirements that promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values and leadership skills.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Emily Bunge for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Girl Scouts Gold Award.

TRIBUTE TO JO ANN FORNEY

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise today to honor an extraordinary public servant, Jo Ann Forney. Ms. Forney has contributed thirty plus years of love and concern to her community in East Orange, New Jersey. Prior to attending Rutgers University, Ms. Forney worked at Western Electric and at the Conmar Zippers Factory as an assembler. She also worked at Bell Telephone as a toll operator.

After graduating from Rutgers, Ms. Forney became a Family Enabler for Family Life Education Center. There she became a substance abuse counselor and worked part-time on weekends and holidays at Orange Memorial Hospital as a switchboard operator.

Finally, Ms. Forney worked as a social worker at United Hospitals and later she became a valued employee of the East Orange Board of Education at the Enrollment Center for the past 10 years.

Madam Speaker, I invite my colleagues here in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in honoring Ms. Forney as she leaves the East Orange Board of Education, and in expressing appreciation for her hard work and dedication. I am proud to honor Ms. Forney and I wish her never-ending success in her future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO BUSINESS EXECUTIVES FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, let me take this opportunity to publicly recognize the contributions of Business Executives for National Security (BENS). Founded in 1982 by business executive and entrepreneur Stanley A. Weiss, BENS is guided by the simple notion that America's security is everybody's business. BENS has become a highly respected national, nonpartisan organization of senior executives dedicated to enhancing our national security using the successful models of the private sector.

The innovative business-government partnerships that BENS has fostered over the past two decades are uniquely positioned to help meet the new challenges of the 21st century. BENS is expanding these public-private partnerships into all aspects of homeland security—tracking terrorists' financial assets, securing the Nation's ports, and preparing State and local governments to deal with catastrophic events or terrorist attacks.

Business Executives for National Security has provided decades of distinguished service to the Nation through a variety of programs. These include advocating for a more modern and agile fighting force, safeguarding and destroying nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons in the former Soviet Union, and creating innovative partnerships around the country in which civic-minded companies volunteer their assets and employees to assist local and

state governments in responding quickly and efficiently during an emergency or terrorist attack.

Madam Speaker, I know the Members of the House will join me in commending Business Executives for National Security for their commitment in support of our national security interests.

SALUTING PHIL COHEN, "MR. BROOKLYN CENTER," ON A LIFETIME OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. RAMSTAD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a very special government, business and civic leader in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, Phil Cohen.

Phil's long career in public service has been guided by former Vice President Hubert Humphrey's fundamental principle: "The moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped."

Phil has truly lived up to those lofty aspirations. I want to thank Phil Cohen for his many decades of public service to the people of our area—and wish him a happy 80th birthday.

Phil Cohen, "Mr. Brooklyn Center," is one of a kind—a friend to all and a dynamic whirlwind of economic, civic and charitable activity. His personal motto is: "It's important for each generation to leave society in a better state than they found it." Madam Speaker, Phil Cohen has done that and then some.

He is truly an inspiration. The Philip Q. Cohen Room at the Brooklyn Center Community Center attests to the magnitude of his giving.

There are many reasons Phil is known as "Mr. Brooklyn Center." From 1960 to 1990, at various times he served as Mayor and on the City Council and School Board. He has held leadership positions with the Metropolitan Council, the League of Minnesota Cities and many more community organizations.

There is no cause or community organization, from the Lions and Rotary to the North Metro Mayors Association, Chamber of Commerce and Babe Ruth Baseball, which has not been touched by his energy and his heart. Phil helped create the Brooklyn Center Crime Prevention Association and the Brooklyn Center Charitable Foundation.

Whether it is helping the Brooklyn Center Police Department obtain life-saving equipment; rescuing the Brooklyn Center High School Band program, which includes many students from disadvantaged families; helping local youth baseball; making every imaginable non-profit and civic group more viable and effective; mentoring a young person in leadership and public service; or just being there for someone in need, Phil Cohen has done it all.

I have personally long relied on Phil's wise counsel. As a young Congressman arriving in Washington, I appreciated Phil's guidance on the ways of our Nation's Capitol. Phil was always there to counsel. As Legislative Assistant to former U.S. Senator Dave Durenberger for a decade, Phil shared his expertise with

me, and my constituents have been the beneficiaries.

Madam Speaker, I want to wish Phil Cohen a most joyous 80th birthday for his inexhaustible spirit of public service and all the good he has done for the people of Brooklyn Center. Phil truly is "Mr. Brooklyn Center."

HONORING YVONNE GRAHAM

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Brooklyn's Deputy Borough President, Yvonne Graham who has been a pioneer in the area of public health for over 20 years. As Brooklyn's Deputy Borough President, Ms. Graham oversees health care policy and all human services for the borough president. Her vision was critical to the 2005 founding of Brooklyn's first Center on Health Disparities, which works to reduce cardiovascular disease, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, infant mortality, asthma, and diabetes among minority communities. This center is part of an innovative partnership with the SUNY Downstate Medical Center and the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health.

In an effort to increase the number of women in leadership positions in government, business, and industry. Ms. Graham spearheaded the Women's Leadership Initiative, a partnership between academic institutions, government agencies, community-based organizations, and the private sector that brings women together for dialogue and networking.

Born and raised in Jamaica, West Indies, she moved to New York in 1979 working as a registered nurse in the emergency room of Brookdale Hospital. She holds a bachelor's degree in health administration and community health from St. Joseph's College and a master's degree in public health from Hunter College. In addition, she completed the Executive Program in business administration at Columbia University School of Business and an honorary doctor of law degree conferred on her by St. Joseph's College, her alma mater.

Yvonne Graham has written and published many professional articles and has recently co-authored a textbook that serves as a seminal guide to the operations and management of community-based health organizations and their role in improving health outcomes.

She has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors: YWCA's Women of Distinction Award; National Association of Black Social Workers' Public Citizen of the Year Award; the Frederick Douglass Medal of Honor awarded by the New York State Governor to distinguished Africans-Americans; the American Lung Association's Distinguished Award for Leadership, Creativity, and Caring in Promotion of Community Health; and the Harriet Tubman Award.

Madam Speaker, Ms. Graham's record of public service has continuously demonstrated a level of altruistic dedication and today we should recognize this outstanding woman.

EMILY BECKER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Emily Becker of Blue Springs, Missouri. Emily is a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, and earning the most prestigious award of Girl Scout Gold Award.

Emily has been very active with her troop, participating in many scout activities. In order to receive the prestigious Gold Award, Emily has completed all seven requirements that promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values and leadership skills.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Emily Becker for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Girl Scout Gold Award.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO NAME THE NEW CENSUS BUREAU HEADQUARTERS

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill with my colleagues Mr. WYNN, Mr. HOYER, Mrs. HOLMES NORTON, Mr. TOM DAVIS, Mr. TURNER, Mr. HONDA, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, and Mr. COHEN to name the new Census Bureau Headquarters building for Founding Father, Thomas Jefferson. The Founding Fathers' recognition of the need for fully representative government which put power in the hands of the people was unprecedented at the time of the Constitution's adoption. The modern decennial census is a uniquely American invention. Naming the Census Bureau Headquarters for Thomas Jefferson, who oversaw the first national census, underscores this historic contribution.

