

the Glades; \$249,000 for the renovation of the Lake Park Library; \$500,000 for the St. Mary's Medical Center Children's Emergency Room Wing; \$500,000 for Home Safe; and \$100,000 for project SOAR Healthy Mothers/Healthy Babies.

Moreover, Ms. Green has helped to secure funding for projects beneficial to the Palm Beach community such as an aquatics facility in Riviera Beach, the Dan Calloway Recreation Complex, the Northwest Community Center, the Spady House Museum and C. Spencer Pompey Amphitheater in Delray Beach, the Wilson Recreation Center and Pool Renovation, the 1916 County Courthouse Restoration, and the 4-H Community Gardens. She arranged recreational and cultural funding in support of Heritage Fest, Children's Outreach, Mt. Olive Community Outreach Center, Roots Festival, the Soul of Delray, Annual Jazz & Blues Festival in Riviera Beach, Salvation Army, Teen Partnership Coalition, Operation Hope, and a host of school-based programs.

With the concerted efforts of many individuals and business leaders in the community, Ms. Green was able to organize the first Homeless Task Force for Palm Beach County. In 2007, she was named "Commissioner of the Year" by the Florida League of Cities for her extraordinary efforts of presiding over tough County transitions and improved relationships with cities throughout South Florida.

I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to work side by side with Commissioner Greene and it is a privilege for me to have this opportunity to recognize her before the esteemed House of Representatives. Now, in retirement, she embarks upon new challenges in life and I am certain her legacy of greatness will only grow and develop as she enters this new phase of life. I wish her every happiness and success.

HONORING RODNEY JOHN DIRIDON
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 70TH
ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTH

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Rodney John Diridon, "Rod," on the 70th anniversary of his birth. In addition to celebrating the commemoration of a life well spent, I would like to acknowledge the dedication he has exemplified in serving the Valley of Santa Clara for over half of his life.

Diridon, the son of an immigrant Italian railroad brakeman, has focused on transportation issues for decades. A most effective proponent of public transportation, Rod Sr. is considered the "father of modern transit" in Santa Clara County and credited with countless achievements including building the light rail system. He is a former member of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and a former candidate for the California State Assembly.

Upon his retirement from public office in 1994, the main train station in San Jose was

renamed "The Diridon Station" in his honor. He currently heads the Norman I. Mineta Transportation Institute at San Jose State University, and is a former chairman of the board of the High Speed Rail Authority.

Rod's service to his community and country started much earlier in his life. From 1963 to 1967 he served in the U.S. Navy as a Fleet Officer and Combat Duty Officer in Vietnam.

In 1969, Diridon founded the Diridon Research Corporation, later renamed Decision Research Institute (DRI) in 1972. DRI conducted market research, needs assessment surveys and legislative consulting throughout the United States. As founder and president he developed a "shared survey" research procedure subsequently adopted by the UNICEF of the United Nations.

His political career began in 1972 as the youngest person ever elected to the Saratoga City Council. He retired because of term limits, after completing 20 years and six terms as chairperson of both the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and Transit Board. He is the only person to have chaired the San Francisco Bay Area's (nine counties and 104 cities) three regional governments: the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, and the Association of Bay Area Governments.

To find the basis for Rod's call to public service, one need only look at his family's roots. Rodney John Diridon was born in Dunsmuir, California in 1939 to Claude and Rhoda Diridon. As the son of Italian immigrants, Rod's father, Claudius Diridoni was compelled to change his name when bigotry in the railroad employment system kept him from being hired. After becoming a union member, Claude was protected from discrimination, thus starting the Diridon family's long appreciation of organized labor.

Although Rod was dyslexic, through hard work and determination, he was a good student and member of championship football teams in high school. While working his way through college as a railroad trainman, he attended Shasta Junior College and Chico State, each for one year. He then transferred to San Jose State University, where he was a student leader, and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and an MSBA in Statistics.

