

what side of the issues you were on, Ron did not question one's patriotism—he believed that all Americans were united by a common bond and love of country—even if they stood on opposite sides of an issue. That fact in and of itself says a lot about the man.

In Washington, Ron Silver understood the importance of taking the time to study the issues he championed and to Ron that included taking into account all points of view. As a fierce independent, he knew that criticism could come from all sides. Ron knew that it was important not only to understand the policy and politics but also to respect the process and nuances of Washington that too many overlook and, as a result, find themselves facing a more difficult and challenging path to achieve their goals.

Ron Silver's abilities were illustrated in his work as a founder of the Creative Coalition, a collection of artists and entertainers from across the political spectrum who work to educate people about issues ranging from arts funding to First Amendment Rights to fighting poverty. Ron earned immense respect for his tireless work with the Coalition. It wasn't Ron Silver's nature to simply write a column or cut a check—although he was able to do both—he simply had too much energy and too much of an interest in making the lives of others better to limit his advocacy. That was the Ron Silver way—always striving to make a difference and contribute to building a stronger and more secure America.

Ron Silver leaves behind a grateful nation and a loving family. Our nation would be enriched if more of us exercised the same sense of country, level of thoughtfulness and aptly placed priorities as Ron Silver. At the top of such order was his family, who graciously shared their devoted husband and father with the rest of us. Our condolences are with each of you. Please find solace in the memories of the time and special moments you shared and the knowledge that your loved one was the embodiment of all that Thomas Jefferson valued in his countrymen—a citizen who never shied from his responsibilities to make his country a better place. He will be sorely missed.

Thank you Ron Silver.  
May God bless you and grant you peace.

THE WORLD'S WORST  
PERSECUTORS

**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 30, 2009*

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, the right to worship according to the dictates of your conscience is among the most precious freedoms.

Tragically this basic freedom has not been realized for millions around the globe. On January 16, the State Department designated the annual "Countries of Particular Concern." This notorious distinction is given to countries deemed particularly severe violators of religious freedom. This year the list included Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Uzbekistan.

Oftentimes the most powerful testimony of the repressive nature of these governments is found in the accounts of their own people.

Take the words of a 23-year-old Burmese monk: "We did not expect that the junta would

crush down a peaceful demonstration but when they raided the monasteries, shot and arrested the monks. I was so surprised and unbelievable that I could not express how my feelings were. All my beliefs were also destroyed."

Or the reflections of a Chinese house church leader: "First, when they arrest you, they try to convince you to give up your faith. And when you surrender to them they will offer you an office in a position such as community member or a position in the Three Self church. If you do not deny your faith and surrender to them, then they will attack you. First they put you into a small place, isolate you, and they let you starve to convince you."

Or these insights from North Korea: "North Korea is a prison without bars. The reason why the North Korean system still exists is because of the strict surveillance system. When we provide the information like 'this family believes in a religion from their grandfather's generation,' the National Security Agency will arrest each family member. That is why entire families are scared of one another. Everyone is supposed to be watching one another like this . . ."

With the 1998 passage of the International Religious Freedom Act, legislation which I authored, the promotion of religious freedom became official U.S. foreign policy. Sadly, 10 years later, the fight for this "first freedom" has never been more necessary. We must commit ourselves anew to standing with persecuted people of faith around the world who against all odds, in the face of fear, intimidation, imprisonment, torture and worse gather secretly to worship as their conscience demands.

CONGRATULATING DR. JIM  
JACOBS

**HON. SANDER M. LEVIN**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 30, 2009*

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my good friend, Dr. Jim Jacobs, as he is inaugurated as the Fifth President of Macomb Community College. Jim has the creative intelligence, passion, in-depth knowledge of the challenges facing Michigan, and collaborative energy to lead this fine institution through these next vital years of economic transformation for our State's businesses, workers and communities.

Jim Jacobs has more than 40 years of experience at Macomb Community College. He began teaching economics in 1967 and continued teaching both economics and political science for sixteen years before leading efforts to establish both the Tech Prep and Machinist Training institutes.

Jim Jacobs has a vast array of expertise in the areas of occupational change and technology, suburban economic development, occupational education, retraining of displaced workers and needs assessment of occupational programs. He has played a significant role in these areas at the national, state and local level, both conducting and publishing research and developing programs.

Jim Jacobs is the past president of the National Council for Workforce Education, a national post-secondary organization of occupa-

tional education and workforce development specialists. He served on the team that assisted the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth in the development of Reshaping Michigan's Workforce: An Action Plan of the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth. He was also part of the research staff and a report writer for Lt. Governor John Cherry's Commission on Higher Education & Economic Growth.

At the local level, Jim Jacobs is viewed by many as the authoritative voice on the economic climate in Macomb County. Each January for the past 23 years, Jim Jacobs has presented his economic forecast for Macomb County to an often sell-out crowd of business, government and civic leaders. He has also served on a number of community boards, including Peoples State Bank, Macomb Inter-Faith Action Center, United Way and St. John Hospital, and is a member of the board of directors of the Community College Research Center, New York.

I have had the pleasure of working with Jim Jacobs on numerous projects over the years. Including, school-to-work efforts, the redevelopment of the Tank Plant property (the local committee was co-chaired by Jim), worker retraining, and the impact of trade and monetary policies. On a whole range of issues, Jim is always available with wise and thoughtful insights and the economic statistics to make his case.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Jim Jacobs as he assumes this important position. With his immense skills and masterful understanding of the local area he and the community college will play a key role in continuing efforts to revolutionize the work force in Macomb County to prosper in this new economy.

IN HONOR OF THE STUDENTS AT  
ANOKA HIGH SCHOOL, MN

**HON. MICHELE BACHMANN**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 30, 2009*

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the students at Anoka High School. These students are taking their talents to the next level and joining with the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation to help fellow students that are afflicted by this lifelong disease.

Using the Tony Award-winning musical, Aida, as well as their reputation as one of Minnesota's best high school musical theater programs, students at Anoka High School are learning more than choreography and stage cues. They'll be raising money and awareness for juvenile diabetes. Through the "Kids Showing They Care" program, teens are able to be involved in a larger cause that affects their community and have the opportunity to use their talents and skills to help others. They can also see the growing impact of their seemingly small efforts and understand the importance of a collective effort in a successful production.

I rise today to honor the students at Anoka High School who have taken on an ambitious endeavor today, producing a school musical, that will have a lifelong impact on themselves and others. I commend them for their desire to help others in need and their very mature sense of community.