ESTABLISHING AN OFFICE OF CONGRESSIONAL ETHICS

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2008

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the Democratic majority's commitment to ethics reform. In the first 100 hours of this Congress, we adopted vital new rules ushering in a new era of openness and fiscal responsibility. We then reformed lobbying practices, and this year many of us voluntarily will reduce and disclose our earmark requests. To continue this commitment to transparency in government, I am pleased to support H. Res. 895 and the creation of an independent, bipartisan Office of Congressional Ethics.

A smooth functioning and credible ethics process is critical for both the reputations of individual members of Congress and for the future of the institution itself. I have consistently supported reform of the existing process. At the beginning of 2007, my colleague GREG WALDEN and I reintroduced legislation, the "Ethics Reform Act," which abolishes the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct and establishes a fully independent ethics review process. This plan gives oversight authority to a panel of former Members, and empowers the independent office to oversee the actions and filings of lobbyists and offices.

While the measure we consider today differs significantly from my bill, the spirit behind it is the same. If the intent of having members of Congress sit in judgment of their colleagues is to provide both a Constitutional check on impropriety and maintain public confidence in the institution, then I believe the present system has failed both the test of timely justice and of public opinion. Vesting the power of preliminary investigation with an independent board can lift the day-to-day work above partisanship and still keep any punishment of violators safely within the purview of the Congress. I believe a more independent process will provide greater fairness for both Members under review and for the public that demands greater accountability.

The bill before us today initiates the changes that many of us seek and our constituents demand. Ultimately, I would like to see reform that fully removes sitting Members from the task of investigating their peers, and that instead gives that authority to independent individuals with a firsthand understanding of Congress. However I remain profoundly encouraged with the progress we have made on the issue of Congressional accountability. Instituting the independent ethics mechanism as outlined in this bill will benefit Congress, and ultimately, the American people.

HONORING MARGOT WRIGHT

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, I stand here today to honor and remember a civic leader, champion for worker's rights, loving mother and grandmother—Margot Wright.

Margot passed away on Saturday, March 8, 2008.

She was born in Mansfield, Ohio. She attended the Ohio State University, and remained an enthusiastic Buckeye's football fan throughout her life.

In 1967, she moved to California and came to my hometown of Rialto. Here she began a long career as a tax-collections worker in San Bernardino County. Margot soon became an integral part of the Rialto community. She volunteered her time and home to feed overworked police and firefighters, help keep score at little league baseball games, and at the same time raised two wonderful children as a single parent.

During her career, Margot became very involved with her local union. She held numerous terms as president of the San Bernardino Public Employees Association, the union that

represents most San Bernardino County workers and counts over 11,000 members.

Margot was known as a fighter, someone who took her union duties seriously and stood up to protect her fellow employees.

I had the great privilege of getting to work with Margot firsthand in the community. Even just a few years ago, she was still an outspoken advocate for her community—when in 2005, she helped lead the support for the Rialto Police Department during their battle to keep the city from contracting with the County Sheriff's Department.

Margot is survived by her son Todd, who is a retired Rialto police officer, her daughter Terri, and three grandchildren.

Let us take the time to pay tribute to this wonderful woman. Let us celebrate the life she lived and the example she led.

Although she is no longer with us, Margot's legacy and spirit will continue to live on through the lives of everyone she has touched. The thoughts and prayers of my wife Barbara, my family and I are with her family at this time.

IN HONOR OF W.L. "CORKY" BURR

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Trooper W.L. "Corky" Burr of the Missouri State Highway Patrol, one of four state troopers nationally to be nominated for the 2007 International Association of Police Chiefs' Trooper of the Year Award. Although I am disappointed to learn that Trooper Burr did not win the award, I want to take this opportunity to honor him and his service to our community. I also extend my congratulations to the winner of the Trooper of the Year Award, New York State Trooper Amanda Reif.

Trooper Burr's actions last August in Neosho, Missouri, are testament to his skill and training as a Missouri State Trooper. On August 12, 2007, a tragic shooting spree occurred in my district at the First Congregational Church in Neosho, Missouri. That shooting left three people dead and several others seriously injured. Trooper Burr arrived at the scene, along with officers from the Neosho Police Department and the Newton County Sheriff's Office, and joined a team of other experienced officers schooled in special weapons and tactics. As they entered the sanctuary of the church, they found a man holding a female hostage at gunpoint, with around 30 members of the congregation positioned around him. Three victims were found lying on the floor mortally wounded and five others critically injured. During a tense confrontation between the suspect and the officers, Trooper Burr was able to calm the gunman, leading to his surrender and allowing the officers to take him into custody.

I had the privilege to meet with Trooper Burr and the other brave law enforcement officers shortly after this tragic event and personally thank them for their heroic actions to save the lives of the others in the church that day. I am proud today to honor Trooper "Corky" Burr for his well deserved nomination for Trooper of the Year, his dedication to his profession and his service to our community, and ask my col-

leagues in the House to join me in doing the same.

HONORING DR. MONICA DWECK

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Monica Dweck, a native New Yorker who graduated from Hunter College High School and then attended Princeton University. However, after working for several years, she decided to attend medical school at the State University of New York at the Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn, New York. Upon graduation, she interned at Hartford Hospital in Connecticut, a large Level I trauma hospital. She returnee, to New York City to do her residency in Ophthalmology at The New York Eye and Ear Infirmary where she was the first African-American woman in their 180-year history.

Her fellowship In Oculoplastic, Reconstructive and Orbital Surgery was done at the Cleveland Clinic and she was the first woman of color in the entire country to receive this type of fellowship training. She then entered private practice in Pennsylvania for several years. Dr. Dweck was soon recruited back to SUNY Downstate Medical Center to create an Oculoplastic Surgery curriculum for the Ophthalmology Residency Program there and to become Director of the Oculoplastic Surgery Service. A few months after her arrival, she was asked to run the Ophthalmology Residency Program. In 2005, Monica was appointed Vice-Chair and Program Director for the Department of Ophthalmology.

Dr. Dweck has held many leadership positions locally, regionally, nationally and has chaired several committees at SUNY Downstate Medical Center. She was elected to the Board of Directors of the New York State Ophthalmological Society and also the Brooklyn Ophthalmological Society, where she served as President.

In 2001, she was appointed by the New York State Board of Regents to the New York State Board of Medicine. Dr. Dweck was elected Chairperson-Elect of the National Medical Association—Ophthalmology Section In 2005.

Dr. Monica Dweck has lectured on national and international levels and has several research abstracts and book chapters. She has received numerous awards over the years, including a listing in the Castle-Connelly "Top Doctors in the New York Metro Area" annually since 2000 and Strathmore's Who's Who.

Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to recognize Dr. Dweck's remarkable career and selfless dedication to medical research. She is distinguished member of the Brooklyn medical community.

ELIZABETH CRUZ

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Elizabeth Cruz of Liberty,

Missouri. Elizabeth is a very special young woman who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Girl Scouts of America, and earning the most prestigious award of Girl Scout Gold Award.

