

She served as a San Leandro Council member from 1998–2008 including two terms as the City's Vice Mayor. Ms. Grant is the first person of non-European descent to be appointed or elected to the City Council in the City's 150 years. Originally appointed to the council in August 1998, Ms. Grant was elected in November 2000, November 2004, and was appointed Vice Mayor in 2006 and 2007.

Taking a leadership position in a historically closed and restrictive city, some civic leaders describe Ms. Grant as the change agent that lead to the creation of a city management team that has become more reflective of the diverse population of San Leandro, as well as paving the way for other African Americans to be elected to the City Council.

Ms. Grant can point to numerous successes during her tenure on the San Leandro City Council. She worked with the community and staff in the development of the award-winning South Area Development Plan. She worked diligently with her colleagues for the adoption of an inclusionary housing policy, which sought to enhance the City's affordable housing policies, and also successfully spearheaded the passage of the Local Purchasing Ordinance. Ms. Grant also labored for removal of the word "minority" in city documents to facilitate inclusive opportunity for all. Ms. Grant is also responsible for the establishment of the African American Business Council and the Business Association of South San Leandro.

She has served on numerous commissions, boards and advisory committees that include working as Chairperson of San Leandro's Finance Committee and as a member of the Business Development and Redevelopment Committee. She was formerly a member of the Alameda County Housing Authority Board of Commissioners and served as an alternate on the Alameda County Transportation Improvement Authority Board.

Ms. Grant received her B.S. in Journalism from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois and a M.A. from John F. Kennedy University, Orinda, California.

I join the community in recognizing Surlene Grant for her contributions that have ensured the quality of life in San Leandro's neighborhoods and the economic development and vitality of the city. We will miss her on the San Leandro Council but will continue to depend on her experience, sage advice and exemplary leadership.

TRIBUTE TO ROYCE HOPKINS

HON. MICHAEL T. McCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 9, 2009

Mr. McCAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Royce Hopkins of Waller County, who passed away on February 6, 2009.

Today we celebrate the life of a great man who was one of my heroes. Royce Hopkins was a dear friend and a gentle man in every sense of the word. He will always be remembered for his kindness, integrity and his optimistic and infectious smile. I can still see the twinkle in his eyes and his spirit lives on in all of us.

Like my father, Royce served in the Eighth Air Force in World War II. Like Dad, he flew

on bombing missions in a B-17 known as the Flying Fortress. On December 4, 1944, Royce and his crew arrived in England. He flew 26 combat missions over Germany, 25 bombing and one weather mission. He earned four Air Medals, five Battle Stars, a Commendation Medal for a special assignment, a Purple Heart and two presidential Commendations for the group.

His generation saved the free world from the threat of fascism. Born during the Great Depression and tempered by war, they will always be known as the Greatest Generation. I remember going to Royce's WWII reunion and meeting the veterans with whom he served. And now, like my father and so many in their generation, he has passed on and returned to our heavenly Father. Perhaps they are together now talking about airplanes.

This Christmas I received an A-2 Bomber Jacket with Army Air Corps and Eighth Air Force patches. I thought of Royce and my Dad and I regret not having the chance to show it to Royce. But maybe he can see it from a better vantage point now.

I met Royce during my first campaign for Congress. He supported me when many did not and he was always there for me. I remember how much he reminded me of my own father and he was a shining example of how to live. Like many others in his generation, he taught us how to be courageous but with humility. He taught us how to have a sense of humor and I learned a great deal from him.

As we mourn our personal loss, we must also celebrate the life of Royce Hopkins, for it was a great life and he lived it to the fullest. To his wife, Mollie, and his children, Kim, Kit, Sharon and Mike, like you, we all loved Royce. It was hard not to, he was just that kind of person. I am fortunate God brought us together. He was my friend and I will miss him dearly.

I am reminded of the Gospel of Matthew when Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven." May the peace of Christ be with you and may He hold you in the palm of His hand.

I will miss him dearly. Well done, good and faithful servant.

FOXBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ ENSEMBLE HEADS TO THE INAUGURATION CELEBRATION

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 9, 2009

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, on Sunday, January 18th, the Foxborough, Massachusetts High School Jazz Ensemble was given the great—and fully deserved—honor of playing at the Kennedy Center as part of the event that was entitled "Swing Into Freedom." The ensemble accompanied Wynton Marsalis and I am very proud that high school students in the district I am privileged to represent were selected for this important part of the Inauguration festivities and performed in a manner that fully justified the invitation to them.

Madam Speaker, I want to congratulate the members of the Foxborough High School Jazz Ensemble and also those planning this pro-

gram who had the foresight to include this excellent group of young musicians in this important set of events in the nation's history.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MENTORING AMERICA'S CHILDREN ACT OF 2009

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 9, 2009

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce strengthening the link between high-quality mentoring and public education in the United States.

The Mentoring America's Children Act of 2009 will improve upon the current efforts to match high-quality and responsible mentors with children in need of a strong role model.

In 2002, the U.S. Department of Education began granting funding directly to community organizations and schools to establish or expand mentoring opportunities. Since then, we have seen a 20-percent increase in the number of children benefiting from a mentor.

The Mentoring America's Children Act sets out to expand and build upon this success. By increasing the availability and quality of the grants available through the Department of Education, school-based mentoring programs will reach more children in need while enhancing quality.

The bill will also tie mentoring programs' funding more closely with the important role mentors can play in improving a young person's academic standing and the learning environment. The legislation would broaden the reach of mentoring to include a number of specific populations of young people who could benefit from a strong role model.

Finally, the legislation also authorizes the Department of Education to conduct high-quality research into successful school-based mentoring programs. Through this research, plus improved data collection and tracking, we will better understand the impact of mentoring and can continue to refine program practices to best meet the needs of children.

Mentoring is a critical element in a child's social, cognitive and emotional development. When it comes to education, a healthy relationship with a mentor plays a key role in improving the learning environment for a young person. Students with a responsible mentor have better attendance and are more connected to their school, schoolwork, and teachers. They perform better in school and are more likely to graduate and go on to higher education.

It is an honor to introduce this legislation with a number of my colleagues on the House Mentoring Caucus and others dedicated to the noble cause of mentoring. It was also an honor to work directly with the MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America and the National Collaboration for Youth to develop this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I urge consideration of this legislation.