

to help in this crisis, and Miss Simpson responded wholeheartedly. Additionally, Miss Simpson painted cabinets for Angel's Attic, a resale and outreach ministry of the Whites Chapel United Methodist Church.

The Girl Scouts of America promotes a positive influence for young women of today. I am honored to represent Rebecca Simpson 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.

HONORING JASON BAUR

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jason Michael Baur of Kearney, Missouri. Jason 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.

Jason has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jason 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 Jason Michael Baur for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

EQUAL PAY DAY

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, I am honored to rise here today to recognize Tuesday, April 22, 2008, as Equal Pay Day. National and community organizations alike make this a national day of action to promote equal pay for women and minorities. It is a day to recognize the wage gap that exists between men and women and offer solutions that will address and remedy this economic injustice.

It is no accident that a Tuesday in April is chosen as the day in which we recognize income inequality. April symbolizes the month when women's wages catch up to men's wages from the previous year and Tuesday represents the day on which women's wages equal men's wages from the previous week. According to 2007 statistics by the United States Census Bureau, on average women are paid 77 cents for every dollar that their male counterparts earn. For a country where 46 percent of its workforce is female, this is unacceptable.

It is clear that we are not moving fast enough in promoting pay equality. Some reports estimate that if we continue at the current pace, the wage gap will not be closed until 2057. That is far too long for this discrimination to continue. We must promote all efforts to encourage employers to pay women

fairly, educate women on negotiating appropriate salaries, and enforce current equal pay legislation.

It is imperative that we protect every American's right to earn a fair wage based solely on qualifications and performance. There is no room in the American workforce for perpetuating gender and race stereotypes. By eliminating pay discrimination we will be ensuring that we will have the best and most productive workforce.

I applaud all Americans who participate in and support Equal Pay Day. The first step in correcting this inequity is by alerting others it exists. It is my hope that together we can do this and ultimately be the catalyst for change.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY TO VICTIMS AND FAMILIES OF COLORADO SHOOTINGS

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 14, 2008

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 886 which expresses sympathy to the victims and families of the tragic acts of violence in Colorado Springs, CO and Arvada, CO.

The events last year in Colorado Springs, CO and Arvada, CO were another sad example of gun violence in this country. The nation is still mourning the loss of life at Northern Illinois University, Virginia Tech, the mall in St. Lake City, the Red Lake Indian Reservation, and in countless other communities. On December 9, 2007, Tiffany Johnson, Philip Crouse, Stephanie Works, and Rachel Works were tragically killed and David Works, Judy Purcell, Larry Bourbonnais, Dan Griebenow, and Charlie Blanch injured by bullets fired from an assault rifle and one of two handguns wielded by the assailant.

Expressing sympathy to the victims and families of this tragedy is not enough. Far too many people are the victims of gun violence in our nation, including the hundreds who are killed and thousands injured in unintentional shootings. The Federal Government has an obligation and moral responsibility to prevent this type of violence, including mandatory background checks at gun stores and gun shows and requiring safety devices that prevent guns from being used by someone other than the owner.

Congress must reinstate the ban on assault style weapons and broaden it to include enhanced restrictions on many different assault-style guns that were not previously covered. A new ban should also direct the Attorney General to maintain a weapon database system of guns that have been used in violent crimes and submit the record to Congress each year. This is a necessary public safety measure that will allow law enforcement to do their job and combat crime.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the victims of gun violence in Colorado Springs, CO and Arvada, CO and working together on common-sense gun laws that help to prevent tragedies like these from recurring.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 22, 2008

Mr. MARKEY. Madam Speaker, on April 16th and 17th, 2008, I was unavoidably absent from the House due to an injury, and missed rollcall votes 192, 193, 194, 200, 203, and 204. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcalls 192, 193, 194, 200, 203, and 204.

RECOGNIZING CAROLYN KULIG

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

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

For her Gold Award project, Carolyn Kulig decorated the library at the Easter Seals facility in Carrollton, Texas. Miss Temple painted book shelves in lively colors and added color to the walls. She also collected books and videos through donations that will be given to low-income families that have children being treated at the facility. Her efforts will live the spirit of all that use the library at Easter Seals.

The Girl Scouts of America promotes a positive influence for young women of today. I am honored to represent Carolyn Kulig 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.

ENSURING CONTINUED ACCESS TO FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 2008

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the bill (H.R. 5715) to ensure continued availability of access to the Federal student loan program for students and families:

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Chairman, today I rise to support H.R. 5715, the Ensuring Continued Access to Federal Student Loans Act of 2008. As current turmoil in the U.S. financial markets make obtaining and affording student loans more and more difficult, today we take an affirmative step to relieve that pressure on students and families by providing greater access to Federal loans. This legislation: reduces borrowers' reliance on costlier private college loans and encourage responsible borrowing; gives parent borrowers more time to begin paying off their Federal PLUS college loans; helps struggling homeowners pay for college; provides the U.S. Secretary of Education additional tools to safeguard access to

student loans; and encourages Federal financial institutions to exercise their existing authorities to ensure borrowers have access to Federal loan funds in the upcoming academic year.

Here in Congress, we must ensure that access to higher education is as unfettered as possible. As our economy goes more and more global we have to assure that our future generation will be able to effectively compete on the world stage.

I strongly support this bi-partisan legislation that makes access to college more affordable thereby giving greater opportunities to many more to pursue the American dream. The Ensuring Continued Access to Federal Students Loans Act will achieve its goal at no additional cost to the government and with so much money being spent on building infrastructure in Iraq by the Executive branch it is encouraging to see the Congress show fiscal restraint and responsibility.