Elizabeth has been very active with her troop, participating in many scout activities. In order to receive the prestigious Gold Award, Elizabeth has completed all seven requirements that promote community service, personal and spiritual growth, positive values and leadership skills.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Elizabeth Cruz for her accomplishments with the Girl Scouts of America and for her efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Girl Scout Gold Award.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT, OFFENDER SUPERVISION, PAROLE, AND PUBLIC DEFENDER EMPLOYEES EQUITY ACT OF 2008

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, today Congressman TOM DAVIS (R-VA) and I introduced a bill that will correct a long overdue oversight affecting the non-judicial employees of the D.C. Courts, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, CSOSA, and the D.C. Public Defender Service, PDS.

Under the 1997 National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997, the Federal Government took over the operation of the District of Columbia Courts and related services making the non-judicial employees of the D.C. Courts and the employees of CSOSA Federal employees. In 1998, employees of PDS were similarly transferred as part of the District of Columbia Courts and Justice Technical Collections Act. As Federal employees, these court, CSOSA and PDS employees were brought under the Federal Retirement Program, FERS. However, for the employees transferred in 1997 and in 1998, "creditable service" for the purposes of determining when they would be eligible to retire and the amount of annuity they would be entitled to under FERS only began from the date of the transfer. That is, the 1997 and 1998 laws made no provision for treating their year of service as court and related services employees prior to these laws as creditable service for retirement.

Accordingly, the bill we introduced today will amend these laws to require that the time served by these employees before 1997 will count towards their overall Federal retirement eligibility as "creditable service." So for example, if an employee is 60 years old today and has worked 20 years (i.e., since 1985) for the D.C. Courts, under our bill he would be eligible for Federal retirement today (whereas without our bill he would have to work another 12 years).

I should also note that to avoid the problem of "double dipping," since the employees are still entitled to their D.C. retirement benefits

(based upon their work status up until 1997), our bill does not count the pre-1997 years spent as D.C. government employees towards the amount of Federal retirement annuity an employee is eligible to receive.

However, it is only fair and just that the court and related services employees who started their jobs with the expectation that would be able to retire without penalty after 20 years of service or more should be allowed to do so. Our bill today does just that, it restores their "lost time."

CELEBRATING THE GRANADA THEATER

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Granada Theater located in Mt. Vernon, Illinois, as the community celebrates its 70th anniversary.

The Granada Theater was designed in 1937 by the Boller Brothers and was recently reopened to the public with a weekend long celebration. Many wonderful memories were shared by community members who recalled the original theater and several great movie classics. The announcement that Pearl Harbor had been attacked and the first air conditioning system in the theater were among many unforgettable memories. However, one of the greatest memories that will be shared for years to come was created that night with the relighting of the marquee.

Countless hours of hard work and dedication from community members, along with local businesses, came together to make this celebration possible. Along with the memories shared there were theatrical performances, and the first movie was shown in the renovated theater. The renovated theater is intended to be used for other community events, such as dinner theaters and wedding receptions.

I am pleased to congratulate the Granada Theater on its 70th anniversary celebration.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RON KLEIN

OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I submit a record of how I would have voted on Tuesday, March 11, when I was unavoidably detained. Had I voted, I would have voted "no" on rollcall No. 120.

HONORING GLORIA CHESTNUT

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Gloria Chestnut, a native of Wash-

ington, DC, whose lifelong dream was to further her education. However, she was faced with a critical decision, as she was a single mother, sole provider in her home and yet would have to learn to cope with the challenges of being a student with homework as well as being a full-time breadwinner. Yet she did just that, beginning her amazing journey at the age of 45.

In 1988, Gloria did continue her educational dream by enrolling in Medgar Evers College and was still a liberal arts student there when she retired from the U.S. Postal Service after 27 years of service. She began an introspective search into what would ultimately be her true calling. After graduating with an associates degree from Medgar Evers College, she entered the Graduate Center CUNY B.A./B.S. program and began classes at Brooklyn College in 1995.

It was there in 1997 during a class in the radio and television masters program, when a fellow classmate shared his experience with Brooklyn Community Access Television, BCAT, that she realized her future potential. Here she was, a 67-year-old mother, grandmother of seven, and a great-grandmother of two found a career in the arts through the venues of film, video, radio, and television. Gloria volunteers much of her time assisting producers with their productions as well as editing her own weekly show at BCAT. She produces weekly shows that reflect spirituality: "Expressions of Faith" and "Expressions of Faith Ministries" are programs that explore faith and the healing power of prayer.

Gloria Chestnut is a member of various organizations: GAMA, Grandmothers As Mothers Again; United Parents For Justice; Church Women United; JPAC, Jewish Association for Services for the Aged; NCNW, National Council of Negro Women; AARP Brooklyn Chapter #180; St. Gabriel and Ft. Greene Senior Centers; JASA, Institute for Senior Actions, as a former volunteer cameraperson for Jazz 966 and Jazzy Jazz. As an independent producer, Gloria has numerous productions to her credit: Aids in the Black Church; The Messiah Is Coming; The Real Life of Harriet Tubman; Malachi Roots Revisited; Mighty Men in the Bible; and many more.

Madam Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the accomplishments of Gloria Chestnut as she offers her talents and services for the betterment of our community. Since 1999 she has been rewarded the Hardy Smallwood Foundation Community Service Award, first place PEGASY Religious Import Award, third place in the Alliance for Community Media/Northeast Region Festival, Women's History Month Access Fund Award, Bethune Recognition Award for Loyal and Faithful Service, and the International Library of Photography Editor's Choice Award.

Madam Speaker, Gloria Chestnut is a remarkable woman who demonstrates that she has reinvented the wheel as a senior citizen with a wonderful second career as a video producer.

RECOGNIZING THE SECOND ANNUAL CESAR CHAVEZ CITIZENS MARCH

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the second annual Cesar Chavez Citizens March in my hometown of Flint, Michigan. The March will be held on March 29th to coincide with the 81st birthday of Cesar Chavez.

The Hispanic Latino Collaborative of Genesee County is sponsoring the Citizens March. The March will start on the campus of the University of Michigan-Flint, proceed down Chavez Drive, and conclude back on campus with a luncheon and reception. A fundraiser to help the United Farm Workers will be held in conjunction with the March.

Flint Michigan was the first community in the Nation to pay tribute to Cesar Chavez by naming a street in his honor 21 years ago. Cesar Chavez was an indefatigable fighter for the rights of migrant workers. He founded the National Farm Workers Association and the United Farm Workers. His 5-year nonviolent boycott against California grape growers attracted international attention and led to the signing of the first union contract with the United Farm Workers. In 1994, one year after his death, Cesar Chavez was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Hispanic Latino Collaborative of Genesee County for bringing to the forefront the life and work of Cesar Chavez, and keeping his memory alive for future generations. Cesar Chavez changed the world for the better and his life is an inspiration to all persons seeking justice, parity, and enhanced working conditions for everyone.

RECOGNIZING THE CENTRAL FLORIDA BALLET

HON. TOM FEENEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. FEENEY. Madam Speaker, the Central Florida Ballet's "Children Series," has created a performance in tribute to all who suffered in the 9/11 tragedy. This moving performance of "9/11—An American Moment" not only pays tribute to the men and women who tragically lost their lives that fateful September day, but also stirs our patriotism.

Performed by children, the performance captures the poignancy of tested and proven American courage, resolve and pride in response to the World Trade Center attack.

Central Florida Ballet is the only company in the Nation to have choreographed a ballet based on this fateful day in American history. They chose to approach this complex subject motivated by two strong reasons: first to educate; and second to pay tribute to the thousands of victims.

