

less than 600 today—still terrible but well below the average (940) reported for sub-Saharan Africa.

At the government's invitation, Partners in Health launched efforts to strengthen AIDS treatment and primary health services in one region of rural Rwanda in 2005. Mindful of the lessons learned during two decades of work in rural Haiti—and of that young Haitian woman whom we watched turn abruptly from the anticipation of new life to a confrontation with death—we have made reducing maternal mortality and improving women's health top priorities. And we have welcomed the opportunity to support Rwanda's commitment to breaking the cycle of poverty and disease by including health care and education (especially for girls) in its vision of the future. It's probably no coincidence that Rwanda also boasts the world's highest percentage of women in parliament.

IN SUPPORT OF H. CON. RES. 322—  
RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNI-  
VERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF  
THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

**HON. RAHM EMANUEL**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 14, 2008*

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 322, recognizing the 60th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel. Yom Ha'Atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day, marks a day when Theodor Herzl's prophetic words became reality: "If you will it, it is no dream."

Since its founding on May 14, 1948, the modern State of Israel has established itself as a dynamic and democratic nation with a thriving economy, a pluralistic political system, and a vibrant cultural and intellectual center. The Israeli people have contributed greatly as scholars, innovators, educators, and more, and I am pleased to have this opportunity to recognize their accomplishments as well as those of Israel.

Israel has been a vital ally of the United States since the beginning of its existence, sharing democratic values, friendship, and respect and enjoying a strategic partnership. America and Israel shall remain close friends for years to come, particularly as Israel continues to seek peace with her neighbors. H. Con. Res. 322 reaffirms these bonds of friendship and cooperation and expresses a commitment to strengthen these bonds.

On the Jewish calendar, Israel's Independence Day falls on the 5th of Iyar, corresponding this year with May 8, 2008. This day is a joyous time to reflect with pride on the work of the men and women who knew that one day the dream of the State of Israel would become a reality.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to be a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 322 and wish to extend warm congratulations and best wishes to the people of Israel as they celebrate this 60th year of Israel's independence. I wish them peace and prosperity in the years to come, kein yehi ratzon.

IN MEMORY OF TOM ED HAYS

**HON. MIKE ROSS**

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 14, 2008*

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of my dear friend Tom Ed Hays of Hope, Arkansas, who passed away May 7, 2008, at the age of 73.

I will forever remember Tom Ed Hays as a good friend, a keen businessman and someone who cared deeply about improving the quality of life in southwest Arkansas. As a natural born leader, he excelled at every task he took on and was an inspiration to all of us who knew him.

Tom Ed Hays was born and raised in Arkansas, and was always proud to call Arkansas his home. After beginning his banking career in Texas, he returned home to Hope to join his father and uncle in the family-owned bank, First National Bank of Hope. His ambition and dedication helped him rise from cashier to president and CEO of the bank, a role which he held until the time of his passing. Under his guidance and leadership, the bank underwent significant expansion and spread to communities throughout southwest Arkansas.

While Tom Ed Hays' economic development efforts had a tremendous impact on the region and will never be forgotten, his gentlemanly nature is what everyone will talk about for years to come. The numerous accolades and awards he received over the years are a testament to his deep conviction of community service and civic responsibility.

Tom Ed Hays will be remembered for his outstanding service to Hempstead County, southwest Arkansas, and to the entire State of Arkansas. Above all, he will be sorely missed as a friend. I extend my deepest condolences to his wife, Betty Jo Fite Hays; his three sons, Thomas Hays III of Cambridge, England, Daniel Fite Hays of Hope, and John Julian Hays of Hope; his sister, Nancy Hays Gottwald of Richmond, Virginia; and to his eight grandchildren and countless friends. Tom Ed Hays will be greatly missed and I am truly saddened by this loss.

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF FALLEN  
HERO'S DEATH—IN HONOR OF  
ARMY SPECIALIST ARMER NA-  
THAN BURKART

**HON. WAYNE T. GILCREST**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 14, 2008*

Mr. GILCREST. Madam Speaker, I rise today to submit a poem penned by Albert Caswell of The United States Capitol Guide Service, in honor of a real American hero, Army Specialist Armer Nathan Burkart, on the eve of the 2nd anniversary of his gallant life and most tragic death in Baghdad, Iraq, on May 11, 2006. A Rockville native who gave that last full measure for all of us. Remember him this coming Memorial Day.

ARMER ALL

Armer All . . .  
Strength in honor, an American Hero who  
heard the call!  
Who so marched off to war like all of his fine  
forefathers have done so before!

A man of character, and faith . . .  
A brave heart, who but to his country 'tis of  
thee so gave and gave!  
But All . . . But, his fine life . . . he who so  
sacrificed, showing us all how to be-  
have!

A soul,  
One's being, so deep down inside one's heart  
which holds!

The Armer, The Mantle of Gold . . . to go  
and do, to shine in the light of a hero's  
glow!

To march forward, with clenched fists!  
To stare straight into that the darkest of all  
faces, that of death!

To give all until none lies left, to the future  
. . . our most precious sons and daugh-  
ters bless!

A Maryland Man,  
Who so showed us all what a warm heart of  
Armer and faith so can!

But, only the very few . . . can and have so  
done, as Heaven won . . . our fine son  
. . . Armer you!

A leader of men,  
An Angel on Earth, who our Lord would so  
send!

And now, as your short time is done . . . to  
Heaven rise my son . . . as your new  
battle begins!

As an Angel in the Army of our Lord,  
As on Earth you brought your light, from  
heaven now you continue the fight . . .  
evermore!

For yours, your life Burkart . . . was but our  
Lord's work of art . . . for what you so  
stood for!

Armer . . . You!  
You, so lived and died for What Is Real . . .  
For What Is True!

Can you but hear our tears? All for you, and  
your fine life . . . and all of your lost  
years!

ASIAN PACIFIC HERITAGE MONTH

**HON. DAVID G. REICHERT**

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 14, 2008*

Mr. REICHERT. Madam Speaker, in May, we honor Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, a celebration of the culture and contributions of millions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Their diverse talents have contributed to communities all across our Nation.

The Eighth District of Washington has a vibrant Asian Pacific community. Nearly 100,000 Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders reside in my district, contributing to their individual communities through business, education, volunteerism and public service, just to name a few. I am also very aware of the bravery and patriotism many in the Asian and Pacific Islander community have shown by serving honorably in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other dangerous places.

The Asian Pacific American community is growing in my district and our Nation at large. I know, as the influence of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders grow, the American people will more fully understand—and respect—the many contributions they have made to our communities and our Nation.