

budgets are not. This means that non-fire accounts are cut as more money is shifted to fight fires. Last year, wildfire expenses amounted to 48 percent of the total Forest Service budget. In the 1990's wildfire constituted only 13 percent.

Since 2000, Forest Service resources for managing recreation, wildlife, and timber in our national forests have been cut by roughly 23 percent. Programs that assist the Nation's 10 million family forest owners with forest management are facing a 58-percent cut this year alone because of the rising firefighting costs. These drastic funding reductions mean that it's nearly impossible for the agencies to fulfill their missions.

In addition to addressing the rising firefighting costs, the Emergency Wildland Fire Response Act provides new tools for reducing fire risks and getting ahead of the game to reduce costs over the long term. First, the bill provides the Forest Service with permanent authority to contract with States to reduce wildfire risks across boundary lines. This authority, commonly called "good neighbor" authority, has been tested successfully in Colorado and Utah for the past several years, accomplishing much-needed hazardous fuels reduction work in severely fire-prone areas. This work is done in compliance with all environmental laws. Since wildfires don't stop at boundary lines, this tool is about making sure the Federal land management agencies are good neighbors to their State and private partners.

The bill also encourages local communities to step up to the plate and reduce wildfire risks. Under this authority, the Secretary would give priority in Federal funding to communities that have taken proactive steps to make their homes and communities fire-ready.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to move this important legislation forward.

WOMEN IN THE TEXAS PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRY: PAT AVERY

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2008

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to pay tribute to a personal friend, Ms. Pat Avery, Administrative Manager of Total Petrochemicals. Patricia Avery came into this world a double minority—black and female, but that didn't stop her from pursuing her dream of making it in an industry dominated by white males.

Born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia, she was surrounded by people who looked like her. When she graduated from high school, and stepped off of the plane in Iowa, to attend college at Drake University, that all changed. She was among the first women to live on the fourth floor of the university's Goodwin-Kirk Hall, previously an all male dorm. Ms. Avery graduated from Drake University, with an undergraduate degree in biology and a graduate degree in public administration.

After graduating from college, Ms. Avery joined Church's Fried Chicken, Inc., as a Personnel Assistant and later Regional Personnel Manager. She noted, "You may not start out

where you want to be in your career, but take advantage of every opportunity and make the best of it." Five years later, she took the helm of corporate personnel management at Bleyle of America, Inc., a German company that manufactures international women's better sportswear. Pat then joined Mobil as an employee relations representative in Houston and quickly began her march up the corporate ladder. She served as employee relations advisor at Mobil's plastic packaging division in New York. She became the first woman and first minority manager of employee relations at Mobil's chemical specialty division in Beaumont, the first woman and minority manager of employee relations at Mobil's Mining and Minerals Co. in Houston, and manager of Human Resources at Mobil's Polyethylene Plant in Beaumont.

Ms. Avery joined Total's Port Arthur Refinery in March of 1998, again as the first woman and minority on their management team. As the Administrative Manager, she manages the refinery's human resources department, as well as the accounting, security, training, labor relations, purchasing, warehouse, contracts, and public affairs activities. She admits, "I have been the first female and the first African-American throughout my entire career in my industry and really in all of the industries I have worked in. Having been the first and the only in many jobs that I have had has been bittersweet. It was lonely, awkward, challenging, very scary, and extremely hard at times, but it was also invigorating, exciting, rewarding, and historic. I don't want to give the impression that it all happened in perfect order. That is far from the truth. Many times, I wanted to run back into the comfort of my own community where I felt safe, but I didn't. It's one of the most significant lessons I've learned: Nothing ventured, nothing gained."

As busy as she is, Ms. Avery still finds time to serve the community. She is involved in numerous projects and serves as a Board Member with Communities in Schools; United Way of South County; Art Museum of Southeast Texas; the Texas Association of Business; Lamar Institute of Technology Foundation Board; Julie Rogers Gift of Life Board; and Inspire, Encourage, and Achieve Board. She is the Vice Chair of the Golden Triangle Business Roundtable, and also served as their Safety Committee Chairperson for 5 years.

Ms. Avery was appointed by Mayor Evelyn Lord to the Beaumont Board of Adjustments, and reappointed by Mayor Becky Ames. She currently co-chairs Golden Triangle Days in Austin for the Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce and will again be co-chair in 2009. She chaired the Texas Museum Blowout in 2007; is a member of the Port Arthur Rotary Club; and will be President of the 2009/2010 Season of the Symphony of Southeast Texas. In addition, Ms. Avery serves on my Service Academy Board. From 1999–2002, she served on the Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce Board. She was recognized as Business Advocate of the Year in 2002 by Lamar State College's Small Business Development Center, and is a graduate of the 2000 class of Leadership of Southeast Texas.

Madam Speaker, Pat Avery, a former high school track star and cheerleader, found her niche by helping people through employee relations and management. She is a pioneer in the male dominated petrochemical industry, and I am proud to celebrate her accomplishments.

A TRIBUTE TO THE GAMBLE HOUSE UPON ITS ONE-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 14, 2008

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Gamble House upon the occasion of its one-hundredth anniversary.

The Gamble House was designed by American Arts and Crafts architects Charles and Henry Greene. The Greene brothers have left an indelible impression on the design heritage of California houses, and their influence is most evident in their best-preserved work, the Gamble House in Pasadena, California.

The Greene brothers' distinctive style was deeply influenced by Japanese architecture and the English Arts and Crafts Movement, and is visible in the distinguished treatment of wood, stone, shingle, and brick. They designed all aspects of the house with assistance from notable European-trained craftsmen, John and Peter Hall, who elevated their exquisite designs to high levels of artistic excellence both throughout the house and in all the joinery, furniture, and decorative arts.

Construction on the Gamble House began in 1908. In January of 1909, the owners, David and Mary Gamble, moved in. The house was inhabited by the Gamble family for over fifty years, and remained their property until 1966, when the Gamble heirs, led by James N. Gamble, deeded the house to the City of Pasadena in a joint agreement with the University of Southern California's School of Architecture.

Boasting nearly 30,000 visitors annually, the Gamble House continues to play a leading role in educating the public about a unique part of Pasadena's heritage, as well as the history of the Arts and Crafts Movement. The Docent Council of the Gamble House, formed in 1967, encompasses a group of volunteers who aid with the cultural and educational components of the Gamble House. The Friends of the Gamble House, founded in 1972, is composed of individuals and organizations whose purpose is to financially support the house and its programs. Some of the programs include the Scholars in Residence Fellowships, the Junior Docent Program, and participation in the Museums of the Arroyo Day celebration.

In 1974 the Gamble House was named a California State Historic Landmark, and four years later the United States Department of the Interior designated the Gamble House a National Historic Landmark. The house has been preserved with the help of the James N. Gamble Preservation Fund.

I ask all members to join me in recognizing the Gamble House upon its one-hundredth anniversary, and to congratulate the staff and volunteers who keep the facility open for the public's education and enjoyment.