The performance is emotionally stirring. Some scenes contain live recordings of the events that unfolded that fateful morning. The

end, however, is both patriotic and uplifting. Our national anthem is played and the audience rises and sings in unison with the performers.

I could not be prouder of our Orange County students and professionals for their dedication and respect in putting together this production. Together we honor part of our heritage as an American people.

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK

SPEECH OF

HON. RALPH REGULA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 4, 2008

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, the Everglades National Park plays a major role in preserving an important ecosystem in the State of Florida. The Everglades act as a natural filter that helps provide fresh water to major cities in Florida. In a time when water is becoming an increasingly valuable resource, protecting this area for its natural filtering benefits is vital. While I was chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee responsible for funding the programs that will restore the Everglades, I made sure that this task received the support that it needed. I again stand today in support of the Everglades and the Everglades National Park, an area that plays a vital role that is key to restoration of this ecosystem.

HONORING DR. MYRAH BROWN GREEN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the accomplishments of Dr. Myrah Brown Green, who is currently an Adjunct/Assistant Professor of Art History at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, New York. She is an Art Historian, Fiber/Surface Designer and a Professional Quilt Artist and has been the Program Director of the Crown Heights Youth Collective in Brooklyn for the past thirty years.

Her quilts are in a number of private collections including the homes of personal collectors and academic institutions. "At the Cross" has been acquired by the Smithsonian's Anacostia Museum in Washington, DC. Myrah's quilt exhibitions include one woman shows at the Cacciloa and Back Room Galleries in New York. Other shows include the national traveling exhibit, Textural Rhythm: Constructing the Jazz Tradition, Threads of Faith, at the American Bible Society, Open House at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, Parallel Threads at the New England Quilt Museum, Six Continents of Quilts through the American Craft Museum at the Payne Webster Gallery in New York.

In addition to her remarkable career in quilts, Myrah teaches both art and history along with quilting techniques within a variety of art programs and academic institutions. Her tenure as a docent at the Brooklyn Museum of

Art from 1999–2006 afforded her the opportunity to perform tours in galleries of Africa, Native America, 18th and 19th Century period rooms and American and European paintings. Her quilts appear in a number of quilt publications including Fiber Art Magazine, Spirit of the Cloth: Contemporary African American Quilts, Threads of Faith and Textural Rhythms: Constructing the Jazz Tradition. She is also the author of African Rhythms, a chapter included in the book, Rodale's Successful Quilting Library: Choosing Quilting Designs. Currently, Dr. Green has written a book entitled, "Pieces of a World: Foundation Pieced Symbols From Around the Globe" that is due to appear on book shelves later this year.

Myrah's Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Studies with a focus in Art History is themed: The Presence of African Symbols in Modern Art. She created a lecture entitled, The Presence of World Symbols in Quilt Making, which was presented at the Storytellers in Cloth Conference, Connecticut, the Museum of the American Folk Art, Pratt Institute, New York and the Cheik Anta Diop Conference in Pennsylvania. Dr. Myrah Brown Green is a member of the Quilter's Guild of Brooklyn, the American Quilt Study Group, the Studio Art Quilt Association, Chairperson of Women of Color Quilters Network, Inc. Finally, she is the Director and Co-Founder of "Tell Mama Now" a mentoring program for girls interested in Art and Art History.

Madame Speaker, it is important for us to recognize the successful endeavors of Dr. Myrah Brown Green and her talented gifts as an inspirational quilter. I am pleased to congratulate her today.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CLAUDINE WILLIAMS

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my longtime friend Claudine Williams, Chairman of Community Affairs at Harrah's Las Vegas and congratulate her for being honored by the American Heart Association for her contributions and support of promoting heart health for women.

Ms. Claudine Williams has been an exemplary citizen and businesswoman since she and her husband Shelby moved to Nevada in 1964. Claudine serves on countless boards of directors in Las Vegas and the State of Nevada including the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce and Nevada State Commission on Tourism. For her service and generosity to the community, Claudine was inducted into the Nevada Business Hall of Fame at the University of Nevada Las Vegas in 2004.

In addition to her many professional successes, Claudine has earned numerous accolades from her peers and other notable organizations. Among those many awards and honors, Claudine has been named Humanitarian of the Year by the Muscular Dystrophy Association (1998), Educator of the Year by the Nevada Hospitality Foundation (2002), and Woman of the Year by the Nevada Dance Theater (1996). Claudine has also established endowment scholarships for education at the William F. Harrah School of Hotel Administration at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

She was honored by the university in 1990 with the dedication of the Claudine Williams Residence Hall.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to recognize my good friend Claudine. Her hard work and efforts on behalf of the community should be emulated. I applaud Claudine Williams on her success and I wish her the best in her future endeavors.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND
CLIMATE CHANGE**

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize that Americans took 10.3 billion trips on public transportation in 2007, and recognize the significant impact public transit use can have on improving the environment. This growth in transit usage represents a 2.1 percent increase over 2006, and is the highest level of transit ridership our country has experienced in the past 50 years. In the last decade alone, public transportation use has been more than double the growth rate of the population and up substantially over the growth rate for vehicle miles traveled on our Nation's highways for that same period. The American public has proven that riding transit—especially at such record levels—helps relieve congestion in our crowded cities, addresses climate change and energy independence, and improves the daily lives of our citizens.

Public Transportation and its relationship to the environment is further explored in a new study from the Transportation Research Board and the Division on Earth and Life Studies of the National Research Council entitled "Potential Impacts of Climate Change on U.S. Transportation" (Special Report 290). This report highlights the consequences of climate change for the infrastructure and operations of U.S. transportation. Specifically, the report provides an overview of the scientific consensus on those current and future climate changes of particular relevance to U.S. transportation; identifies potential impacts on all transportation modes; examines adaptation options; and offers recommendations for both research and actions that can be taken to prepare for climate change.

The report also summarizes important strategies for reducing transportation-related emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂)—the primary greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. Currently, public transportation plays a vital role in reducing emissions because it produces less carbon monoxide, fewer volatile organic compounds, and nearly half as much carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxides for every passenger mile traveled as compared to traveling with private vehicles. Using public transportation helps the Nation save 1.4 billion gallons of gasoline every year, the equivalent of 108 million cars filling up, about 300,000 tanks of gas each day. If Americans rode transit at the rate of 10 percent of daily travel, the U.S. would reduce its dependence on oil imported from the Persian Gulf by more than 40 percent.

For these reasons and more, I support public transportation and pledge to continue the

strong Federal partnership with our local communities in providing the necessary resources to offer even more citizens the opportunity to choose transit for their daily commutes. Increased Federal support for public transportation will only further the national goals of addressing climate change, reducing our dependency on foreign oil, and renewing our commitment to environmental stewardship.

**PAYING TRIBUTE TO PENDER
RHYNES**

HON. JON C. PORTER-

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Pender Rhynes, a retired Chief Master Sergeant for the United States Air Force.