I would like to commend Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MCKEON for their work and leadership in bringing this bill to the floor so families can receive relief before this coming August.

RECOGNIZING MAYA ANGELOU ON HER 80TH BIRTHDAY

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 80th birthday of Dr. Maya Angelou, one of the great voices of contemporary literature and a remarkable Renaissance woman.

I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Angelou when I attended Yale University. She was a mentor to me then, not for her literary works, which were inspiring, but for her love for the least of us. She maintains a passion for all people regardless of race, gender, or class.

Dr. Angelou was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on April 4, 1928, and attended public schools in Arkansas and California. Dr. Angelou is truly a woman of great vision, grace, and intellect. She speaks French, Spanish, Italian, Arabic, West African Fanti, and English.

In addition to written and spoken word, for which she is most known, she has other accomplishments that have not received as much attention. She taught modern dance at the Rome Opera House and the Hambina Theatre in Tel Aviv. She has been a civil and human rights activist for many years, and in fact was the northern coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, SCLC, in 1959, appointed at the request of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

HONORARY DEGREES AND AWARDS

Maya Angelou has been honored by several universities, Howard University to Spellman College, from Columbia University to the University of Southern California giving her over 30 honorary degrees.

She has received Tony Awards, Grammy Awards, Woman of the Year Awards, a Congressional Tribute by Former Congressman Kweisi Mfume, and even a Presidential Medal of Arts from President Bill Clinton.

BOOKS, POEMS, AND SHORT STORIES

Maya Angelou is known for her stirring poems and storytelling abilities. "On the Pulse of the Morning" and "Phenomenal Women" were two of the poems that helped her become only the second poet in U.S. history to have the honor of writing and reciting original work at the Presidential inauguration.

Dr. Angelou has authored 12 bestselling books including "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," "A Song Flung Up to Heaven," and "Even the Stars Look Lonesome." She has the unique ability to shatter the opaque prisms of race, class, and gender between the reader and the subject. She captivates her audience, be they children in Tel Aviv, Civil Rights Leaders, or even Presidents.

CONCLUSION

I would have had us sing to Maya Angelou on her 80th birthday, but I would rather say thank you. Thank you, Dr. Angelou, for your dedication to civil and human rights, thank you for your activism, your perceptive stories and poems, thank you for your wisdom, and thank you for reminding us how powerful language can be. For Maya Angelou has moved hearts and minds with her lyric and prose.

I thank Maya Angelou for being a Phenomenal Woman, for now we understand "Just why [your] head is not bowed. Why you don't shout or jump about, or have to talk real loud. Why when we see you pass by, we are so proud, Some say, It's in the click of your heels, the bend of your hair, the palm of your hand, the need of your care, But its because you are a woman, Phenomenally. Phenomenal woman . . . that, Dr. Angelou, is you.

Happy 80th Birthday, Maya Angelou.

PHENOMENAL WOMAN

(By Maya Angelou)

Pretty women wonder where my secret lies. I'm not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size

But when I start to tell them, They think I'm telling lies.

I say, It's in the reach of my arms The span of my hips, The stride of my step, The curl of my lips.

I'm a woman Phenomenally. Phenomenal woman, That's me.

I walk into a room Just as cool as you please, And to a man, The fellows stand or Fall down on their knees. Then they swarm around me, A hive of honey bees.

I say, It's the fire in my eyes, And the flash of my teeth, The swing in my waist, And the joy in my feet.

I'm a woman Phenomenally. Phenomenal woman, That's me.

Men themselves have wondered What they see in me.

They try so much But they can't touch My inner mystery. When I try to show them They say they still can't see.

I say, It's in the arch of my back,

The sun of my smile, The ride of my breasts, The grace of my style.

I'm a woman Phenomenally. Phenomenal woman, That's me.

Now you understand Just why my head's not bowed. I don't shout or jump about Or have to talk real loud.

When you see me passing It ought to make you proud. I say,

It's in the click of my heels, The bend of my hair, The palm of my hand, The need of my care, 'Cause I'm a woman Phenomenally. Phenomenal woman, That's me.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE RETIREMENT OF LEROY R. CLINK

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I wish to celebrate the accomplishments of Mr. Leroy R. Clink, Sr. for his 30 years of service. Below is a brief description of his accomplishments.

Leroy Clink comes from humble origins, attending a two room schoolhouse in West Granville, MA. After graduating from Westfield High School, he went on to New England College to receive his Bachelors of Science in Civil Engineering. He also obtained a Master of Science in Engineering Management from Western New England College.

Mr. Clink was an impressively well-rounded college student. During his time at New England College, Mr. Clink ascended to the presidency of the Sigma Alpha Beta Fraternity, in addition to becoming Chairman of the Inter-Fraternity Council, Mr. Clink displayed his leadership skills in the Student Senate. He was also the First New England college student to be a voting member of the College Admissions Committee. Mr. Clink was able to find time in his busy schedule to become a student guide, dormitory proctor, and a student member of ASCE.

Mr. Clink began his professional career in 1978 at Westover Air Reserve Base as a Pavements Engineer. From there he became the Project Engineer in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He served as a Base Civil Engineer at the Westover ARB, where he coordinated construction projects. Mr. Clink has played an imperative role in runway overlays, east ramp improvements, water distribution, and base operations. He also played an active role as a security police officer. In addition, he was involved in control tower, base civil engineering, and Marines site support element.

Before his retirement, he was working on the New BRAC projects Armed Forces Reserve Center and the Navy Sea Bee Battalion Facility. On this occasion, I am proud to mark 30 years of Mr. Clink's service and to congratulate him on his well-deserved retirement.