

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 Bolter 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.