Pender Rhynes was born on June 23, 1945 in Campbellton, Florida. After graduating high school in 1963, Pender joined the United States Air Force, where he served twenty-six and a half years before retiring. He served five different stateside tours and three overseas tours, including the Vietnam War. During the Vietnam War, Pender was a team leader and he was responsible for making major repairs on many F-105 Fighter-Bomber aircraft. He also worked with F-117A Stealth Fighters at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada. When Pender retired from the United States Air Force, he had earned the Rank of Chief Master Sergeant, which is the highest attainable enlisted rank in the U.S. Air Force.

Since his retirement, Pender has worked for the State of Nevada Unemployment Insurance Claims Office in Las Vegas. He has worked there as a Career Enhancement Program Representative and has since been appointed manager. He has achieved some of the highest production ever, helping thousands of Nevadans receive the training they need to attain successful employment. Pender is married to Gloria Olds and they have two sons, Anthony and Phillip. Pender also is the proud grandfather of seven wonderful grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Pender Rhynes. I would like to thank him for his service to our country and our community. I wish him the very best in his current successes and his future endeavors.

**HONORING THE MADISON HIGH
SCHOOL GIRLS GYMNASTICS TEAM**

HON. STEPHANIE HERSETH SANDLIN

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Ms. HERSETH SANDLIN. Madam Speaker, on February 15, 2008, the Madison High School girls gymnastics team from my State of South Dakota won its 14th consecutive state championship. This accomplishment sets a national record for consecutive gymnastics State titles.

The Bulldogs' streak began in 1995 with a narrow victory over Stanley County High School and has continued through this season's dominant victory over runner-up Britton-Hecla High School.

Madison's list of accomplishments goes deeper than just a national record. The Bull-

dogs' victory streak is the longest in South Dakota history—for any sport—and the team holds the State record for highest team score in their class. In addition, Madison gymnasts have won 47 individual State titles during the streak, setting State class records for the balance beam, floor exercise and vault. In addition, Madison's Kristen Osterberg set a record with 14 career State titles from 1996 to 2001.

Led by former coach Linda Collignon and current coach Maridee Dossett, Madison has set a standard by which teams from all across the country can be judged. With a focus on team success first, the Madison gymnastics program doesn't just produce champions, it also creates individuals better prepared to take on all the challenges life can present.

Madam Speaker, it is with enduring pride and respect that I rise today in recognition of the Madison gymnastics team on the occasion of their record-breaking achievement. Their achievement is not only measured in the dominating statistics of their string of victories over fourteen years, but also in how they work together as a team in their commitment to excellence. The Madison gymnastics team has proven itself worthy to be counted among the most dominant high school athletic dynasties in the Nation.

**PAYING TRIBUTE TO DR. JAMES E.
HANSEN**

HON. JON C. PORTER-

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Dr. James E. Hansen, the Director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, as this year's recipient of the Desert Research Institute's 21st Annual Nevada Medal. This award is Nevada's highest achievement in the area of scientific study and research.

The Nevada Medal was first given out in 1988 and has been bestowed annually upon a scientist whose work has great impact on the field of science and engineering. Dr. Hansen joins an esteemed list of recipients.

Dr. Hansen earned all of his degrees from the University of Iowa which includes a Bachelor of Arts in Physics and Mathematics, a Masters of Science in Astronomy, and a Ph.D. in Physics. In addition to his numerous publications, research and his work with NASA, Dr. Hansen is also a professor at Columbia University.

He has studied the effects of greenhouse gases throughout his career and has developed and applied various models to note the effects these gases have on climate change and other areas. Dr. Hansen has been a consistent speaker warning about the possible effects of greenhouse gas emissions and the possible benefits of decreasing these gases being emitted.

I wish to also congratulate the Desert Research Institute on another year of service and their continued success in the areas of quality of the air, the water, and the land that surrounds us. The effects of their tireless work and research are felt throughout Nevada and across the globe.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Mr. James E. Hansen for being selected as this

year's recipient of the Nevada Medal presented by the Desert Research Institute.

NATIONAL PEACE CORPS WEEK

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I would like to take a minute to recognize an enduring legacy of John F. Kennedy—the Peace Corps—in recognition of its 47th anniversary this year and to commend 44 constituents from Northern Virginia currently serving in 38 countries around the world. It is an honor to serve with the likes of my colleague and friend CHRIS SHAYS and others in this body and the other who served our country in the enhancement of citizen diplomacy. I hope all Americans will join us in supporting and expanding this enduring commitment to convey our values as a nation.

As Fareed Zakaria wrote: “We must begin to think about life after Bush—a cheering prospect for his foes, a dismaying one for his fans (however few there may be at the moment). In 10 months he will be a private citizen, giving speeches to insurance executives. America, however, will have to move on and restore its place in the world. To do this we must first tackle the consequences of our foreign policy of fear. Having spooked ourselves into believing that we have no option but to act fast, alone, unilaterally and preemptively, we have managed in six years to destroy decades of international good will, alienate allies, embolden enemies and yet solve few of the major international problems we face.”

The London Financial Times last December reported that the U.S. has suffered a significant loss of power and prestige around the world in the years since the beginning of this century, limiting our ability to influence international crises, according to an annual survey from a well regarded British security think-tank. The 2007 Strategic Survey of the non-partisan International Institute for Strategic Studies picked the decline of U.S. authority as one of the most important security developments of the past year—but suggested the fading of American prestige began earlier, largely due to its failings in Iraq.

One of our most special and effective citizen agencies of public diplomacy is the Peace Corps. Think of this—more than 187,000 volunteers have served this venerable legacy of former President Kennedy, serving in 139 countries—where they bring our values to other peoples, and bring understanding and appreciation of other cultures back home.

The greatest gift of the Peace Corps and other civilian programs is not just that ordinary Americans share their values and our culture with other peoples, but also that when volunteers return, they bring greater understanding and appreciation of other cultures.

Foreign policy is not just what we do, but also who we are. America as a place has often been the great antidote to U.S. foreign policy—and it should be again. Mr. Zakaria writes that “When American actions across the world have seemed harsh, misguided or unfair, America itself has always been open, welcoming and tolerant * * *

At the end of the day, our openness is our greatest foreign policy. We have succeeded

not because of the ingenuity of our government, but rather because of efforts like this unique program to keep ourselves open to the world—to sending our people out across the countries of the world to share our unique culture, our goods and services, our ideas and inventions, our people and cultures. This openness, this civilian diplomacy, has allowed us to make friends across boundaries. It will be central to our place as a Nation in the future.

This week, as we celebrate National Peace Corps Week, we honor the more than 190,000 volunteers who have served in 139 developing countries since President Kennedy's call to service in 1961—and I honor 44 of my constituents currently serving our country in places as diverse as China, Mali, Azerbaijan, Macedonia, El Salvador, and Namibia. This can be lonely and demanding service but service that can create enduring friendships and values that transcend boundaries and cultures.

Today, more than 8,000 Peace Corps volunteers around the world are currently providing training and education in 74 countries. These volunteers each donate their time and skills for over two years, in order to make a difference in the world and to promote understanding between cultures. By offering their valuable skills and showing a passion for helping others, they show the world that Americans value learning and cross-cultural exchange.

Volunteers work in areas of education, health and HIV/AIDS, business development, environment, agriculture and youth, and must often be creative and flexible when living and working in new cultures and learning new languages. The resulting experience is rewarding for all involved, and it highlights the importance of cooperation and involvement between cultures around the globe.

