

Begum, Elva Miriam Reyna, Fidelina Rodriguez, Beatriz Anaya Vargas, Efrén Carranza, Arturo Cantero Paredes, Carlos Nicolas Perez Aranda, Maria Stoneburner, and Alma Della Rangel.

Though each individual has sought to become a citizen of the United States for his or her own reasons, be it for educational or occupational opportunities or for the opportunity to offer their families a better life, each is inspired by the fact that the United States of America is, as Abraham Lincoln described it, a country “. . . of the people, by the people, and for the people.” They realize that the United States is truly a free nation, and by seeking American citizenship, they have made the decision that they want to live in a place where, as guaranteed by the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights, they can practice whatever religion they choose to practice, speak their minds without fear of punishment, and assemble in peaceful protest should they choose to do so.

On July 4, 2008, we will welcome these newly naturalized citizens to enjoy the same freedoms and liberties that all Americans take pride in and cherish. They, too, will be American citizens, and they, too, will be guaranteed the inalienable rights of Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. These individuals, representing many nations throughout the world, will be called upon to declare their allegiance to the United States of America.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating these individuals, who will become citizens of the United States of America on July 4, 2008, the day of our Nation's independence. We, as a free and democratic nation, congratulate them and welcome them.

HONORING MR. BLACKSTONE
DILWORTH

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 25, 2008

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Blackstone Dilworth in recognition of his being named the 2008 Laredo Business Person of the Year by the Laredo Chamber of Commerce on June 26, 2008. This award recognizes his remarkable dedication to the city of Laredo as a business entrepreneur.

McMullen County is where it all began for Mr. Dilworth, where he was called upon to oversee his family's ranching, oil, and gas operations in the mid 1970s. He managed over 50,000 acres spread over four south Texas counties, and his land was often used for commercial hunting operations. In 1983, Mr. Dilworth went on to found Towers of Texas, a communication tower leasing company. He focused his communication business on the digital cell phone tower market in the late 1990s, enabling the construction of over 500 tower sites across Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas.

Along with the expansion of his tower business, Mr. Dilworth planned and executed the development of a family ranch in north Laredo. The relatively new addition to Laredo has already created a solid reputation for itself, boasting of industrial, commercial, and residential development. From the beginning of

Mr. Dilworth's ownership of the San Isidro ranch, he has tried to develop a quality place to live and work for Laredoans. Toward that end, he donated over 120 acres of land for Loop 20 as well as for the extension of McPherson Road to connect to the Loop. In the years following, the land for the United Day School was donated by the Dilworth family. The land for the fire station north of the Loop on McPherson was also donated to the city. Mr. Dilworth's newest venture in the business world is in the hospitality industry, with addition of the new Best Western Motel on the corner of Sandia Drive and Loop 20.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize the hard work and dedication of Mr. Blackstone Dilworth to the city of Laredo, to his wife, Frances, and to his family. He is a truly deserving recipient of the 2008 Laredo Business Person of the Year by the Laredo Chamber of Commerce.

HONORING DR. ALVIN R. LEONARD

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 25, 2008

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Dr. Alvin R. Leonard. We lost this kind spirit and community leader on April 20, 2008. A remarkable trailblazer and humanitarian, Dr. Leonard lived a full and vibrant 90 years, during which he transformed our community immeasurably. Although his presence will be sorely missed, there is no doubt that his legacy will continue far into the future.

Dr. Alvin R. Leonard was a respected physician and community activist who used his talents and intelligence to serve those most in need in our community. Nearly 40 years ago, he helped found the Berkeley Free Clinic in my congressional district. Dr. Leonard then dedicated the remainder of his life to making sure people were given the opportunity to achieve and maintain good health. For Dr. Leonard, this was especially important for those who faced economic hardships or strenuous life circumstances.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Dr. Leonard served as the director of public health for the City of Berkeley, California. Dr. Leonard truly fulfilled his role as a public servant, introducing initiatives which championed those most in need regardless of the opposition or skepticism he faced from contemporaries. An example of his foresight is the seat-belt campaign he launched to encourage people to buy the safety devices and install them in their cars—long before national legislation mandated that auto manufacturers build cars equipped with them.

One of his greatest characteristics, noted by his family and friends, was his sense of humor. Dr. Leonard clearly knew the importance of love, camaraderie, community building, and maintaining a youthful spirit in the pursuit of both health and social justice. During his tenure as public health director, Dr. Leonard succeeded in persuading department employees to run up and down the stairs for exercise, convinced many to quit smoking, and always urged people to take their health both seriously and personally by giving up bad habits and encouraging lifestyle changes.

Dr. Alvin Leonard was an exceptionally vibrant and creative person whose accomplishments spanned decades where he personally impacted the lives of those around him. He documented pesticide poisoning among farm workers in the 1940s, created statewide programs to control high-blood pressure among specific ethnic groups and examined the health effects of electromagnetic fields. Perhaps most notably, in 1969 Dr. Leonard helped to establish the Berkeley Free Clinic.

Dr. Leonard was a pioneer and champion of our most vulnerable community members. Although the Greater Bay Area is one of the most diverse and innovative regions in the Nation, it also faces many challenges including homelessness, poverty, and health inequities. Dr. Leonard's compassion for those less fortunate motivated him to create a “street medicine” clinic.

The Berkeley Free Clinic found a permanent home in the Berkeley community, one of the Nation's epicenters for social justice advocacy. The clinic services our neighbors who are in the most dire economic need by providing them with a right that should be universal—the right to health care. Essential to Dr. Leonard's personal convictions and vision are the compassion and personal care shown to residents of my district who seek assistance from the clinic.

In its 40-year tenure, the clinic has served thousands of people, and today it is a strong pillar of hope for many in my district.

Although Dr. Leonard formally retired in 1984, he continued public health consulting until his own health no longer permitted it during this past year.

Dr. Leonard's legacy will certainly live on through the lives of all who were fortunate enough to know him. His contributions to our society were so great that his positive influence will continue on even through those who were never able to meet him.

Today, California's Ninth Congressional District salutes and honors Dr. Alvin R. Leonard. We extend our deepest condolences to his family, especially his wife of 65 years, Pearl, and his daughters Barbara and Cathy. May his soul rest in peace.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF
RICHARD DARMANIAN

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 25, 2008

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Richard Darmanian of Fresno, California, who recently passed away at 81 years of age. He leaves behind his best friend and loving wife of 59 years, Armon, six children, and several grandchildren.

Mr. Darmanian was born on November 21, 1926, in Sacramento, California, but was raised in the Central Valley. As a youngster, he lived on a farm where his passion for farming came to life.

Upon graduation from Caruthers High School he attended Fresno State College and earned his B.A. degree in history and a master's degree in guidance and counseling.

Upon graduating from Fresno State in 1952, Mr. Darmanian began his teaching career at Roosevelt High School, where he taught mathematics, history and government. Mr.