

freedom of the press, arresting dissidents, and labeling religious activity as subversive. We need a bilateral relationship with Vietnam that enhances individual freedom, democracy, and freedom of speech. I will continue to work in Congress to help promote democracy and end oppression in Vietnam.

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF MR. BASIL C. MARHOFFER

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments and career of Mr. Basil C. Marhofer, a good friend from my home State of Kansas. Mr. Marhofer will be retiring Monday, June 30, from a successful career as a distinguished lawyer and public servant.

Mr. Marhofer's contribution of service has spanned over six decades. After graduating from Ness City High School in Ness City, Kansas, in 1942, Mr. Marhofer served his nation in the European theater in the Second World War. After returning from Europe, Mr. Marhofer enrolled in the University of Kansas Law School and graduated in 1951. He opened his first law office that same year in Ness City.

Soon afterwards, Mr. Marhofer was appointed Ness County Attorney, a position that he held until 1959. After spending a short time in Boulder, Colorado, at the University of Colorado Law School, Mr. Marhofer returned to Ness City and to his position as county attorney, where he remained until 1968. In 1971, Mr. Marhofer was elected Mayor of Ness City where he served for 8 years.

Mr. Marhofer has been actively involved in his community, including the local Masonic Lodge and Rotary International. He has held many offices in Rotary International, including District governor and director. In 1988, Mr. Marhofer was elected vice president and represented Rotary International on five continents.

Mr. Marhofer has spent his life serving his community, State, and country. I am proud to know him and to have this opportunity to recognize him. To him, serving his community is not a burden—it is a calling and a way of life. Whenever I have the opportunity to visit Ness City, Mr. Marhofer is always there, greeting me with the utmost hospitality. He is a just scholar of law and an honest public servant who sets an example for us all. I wish him the best as he enters retirement.

TRIBUTE ON THE RETIREMENT OF CHIEF WILLIAM KIDWELL

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. FOSTER. Madam Speaker, I am submitting this statement to express congratulations and gratitude to Chief William Kidwell on the occasion of his retirement from the Geneva Police Department.

On July 1, Chief Kidwell will end a 35-year career of distinguished service to his community. He joined the Geneva Police Department in 1973 as a captain, and rose quickly through the ranks. During his 27-year tenure as chief, the department expanded from a force of 13 officers and 4 patrol cars to 8 squads of 37 officers.

Chief Kidwell is known in the department and throughout the community as a leader with high integrity. He exemplifies the devoted public service to which we all should strive.

I offer my best wishes to Chief Kidwell and his family, and I thank him for more than three decades of service.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. BECERRA. Madam Speaker, on Monday, June 23, 2008, I was unable to cast my floor vote on rollcall vote 438.

Had I been present for the votes, I would have voted "aye" for rollcall vote 438.

SCHOOL TO WATCH

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. CANTOR. Madam Speaker, I am proud to congratulate Short Pump Middle School, located in Henrico County, VA, for their recognition as a School to Watch by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform. This forum is an alliance of more than 60 educators, researchers, and officers of national associations and foundations dedicated to improving schools for young adolescents across the country. They have identified Short Pump Middle as a high-performing school that excels in many areas of education. Congratulations to the administration, teachers and students on this tremendous honor. National organizations recognize what we in Richmond already know—that Short Pump Middle is first rate. As the parent of 3 Short Pump Middle School alumni, I congratulate the teachers, parents, administrators and students on this outstanding recognition.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN SECURITY AND PROSPERITY ENHANCEMENT ACT"

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2008

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Afghanistan-Pakistan Security and Prosperity Enhancement Act. The legislation is a national security bill aimed at protecting our homeland and those of our allies in the fight against Al-Qa'ida and the Taliban. This bill authorizes the President of the United States to designate Reconstruction

Opportunity Zones (ROZs) in Afghanistan and in certain regions of Pakistan. These ROZs will allow qualified businesses duty-free access into U.S. markets for designated products, thereby providing significant employment opportunities where none currently exist. A ROZ program could go a long way to bolster economic development in this critical region of the world where extremists have tried to exploit the lack of economic opportunities to gain recruits for their radical agenda.

The countries of Afghanistan and Pakistan are key to the fight against Al-Qa'ida and its Taliban allies. Al-Qa'ida is the group that masterminded and carried out the deadly terrorist attacks of 9/11 that took the lives of nearly 3,000 Americans. It would have had difficulty doing so if were not given safe-haven by the Taliban, then in control of the Afghan government and much of the country.

The U.S.-led effort to topple the Taliban regime and pursue Al-Qa'ida terrorists in the aftermath of 9/11 initially weakened both of these groups but there are disturbing signs that they are regrouping and strengthening, particularly along the porous Afghanistan-Pakistan border. The declassified National Intelligence Estimate on "The Terrorist Threat to the U.S. Homeland," published in July 2007, stated: "Al-Qa'ida is and will remain the most serious threat to the Homeland, as its central leadership continues to plan high-impact plots, while pushing others in extremist Sunni communities to mimic its efforts and to supplement its capabilities. We assess the group has protected or regenerated key elements of its Homeland attack capability, including: a safe haven in the Pakistan Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), operational lieutenants, and its top leadership."

More recently, the State Department's "Country Reports on Terrorism 2007," published in April 2008, noted that "Afghanistan remained threatened by Taliban and other insurgent groups and criminal gangs, some of whom were linked to [Al-Qa'ida] and terrorist sponsors outside the country." The same report also noted that "Despite the efforts of both Afghan and Pakistani security forces, instability, coupled with the Islamabad brokered ceasefire agreement in effect for the first half of 2007 along the Pakistan-Afghanistan frontier, appear to have provided [Al-Qa'ida] leadership greater mobility and ability to conduct training and operational planning, particularly targeting Western Europe and the United States."

Enhanced security efforts by the United States, Pakistan and Afghanistan are needed to disrupt and weaken Al-Qa'ida and the Taliban, but security measures alone will not rid them of these menacing groups—terrorists who continue to want to do us harm and are a threat to democracy and the rule of law. These extremist groups exploit the poor socioeconomic conditions, such as high unemployment, in the border areas, to gain adherents to their nefarious causes. With no meaningful alternatives, young men in particular are vulnerable to their entreaties.

Creative ways must be found to give young Pakistanis and Afghans a positive vision of the future. One such way is to create sustainable jobs in these vulnerable areas so that the promise of a decent living makes more sense than following the warped ideology of the terrorists.