When volunteers return home and share their overseas experiences with their communities, the Peace Corps helps Americans as much as the people in developing countries. From recent college graduates to doctors with decades of experience, volunteers choose to use their valuable skills and education to help people all over the world, but their work affects their lives long after returning home.

This week we remember the dedication and passion of Peace Corps volunteers, young and old, current and returned. We thank them for their service, and encourage more Americans to volunteer with the Peace Corps.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ROBERT CONGDON

HON. JON C. PORTER-

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor United States Army Staff Sergeant Robert Congdon, for his heroic efforts in saving five lives while under heavy enemy gunfire on January 18, 2008 in Iraq.

Robert is a native of the Las Vegas community. He is a graduate of Bonanza High School. He was a former local lifeguard, paramedic, and is currently an active member of the United States Army. Robert is currently stationed in Georgia, where his wife Bonnie and two year old daughter Samantha reside.

Robert's parents, Margaret and Gary Congdon reside in Las Vegas, Nevada along with his sister, Crystal Hill. His younger brother Michael is also in the United States Army and he is stationed in Sparks, Nevada.

Robert is currently on his second tour in Iraq. His first was with the 101st Airborne Division. On January 18, 2008, Robert was caught dodging bullets from a sniper while trying to rescue five soldiers wounded from a roadside blast on a Stryker armored vehicle. He found himself close enough to the blast to race toward his wounded comrades, and was able to avoid any other improvised explosive devices that might be nearby. Robert successfully rescued three of the wounded, and on his way back for the two remaining wounded soldiers, a sniper opened fire. He alerted other military personnel in the vicinity about the situation at hand, but he knew that he had to help his two remaining comrades to safety because of the severity of their wounds. Robert and medical personnel assisted in dragging the two men nearly the distance of a football field and bringing them to safety.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor United States Army Staff Sergeant Robert Congdon for his dedication to the United States Army, and dedication to his comrades. His leadership is a true testament of his honor and devotion to our nation. I am proud to represent this hero and the many others from the great state of Nevada.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, on March 10, 2008, I was unavoidably detained and was not able to record my votes for rollcall Nos. 111–123.

Had I been present I would have voted: Rollcall No. 111—“no”—On Motion to Adjourn.

Rollcall No. 112—“no”—On Motion to Adjourn.

Rollcall No. 113—“no”—On Motion to Adjourn.

Rollcall No. 114—“no”—On Motion to Adjourn.

Rollcall No. 115—“yes”—Congratulating Iowa State University of Science and Technology for 150 years of leadership and service.

Rollcall No. 116—“yes”—On Motion to table the appeal of the ruling of the Chair.

Rollcall No. 117—“yes”—The Intelligence Authorization Act of 2008.

Rollcall No. 118—“yes”—Congratulating the University of Kansas football team for winning the 2008 FedEx Orange Bowl and having the most successful year in program history.

Rollcall No. 119—“yes”—Congratulating the women's water polo team of the University of California, Los Angeles, for winning the 2007 NCAA Division I Women's Water Polo National Championship, and congratulating UCLA on its 100th NCAA sports national title, making it the most accomplished athletic program in NCAA history.

Rollcall No. 120—“yes”—On Motion to Adjourn.

Rollcall No. 121—“yes”—Providing for the adoption of the resolution (H. Res. 895) establishing within the House of Representatives an

Office of Congressional Ethics, and for other purposes.

Rollcall No. 122—"no"—Providing for the adoption of the resolution (H. Res. 895) establishing within the House of Representatives an Office of Congressional Ethics, and for other purposes.

Rollcall No. 123—"yes"—On Motion to Adjourn.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO IRVING
JOSEPH SCHWARTZ

HON. JON C. PORTER—

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Irving Joseph Schwartz for his service to the United States Military, and his admirable accomplishments and contributions to our country.

Mr. Schwartz was assigned to the 82nd airborne, where he parachuted into Normandy in 1944 six days before the invasion. Due to his great efforts in this battle, he was awarded with the Silver Star for Gallantry in Action, the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Combat Infantry Badge, and Parachute Badge with two Bronze Stars for his combat jumps. He also received the European Campaign Badges, along with the Pacific Campaign ribbons.

Today, Mr. Schwartz dedicates countless hours assisting Jewish War Veterans that are down on their luck, as well as homeless veterans. He is a past National Service Officer for the Military Order of the Purple Heart, and is currently involved with the Purple Heart group throughout the Las Vegas Valley. Mr. Schwartz will be 90 on April 19, 2008.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the accomplishments of Irving Joseph Schwartz, and commend his dedication to the veterans throughout the Las Vegas Valley. I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, the 20th century was a time of unprecedented, historic gains in human rights, freedom, and democracy. But it was also a century of unprecedented oppression, carnage and bloodshed.

Millions of families were exiled, tortured and executed because of their faiths, their beliefs, and their ancestries. Countless innocents were marched to camps, slaughtered in streets, and had their blood spilled as though it were nothing more than water. This religious and ethnic genocide is a permanent stain on the history of man.

From 1915 to 1923, Armenians were expelled from their 2,500-year homeland by the Ottoman Empire. To achieve this travesty, the Ottomans murdered 1.5 million innocent adults and children, and raped and brutalized many more. Yet to this day, this act of genocide has been widely overlooked. In fact, it is officially denied by today's Turkish government. This is unacceptable.

As we pledge ourselves to fighting evil and preventing genocide in our modern world, we must keep the past alive. For if we allow ourselves to forget the unthinkable crimes of the 20th century, mankind will be condemned to bear witness to many more.

As we dedicate ourselves today to ending the cycle of genocide, it's important to realize that education is a crucial step in preventing future horror. Groups like the Armenian National Committee of America and others work hard to raise this critical awareness, and I pray that the monstrous horrors of yesterday and today are all the lesson we ever need to end the cycle of death and suffering.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JIM
CAVALIERI

HON. JON C. PORTER—

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend Jim Cavalieri, who is retiring after twenty years of service in the Henderson Fire Department.

Mr. Cavalieri was raised in Henderson, NV where he has resided for fifty-four years. Jim is an alumnus of Basic Elementary School and also attended Basic High School, where he met his wife, Lorna, of thirty-five years. Jim joined the department in 1987 as a firefighter. He would later serve as a paramedic, captain, and deputy fire chief. Jim was selected as Henderson's Fire Chief in May 2001 after thirteen years of service within that department. As fire chief, Jim provided knowledge, experience, and leadership to the department. He led the Henderson Fire Department to receive its accreditation from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) in 2004.

Mr. Cavalieri is a member of several professional organizations, including Southern Nevada Fire Chiefs Association, Nevada Fire Chiefs Association, and the International Association of Fire Chiefs. Jim is active in his church as well as in community service where he has served as a leader in the Boy Scouts of America.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor my friend Jim Cavalieri. His efforts in helping assist the residents of Henderson, Nevada are commendable. I congratulate him on this prestigious award and wish him the best of luck in his much deserved retirement.

ONE OF HOUSTON'S FINEST:
OFFICER AL AMATO

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, police officers dedicate their lives to keeping our streets and communities secure. They selflessly venture into dangerous situations every day and put their lives on the line so that the rest of us can sleep safely. Houston Senior Police Officer Alphonso "Al" Amato, Jr., is one of those elite individuals, who dedicated his entire career to protecting the innocent from evil-doers.

