

I am particularly pleased that this legislative package will provide funding to modernize schools in Texas. According to preliminary estimates, El Paso-area school districts could receive tens of millions of dollars in funding for renovation projects, Title I grants to help disadvantaged children, and grants for special education. Our schools have been neglected for far too long and this important funding will ensure that our children have the labs, classrooms, and libraries that are necessary to learn and compete in a global economy.

The legislation's huge investment in our nation's roads, bridges, and mass transit systems will greatly assist several projects in my district that have gone without necessary repairs and upgrades for years. By investing in these neglected projects we will create good jobs as well as make much needed improvements to our nation's infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this economic recovery bill that will help average Americans, as well as cash-strapped state and local governments, weather this current economic downturn.

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TRIBUTE TO HON. BETTY J.  
LESTER, J.S.C.

**HON. DONALD M. PAYNE**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 23, 2009*

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues here in the House of Representatives to join me as I rise to recognize the Honorable Betty J. Lester for her many years of service to the community and to congratulate her upon her historic retirement from the Essex County Superior Court bench. I would like to express my personal thanks and voice the gratitude of the many people for whom she has paved the path and set standards of excellence.

Judge Lester holds the distinction of being the first African American female judge in Essex County and the second African American female judge to be appointed to the superior court bench in New Jersey. As a trail-blazing woman of color, Judge Lester has built a great legacy in her 32 years of service to the city of Newark, Essex County, and the State of New Jersey.

Judge Lester has served on many committees of the Supreme Court including the Committee to Study New Jersey Bar Admission, the Committee on Municipal Courts, the Task Force on Women in the Courts, the Task Force on Municipal Improvement, and the Task Force on Minority Concerns. She has been a member of the New Jersey State Bar Association, the Essex County Bar Association, and the National Association of Women Judges. On the national level, Judge Lester was appointed as a commissioner for the Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies.

Madam Speaker, I know my colleagues agree that Judge Lester is an excellent role model for women and minorities in the law profession. She will leave a lasting impact on those who were fortunate enough to benefit from her guidance. I am pleased to join all those in attendance in wishing her a wonderful retirement.

HONORING WANDA ELLIS MITCHELL  
ON HER SERVICE TO THE  
PUBLIC

**HON. GENE GREEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 23, 2009*

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Mrs. Wanda Ellis Mitchell on a lifetime of work and dedication to the Baytown community and the people of Texas.

Mrs. Mitchell spent the past 14 years of her life serving the city of Baytown as the director of the Baytown Historical Museum. Under Mrs. Mitchell's leadership the Baytown Historical Museum has added many exciting collections given by volunteer donors, including from one of her former junior high students, the grandson of the great Ashbel Smith of Texas. Even though he had been asked by the University of Texas at Austin to acquire his grandfather's historical belongings, he declined and chose to give those historical belongings of his grandfather's to Mrs. Mitchell to preserve and display them in the Baytown Historical Museum.

Mrs. Mitchell has lived in Baytown, TX, since the age of 1. She served the community in many different ways; among others, she served the community as a teacher and director of Baytown Historical Museum. The City of Baytown greatly appreciates her service and dedication to the community. Her absence in the community will be greatly missed, and I know the community wishes her all the best when she moves with her husband Seth to Corpus Christi to live close to her daughter.

It is with great pleasure that I recognize Mrs. Wanda Ellis Mitchell for her service to the Baytown Historical Museum and the city of Baytown.

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IN RECOGNITION OF AMANDA  
LAGERGREN UPON HER  
ACHIEVEMENT OF THE  
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA  
TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD

**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 23, 2009*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Amanda Lagergren, who has received Escambia County, Florida's Teacher of the Year Award for 2010. Her passion and dedication prove that teachers can truly make a difference in the lives of their students, and I am proud to honor such an admirable leader of our local community.

