

Members who have accounts in a credit union are owners of the financial institution and they elect the board of directors in a one person-one vote system regardless of the amount of money invested in the institution. That means that credit unions are in fact an economic democracy; every customer is both a member and a shareholder.

While this Nation is painfully suffering the current mortgage crisis, credit unions have displayed an outstanding record of service to both minority and low- to moderate-income mortgage applicants and have a long history of responsible mortgage lending. What is impressive to me, Madam Speaker, is that in 2006, credit unions approved an overwhelming 71 percent of applications from low- to moderate-income mortgage applicants.

Furthermore, as a member of the House Committee on Small Business, these non-profit, member-owned banking alternatives are attractive to many entrepreneurs because of the great lending rates and services they provide to them. For individual members, credit unions generally pay higher interest rates on deposits and charge lower interest rates on loans than banks while offering the same services such as savings accounts, checking accounts, credit cards, certificates of deposits, and online banking. So the fact that they provide competitive interest rates, fewer or no fees, and convenience makes so many members hold credit unions in such a high regard.

Madam Speaker, credit unions are extremely vital to my hometown, New York City. Credit unions serve more New Yorkers living in low-income and underserved areas that are continually being abandoned by big corporate banks. I must point out that there are about 43,697 credit union members living in my district. In fact, there are 6 credit unions in the New York 11th Congressional District, which has 3,662 members and an asset value totaling more than \$13 million dollars.

Madam Speaker, I must note that what many people do not know is that more than 1/3 of all credit union CEOs nationwide are women.

Therefore Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the tremendous contributions credit unions provide to so many communities throughout the country and provide any continued support to these financial institutions.

#### RECOGNIZING ALEXA POLASKI

### HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 22, 2008*

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Alexa Polaski on achieving the Girl Scout Gold Award. Receiving the Gold Award is a testament to Miss Polaski's leadership, citizenship, and service to her community.

For her Gold Award project, Alexa Polaski cleared and redesigned a garden courtyard at the Mimosa Manor Nursing Home in Keller, Texas. Miss Polaski secured donations from various companies, individuals and garden clubs so she could plant new perennials, annuals and trees. She also provided benches, bird feeders, and garden art. This transformation now allows the nursing home residents an outdoor area to enjoy.

The Girl Scouts of America promotes a positive influence for young women of today. I am honored to represent Alexa Polaski in earning the highest award bestowed in Girl Scouts. I commend her commitment and dedication for the betterment of her life, her community, and her country.

#### SASHA VANHEESCH

### HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 22, 2008*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Sasha VanHeesch, who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award. Sasha VanHeesch is a senior at Arvada West High School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Sasha VanHeesch is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential that students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives.

Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth Award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication she has shown in her high school career to her college career and future accomplishments.

#### HONORING IAN MICAH WRIGHT

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 22, 2008*

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Ian Micah Wright of Kearney, Missouri. Ian is 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 397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Ian has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Ian has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

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

#### HONORING BRENDA VERNATTI

### HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 22, 2008*

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a heroic educator who saved the life of one of her students a few weeks ago.

In the blink of an eye, a moment of levity and fun became a moment of terror, as fifth grader Kelci Ottwell, who had been at the lunch table, laughing at a friend's joke, suddenly found herself choking and unable to breathe. Gasping for air, Kelci moved toward her principal, Brenda Vernatti for help. Unable to speak, Kelci reached out for Ms. Vernatti's arm to get her attention.

Immediately sensing Kelci's distress, Ms. Vernatti swung into action and began to perform the Heimlich maneuver, trying in vain four times to dislodge the small piece of pizza that was by now causing Kelci's face to turn purple. Finally, on her fifth attempt, Kelci coughed up the pizza and began to breathe again.

Kelci's mother, Melissa, told the local newspaper, "She's my hero. I want the world to know she saved my baby's life."

Brenda Vernatti has served the Alton School District for 22 years, touching hundreds if not thousands of young lives. But just a few weeks ago, she went above and beyond the already lofty call of duty of an educator to become a life-saving hero.

Every day, our Nation is blessed to have heroic citizens ready to spring into action to help another in distress. Today, I have the honor of recognizing Brenda Vernatti, who has dedicated her life to helping others attain their goals through education, and who, in that blink of an eye, reminded us all of the heroes in our midst.

#### CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE FOR H.R. 5819

### HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 22, 2008*

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I submit the following CBO cost estimate for the bill H.R. 5819.

*H.R. 5819—SBIR/STTR Reauthorization Act*

Summary: H.R. 5819 would extend programs that require certain agencies to set aside portions of their research and development budgets for small businesses. The bill also would authorize appropriations to improve efforts to develop products funded through those programs that can be sold commercially. Finally, the bill would require participating agencies to develop new databases for program evaluation and business development.

Based on information from the Small Business Administration (SBA) and other agencies, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 5819 would cost \$263 million over the 2009–2013 period, subject to appropriation of the specified and necessary amounts. Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or revenues.

H.R. 5819 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: The estimated budgetary impact is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget functions 050 (national defense), 250 (general science, space, and technology), 270 (energy), 300 (natural resources and environment), 350 (agriculture), 370 (commerce and housing credit), 400 (transportation), 500 (education, training, employment, and social services), 550 (health), and 750 (administration of justice).