Officer Amato enrolled in the Houston Police Academy in 1981. His first assignment upon

graduation was with the Patrol Division of the Houston Police Department. One of his more notable experiences occurred when he was testifying against an aggravated robbery defendant in the 177th District Court. While he was testifying, the defendant jumped up and threw his chair at the prosecutor. Officer Amato responded, like any top-notch officer would, and without giving it a second thought, jumped up and immediately took the defendant into custody. He was later prosecuted as the trial continued.

Officer Amato has been responsible for removing dangerous outlaws from the streets of Houston. In 1983, he began working on cases involving juveniles and spent the majority of his career working in the Juvenile Division of the police force. While working in the Juvenile Sex Crimes Unit, he investigated more than 1,000 child exploitation cases. Time and again, he has successfully arrested the worst kind of criminal, the one who preys on innocent children.

He has a knack for difficult cases and has taken on the most challenging, where little or no information has been available. Each time, he managed to track down the criminals and bring them to justice.

Not only does Officer Amato have fine-tuned investigative skills, he is also known for his ability to manage a crime scene. He always kept order, even in the most difficult situations, while questioning the involved parties.

During his many years of dedicated service, he has received countless commendations, expressions of appreciation, Unit Citations, an FBI recognition for Task Force and Sting Operations, a U.S. Marshal recognition for Gang Task Force involvement and a Houston Fire Department recognition. He is also well respected throughout the community and among his peers.

Officer Amato's family has a history of service. His father served in the military. Before becoming a law enforcement officer, Officer Amato served in the United States Air Force in Vietnam for 4 years. After his time in the military, he joined the Federal Protective Services and was there until 1977, when he left to join the Chicago Police Department. He stayed in Chicago until 1981 and then began his career with the Houston Police Department. This year, he is retiring from a distinguished career after more than 26 years of service.

According to his fellow officers, Officer Amato served the citizens of Houston with pride, honor and commitment. He is known as an upstanding citizen, a patriotic American and a devoted law enforcement officer.

I would also like to recognize the contributions of Al's wife, Sandy, and daughter, Raven. I commend them for persevering over the difficult job of their loved one serving as a law enforcement officer. Many of the most successful officers have a significant family support system behind the scenes.

On the date of his retirement, March 21, 2008, I congratulate and thank Senior Police Officer Al Amato for wearing the badge of a Texas lawman with distinction while serving the people of Houston. Future law enforcement officers can learn by the example of Officer Amato and realize that one person truly can make a difference.

And that's just the way it is.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RAYMOND
LANDRY

HON. JON C. PORTER—

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Raymond Landry for his 35 years of distinguished service to Pardee Homes and to the Southern Nevada community.

Mr. Landry has been a resident of Southern Nevada since 1968, where he has lived with his wife Marge Landry, President/Broker of Landry & Associates, Inc. Mr. Landry began his successful career with Pardee Homes in 1972 and in 1980 he began leading the local sales force in Las Vegas. As Assistant Vice President of Sales, he is well regarded for his commitment to service and professionalism. Over the course of his tenure with Pardee Homes, Mr. Landry has earned countless honors, including the Nevada PTA Community Partner of the Year, the Greater Las Vegas Association of Realtors Builder of the Year, and the Shade Tree Builder of the Year.

Mr. Landry used his expertise and passion in other areas of the housing industry. His founding of and working with various organizations exemplifies such leadership. He was appointed to the Nevada Real Estate Commission by then Governor Bob Miller in 1997. He served for two 3-year terms as the President of the Commission. He is also a founding member of the Southern Nevada Sales and Marketing Council. Furthermore, he is a member of the Southern Nevada Home Builders Association and the Association of the Real Estate License Law officials. Former Nevada Governor Kenny Guinn proclaimed a day in his honor in 2001 describing Mr. Landry as, "an industry leader with the highest professional and ethical standards".

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Mr. Raymond Landry for his commitment to Pardee Homes, as well as his efforts throughout the Southern Nevada community. I praise his accomplishments and wish him the best of luck in the future.

SUNSET MEMORIAL

HON. TRENT FRANKS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I stand once again before this body with yet another Sunset Memorial.

It is March 12, 2008 in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun set today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand—just today. That is more than the number of innocent American lives that were lost on September 11th, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,833 days since the travesty called Roe v. Wade was handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million of our own children.

Some of them, Madam Speaker, cried and screamed as they died, but because it was amniotic fluid passing over their vocal cords instead of air, we couldn't hear them.

All of them had at least four things in common.

They were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone. Each of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each of their mothers, whether she realizes it immediately or not, will never be the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever.

Yet even in the full glare of such tragedy, this generation clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims to date, those yet unborn.

Madam Speaker, perhaps it is important for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves again of why we are really all here.

Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government."

The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution. It says: "No state shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law." Madam Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here. It is our sworn oath.

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is that clarion declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Every conflict and battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to our commitment to this core self-evident truth. It has made us the beacon of hope for the entire world. It is who we are.

And yet Madam Speaker, another day has passed, and we in this body have failed again to honor that foundational commitment. We failed our sworn oath and our God-given responsibility, as we broke faith with nearly 4,000 more innocent American babies who died today without the protection we should have been giving them.

But perhaps tonight, Madam Speaker, maybe someone new who hears this sunset memorial will finally realize that abortion really does kill little babies, that it hurts mothers in ways that we can never express, and that 12,833 days spent killing nearly 50 million unborn children in America is enough; and that the America that rejected human slavery and marched into Europe to arrest the Nazi Holocaust, is still courageous and compassionate enough to find a better way for mothers and their babies than abortion on demand.

So tonight, Madam Speaker, may we each remind ourselves that our own days in this sunshine of life are also numbered and that all too soon each of us will walk from these Chambers for the very last time.

And if it should be that this Congress is allowed to convene on yet another day to come, may that be the day when we finally hear the cries of the innocent unborn. May that be the day we find the humanity, the courage, and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect the least of these, our tiny American brothers and sisters, from this murderous scourge upon our Nation called abortion on demand.

It is March 12, 2008—12,833 days since Roe v. Wade first stained the foundation of this nation with the blood of its own children—this, in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO LIN CLARK

HON. JON C. PORTER—

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Lin Clark, who has been recognized as Citizen of the Year 2008 by the Laughlin Town Advisory Board for her outstanding efforts as a citizen within the Laughlin community.

Lin moved to Laughlin, Nevada when the community was less than 20 years old, and has been a resident for the past 22 years. Since Lin has been a resident, she has taken an active role throughout the community. Lin is the coordinator for the Laughlin Town Fest event in which she dedicates countless hours in successfully organizing the event. She is committed to making sure that the event will be enjoyed by everyone throughout the community. Along with her husband, Bruce, the Clarks are a major part of the success of the bus system's first wine tasting and charity silent auction. The proceeds of this event benefits the senior citizens' transportation program.

In addition, Lin is active in Laughlin's Annual Silver Toy Box. She donates her time and efforts for less fortunate children throughout the Laughlin community by selecting toys and wrapping them, and paying for some of the toys out of her own pocket.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Lin Clark. Her efforts in helping assist the residents of Laughlin, Nevada are commendable. I congratulate her on this prestigious award and wish her continued success.