Ms. Lagergren began her teaching career at Edgewater Elementary in 2006 as a 5th Grade General Education Teacher. While maintaining her usual teaching duties for class, she has gone above and beyond by working both inside and outside of the classroom to better her students' lives. As Grade Level Chair for the 5th Grade, Ms. Lagergren ensures that her teachers have everything necessary to provide the best education to their students. Her membership on the Continuous Improvement Model Team and Accelerated Reading Committee highlights her focus on improving the

reading abilities of Edgewater Elementary's pupils. An expertise in classroom technology makes her a valuable asset to other teachers, and she recently began mentoring new educators on effective teaching methods and classroom models. For the past three years, Ms. Lagergren has inspired both her students and her colleagues with her dedication to teaching, and she is to be admired for her passion.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I would like to thank Ms. Lagergren for her public service to the students and community of Northwest Florida. Vicki and I wish her and her family best wishes for continued success.

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IN COMMEMORATION OF THE  
LAKE WORTH COMMUNITY HIGH  
SCHOOL DEBATE TEAM

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 23, 2009*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the debate team of Lake Worth Community High School in Lake Worth, Florida. The team recently competed in a 22-school tournament and took home five awards. Pierre Dorsainvil won best presiding officer; Shermeke Scott, best speaker and best presiding officer; Gia Cerease, original oratory; and Jennifer Price, first overall for declamation.

I am very proud of these fine young people for their skill as debaters and for the many hours of hard work and dedication that resulted in their supremacy over so many other schools. I am delighted, though not surprised, to know that a school in my district is providing an excellent education in the fine art of oratory. It is a skill that my esteemed colleagues and I value very highly, and I hope that some of these talented students will join us in Congress some day.

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CELEBRATING THE 50TH WEDDING  
ANNIVERSARY OF RICHARD AND  
CONSTANCE SMITHGALL

**HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 23, 2009*

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the long-standing and happy marriage of two of my constituents, Richard and Constance Smithgall. This March 9 they will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with a ceremony at Weeki Wachee State Park in Hernando County, Florida.

Richard and Constance first took their wedding vows at the Grace Baptist Church in Binghamton, New York on March 7, 1959. They have since moved to Spring Hill, where they have lived for the past ten years. The happy couple enjoys their new life in Florida, where Constance has retired from her job and Richard continues to work part time at Home Depot.

During the ceremony commemorating their 50th anniversary, the Smithgalls will have

many of their family and friends attend the event. They have two wonderful children, Richard Jr. and Joi Kneiss, as well as two grandchildren, Justin Richard Kneiss and Courtney Smithgall. The entire extended Smithgall family is looking forward to the anniversary and is very proud of Richard and Constance for making it 50 years together.

Madam Speaker, the union of two souls is a wonderful moment and one to be celebrated by friends and loved ones. It is a sign of true love and affection for two people to make it half a century living in holy matrimony. I want to congratulate Richard and Constance Smithgall on their 50th anniversary and wish them the best of luck as they spend the rest of their lives together.

RECOGNIZING GLENDA PAUL-ALES  
AS THE WALTON COUNTY, FLORIDA  
2009 TEACHER OF THE YEAR

**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 23, 2009*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, it is an honor for me to rise today in recognition of Glenda Paul-Ales, Walton County, Florida's 2009 Teacher of the Year.

For the past eighteen years, Glenda Paul-Ales has captivated students at Walton Middle School in Walton County, Florida. In her classroom, learning occurs in a variety of ways, as Ms. Paul-Ales seizes upon every opportunity to generate a lesson. Beyond the curriculum that Ms. Paul-Ales assigns lays the doctrine that governs her teaching: "there is no one right way to teach all students." It is thus, through her dynamic integration of technology, class projects, and group discussions that Ms. Paul-Ales is able to propel her students to academic excellence.

In addition to being named Teacher of the Year for Walton County, Florida, Ms. Paul-Ales has received numerous other awards and recognitions. She is a two-time winner of the Walton Middle School Teacher of the Year award and serves as the school's Professional Development Chair. Ms. Paul-Ales is also a Literacy Leadership Team member and serves as the Department Chair for Science in the 7th grade. All of these titles highlight Ms. Paul-Ales's outstanding teaching capabilities and emphasize her engaging personality.

The title of Teacher of the Year is an immense honor and is evidence of the greatness Ms. Paul-Ales has achieved. Beyond the title lies Ms. Paul-Ales's dedication and devotion, to not only her students, but to the entire community. Her teaching skills and affable personality have influenced many and pushed countless students to a higher level of academic achievement. Ms. Paul-Ales's outstanding accomplishments have distinguished her as one of the great teachers in Northwest Florida, and the First District of Florida is honored to have her as one of their own.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize Glenda Paul-Ales on this outstanding achievement and for her exemplary service in the Walton County School District.