IN RECOGNITION OF F.N. MCNAIR,
JR.

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I wish to recognize Mr. Nick McNair, Jr., who resides in Lexington, SC, on the occasion of his retirement from AgFirst Farm Credit Bank on April 1, 2008.

Much of Nick McNair's life and career has been dedicated to agriculture and the cooperative Farm Credit System. His interest began as a child growing up on his family's row crop and livestock farm south of Leary, GA. At a young age, Nick began to appreciate the vital role that agriculture played in his community and in his home State. After receiving his education from Leary Elementary School and Edison High School, Nick pursued his education at Georgia Southern College in Statesboro, GA and graduated in 1967.

From 1961 through 1963, Nick supported himself by working at Morris Cattle Company in Leary, GA. He also worked for Arlington Oil Mills, Inc., in Arlington, GA, in their cotton ginning operation. As Nick's interest in agriculture continued to grow, he worked for the Baker and Newton County ASCS offices as a performance reporter during the summers of 1963–1966.

In August of 1967, Nick began his career with the Farm Credit System as a fieldman and association appraiser for the Federal Land

Bank Association of Camilla in Camilla, GA. Over the next several years, Nick was employed as a vice president with the Northeast Florida Farm Credit Service in Jacksonville, FL and also the FLBA of Dawson, before being selected as President of the FLBA of Ahoskie in Ahoskie, NC, in 1979.

In 1982, Nick was employed by the Farm Credit Bank of Columbia, SC, now known as AgFirst Farm Credit Bank. He has served in many capacities including vice president of marketing as well as vice president of legislative and public affairs. In 2001, he was named Distinguished Cooperator of the year by the South Carolina Cooperative Council. He has also served as president of the Friends of Agriculture in South Carolina.

I certainly appreciate the outstanding work Nick has done throughout his distinguished career to promote not only cooperative principles but the vital role that agriculture plays in our everyday lives. I thank his wife, Phyllis, and two daughters, Shonna and Angie, and the entire McNair family for their support of Nick throughout the years. I congratulate Nick on his retirement and thank him sincerely for his many positive contributions to AgFirst and the State of South Carolina.

GENERATIONS INVIGORATING VOLUNTEERISM AND EDUCATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2008

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5563, the "Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education Act" or the "GIVE Act." I would like to thank my colleague Congresswoman MCCARTHY for introducing this important legislation, as well as the chairman of the Committee on Education and Labor, Congressman GEORGE MILLER, for his leadership in bringing the bill to the floor today.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation came to the floor last week as H.R. 2857. It was a good bill then but it now an even better piece of legislation.

The ten amendments that were incorporated into the current bill before this chamber provide: (1) greater integration of funding; (2) strengthens the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, RSVP; and (3) more support for our military families and veterans.

This legislation will make vital strides toward expanding and improving key community service programs, including AmeriCorps, VISTA, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America. The GIVE Act works to ensure that volunteers,

and the organizations that support them, will receive the resources that they need to continue their vital work in our communities.

Today's legislation embodies the altruistic spirit that has made our Nation great. Great numbers of Americans donate their time and their unique skills and gifts to our cities and communities, without any expectation of compensation or material reward. According to a 2005 study, 29 percent of the American public, or about 65.4 million people, had volunteered in the past year.

This legislation engages our youth and fosters a sense of civic duty, which is why I was so pleased to see Section 1202 of this legislation, which gives special consideration to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities. I want to thank Representative MCCARTHY and Representative MILLER for allowing me to add to this great bill. By adding predominately minority community colleges to the list of those to receive special consideration, we help so many more students who have a commitment to service.

Our community colleges are growing as many of our returning veterans, single parents, and seniors desire to make a change in their living circumstances and simply cannot afford traditional higher education. A sense of civic engagement is not fostered only among students at Harvard and Berkeley; it is also found among students at community colleges like Houston Community College and North Harris College. I thank the chairman for recognizing this needed addition and incorporating it into the manager's amendment.

The GIVE Act would:

- (1) increase the number of AmeriCorps volunteers from 75,000 to 100,000 by 2012;
- (2) increase stipends for AmeriCorps volunteers from \$4,725 to \$5,225 by 2012;
- (3) promote recruitment of disadvantaged youth, baby-boomers, and veterans into national and community service opportunities;
- (4) create an AmeriCorps Alumni Reserves Network aimed at tapping into the skills and experience of alumni volunteers, with a particular focus on assisting during emergencies or natural disasters; and
- (5) constructs an Energy Conservation Corps, which will address our Nation's energy and transportation infrastructure needs while providing work and service opportunities.

I am disappointed that our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have chosen to be obstructionists to legislation that engages our youth, strengthens disaster and emergency preparedness, and invests in our volunteer and service organizations with appropriate funding. This bipartisan effort needs to be supported.

I am proud to cosponsor legislation that will add service before self to our leaders of tomorrow. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

CONGRATULATING IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY FOR 150 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 10, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, as a proud original cosponsor of House Resolution 924, a resolution congratulating Iowa State University on its sesquicentennial, I would like to take a moment to express my support for its passage and thank the leadership of the House for bringing it to the floor for consideration.

I am proud to have the opportunity to represent the 4th Congressional District of Iowa, the home of Iowa State University and want to congratulate them on their 150th Anniversary. Iowa State's contributions to the State of Iowa, Nation and world are second-to-none and it deserves to receive special recognition. Established on March 22, 1858, Iowa State University has been a pioneer on many fronts; it has demonstrated leadership on very important issues such as equal education and agriculture. Iconic figures such as George Washington Carver and suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt received their education from this outstanding center of learning.

Widely recognized and respected for its service, Iowa State University has now been a leader in higher education for 150 years. Today, it is regarded as one of the greatest agricultural institutions in the Nation and was one of the first institutions to be designated as a land grant institution. The entire agricultural economy is dependent on the agricultural research carried out by Iowa State University. And, its work in biorenewable energy has contributed to the development of alternative fuel sources important to help America reduce its dependence on foreign energy sources. But agriculture and renewable energy are not the only areas in which Iowa State University excels. Engineering, architecture and computer sciences, to name a few, are other areas of higher learning that attract students from all over the globe to Ames, Iowa.

I would also like to applaud Iowa State University President Gregory Geoffrey, the faculty, staff, students and alumni for continuing the rich tradition of excellence and upholding its superior reputation. On behalf of all Iowans, I want to thank Iowa State University for being a source of pride and for the positive influence it has had on the state of Iowa. Again, I am honored to represent this wonderful university and proud to call myself a Cyclone.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 13, 2008, may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 14

10 a.m.
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine ways to reform the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) system. SD-342

APRIL 1

2:30 p.m.
Energy and Natural Resources
To hold hearings to examine S. 2593, to establish a program at the Forest Service and the Department of the Interior to carry out collaborative ecological restoration treatments for priority forest landscapes on public land. SD-366

APRIL 3

10 a.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To hold hearings to examine international fisheries, focusing on management and enforcement. SR-253

APRIL 8

10 a.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To hold hearings to examine the Federal Trade Commission reauthorization. SR-253

2:30 p.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To hold an oversight hearing to examine the digital television transition, focusing on consumers, broadcasters, and converter boxes. SR-253

APRIL 10

10 a.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To hold hearings to examine phantom traffic. SR-253