IN HONOR OF THOMAS JEFFERSON  
HIGH SCHOOL'S "STREET TEAM"

**HON. PETE SESSIONS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 23, 2009*

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the students of Thomas Jefferson High School in Dallas, Texas for their commitment to reducing the number of "cheese" users at school. "Cheese" is a deadly combination of black tar heroin and over-the-counter drugs. The addictive combination has taken the lives of numerous teenagers in the Dallas area in the past few years.

Since the first case of cheese was discovered at Thomas Jefferson High School in 2005, it has been considered the epicenter of the cheese epidemic and garnered national attention for the issue. However, a group of students—known as the "Street Team"—decided to take action against this deadly drug trend in their school. These students took the initiative to create and implement a program that catered to the specific environment at their school. With the support of the Greater Dallas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (GDCADA) and the Dallas Independent School District (DISD), they embarked on a multi-faceted social norms campaign to educate their peers and change the perception of cheese usage on campus. By correcting the perception of cheese use, they were able to also change behavior.

I applaud the effort of the "Street Team," the students of Thomas Jefferson and the faculty who have supported them to reduce cheese use on campus.

TRIBUTE TO PHYLLIS MUSE

**HON. TOM LATHAM**

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 23, 2009*

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the accomplishments of Phyllis Muse of Boone, Iowa, who has received the Brown Award for outstanding service at Boone County Hospital.

The Brown Award was established by Weldon J. Brown in honor of his parents Everett C. Brown and Eunice D. Brown. Boone County Hospital recognizes the outstanding services and accomplishments of one of its employees each year with the Brown Award.

Phyllis was nominated by anonymous co-workers to receive the award. She has worked for Boone County Hospital since 1977 as a nurse and now currently as the Boone County Hospital specialty clinic director.

I know that my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in congratulating Phyllis Muse for her outstanding service to Boone County Hospital. It is an honor to represent Phyllis in the U.S. Congress, and I wish her continued success and happiness in serving her community.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1,  
AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REIN-  
VESTMENT ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

**HON. DON YOUNG**

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 13, 2009*

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, it is essential that our Nation's ports have a reliable funding stream for vital projects that are "ready to go" in ports around the nation. The Maritime Administration has identified more than \$1.5 billion in immediate opportunities to fund ready-to-go port landside projects. Ports are a key component of our national intermodal transportation system. MARAD has conservatively estimated that funding \$1.5 billion in ready to go projects will add 80,000 direct and indirect jobs to the economy. These port projects are essential to our ports fulfilling their roles in our national defense, transportation, commerce, and homeland security systems. All other transportation modes, including highways, transit, rail, aviation, and ferries have dedicated funding in the Transportation Infrastructure sections of H.R. 1. Ports do not have such a dedicated source of funding. However, I want to state for the record that ports are eligible for funds in the \$1.5 billion discretionary competitive grant funding made available by this bill to the Secretary of Transportation. In addition ports are eligible for funds under the Surface Transportation formula funds made available to States under this bill.

Mr. Speaker, the Secretary of Transportation, working with MARAD, should ensure that ports, like rail, transit, highways and aviation also have a secure stream of funding for much needed "ready to go" intermodal infrastructure investments. Ports all over the country, including in my own State, are ready to put thousands of people to work immediately on vital port infrastructure projects.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the entire House, indeed the entire Congress agrees that it won't do much good to have improved highways, rail, and air transportation if our ports are crumbling, overcrowded, and outdated.

LEGISLATION TO CODIFY TITLE 41,  
U.S. CODE, REGARDING PUBLIC  
CONTRACTS

**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 23, 2009*

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, Ranking Member LAMAR SMITH and I are introducing a bill to codify into positive law as title 41, United States Code, certain general and permanent laws related to public contracts. This bill was prepared by the Office of the Law Revision Counsel, as part of its functions under 2 U.S.C. § 285(b).

This bill is substantially identical to H.R. 4779, which the Committee on the Judiciary approved in last Congress, updated to incorporate a few enactments that took place after the earlier bill was prepared, and to incorporate a few technical clarifications suggested by interested parties.