He was married to Mary Ann Fudge from July 4, 1964 until 1999 and raised two children, Rodney Jr. born September 10, 1969, and Mary Margaret, born September 14, 1971. On June 10, 2001 he married Dr. Gloria Duffy.

Rod has chaired over 100 international, national, state and local community service programs and projects, most related to transit and the environment. He served, in 1993, as the chairperson of the American Public Transit Association in Washington, D.C., and more recently as the North American Vice President of the International Transit Association in Brussels. He has been an advisor to the Federal Transit Administration and in 1995 chaired the National Research Council's Transit Oversight and Project Selection Committee. Rod chaired the NRC's Transportation Research Board's study panel on "Combating Global Warming Through Sustainable Transportation Policy." He is frequently asked to provide testimony to Congressional Committees.

Diridon has received published recognition and numerous awards for his contributions

and has served on numerous organizations committed to community service at the national, state, regional and local levels. He has been most involved with transportation, the environment, arts and human rights fund-raising and advocacy.

INTRODUCING THE NATIONAL
COMMISSION ON EMPLOYMENT
AND ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT
OF 2009

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the National Commission on Employment and Economic Security Act of 2009.

This legislation is a necessary and vital investment in the people of the American workforce and their families. This bill will establish a national commission to examine issues of economic and psychological insecurity within our workforce that have been caused by employment displacement. Further, it will propose solutions, including recommendations for legislative and administrative action, to Congress and the President.

Since the recession began in December 2007, more than 5.1 million jobs have been lost. Last month, the national unemployment rate reached an unprecedented 8.5 percent, the highest it has been since the recession of 1983 and it is much higher in many states like Florida, at 9.7 percent, and it has topped 12.6 percent in Michigan.

Over the past year, unemployment rates have increased in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The scope of the economic downturn is so large that its impact is felt virtually everywhere along the economic spectrum.

While Americans lose their jobs and their incomes shrink, too often, they face the loss of their family's health insurance and, subsequent to the loss of income, even their housing. According to a September 2008 survey by the American Psychology Association, 80 percent of Americans say the economy is a significant cause of stress, an increase from 66 percent since April 2008. Perhaps even more disturbing, calls to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline have increased by more than 20 percent from January 2008 to January 2009.

Madam Speaker, the mental health of the American worker will be integral on the road to economic recovery and Congress must face this problem head on and help the very people who are facing unemployment, loss of health insurance, home foreclosure, stress, increased violence, and depression. It is time that we create this Commission and get our nation back on track.

We have a solemn responsibility to ensure the greatest possible assistance to the American workforce, whose commitment to economic participation has been a defining feature of the cultural fabric of our country. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

HONORING DELANE GOWER
KINZLER

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Delane Gower Kinzler, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 345, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Delane has been very active with his troop participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Delane has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Delane Gower Kinzler for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH CELEBRATE 125 YEARS OF MINISTRY

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the Sisters of St. Joseph. I would like to share some local history as provided by the Springfield Diocese.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield were founded in 1883 following a request by the pastor of St. Patrick's in Chicopee Falls. He needed help starting a parish school and so seven sisters from the New York Congregation moved to the Springfield Area. The small community grew slowly but steadily while educating poor immigrant children in central and western Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

By the mid 1960s, the ranks of the Springfield Congregation swelled to over one thousand women. The group had founded or staffed sixty schools and had established the Elms College.

Following the Second Vatican Council, the Sisters restructured their community life. Many moved out of convents and into small houses and apartments in local towns and cities. Their ministries expanded as well. No longer limited to schools, the Sisters worked in prisons, parishes, homeless shelters and other social services.

In the mid 1970s, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Fall River merged with the Springfield Congregation. In 2001, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rutland, Vermont joined the community which also covers Worcester, the Berkshires, Rhode Island and even Louisiana and Uganda. Today, the Springfield Congregation of about 300 Sisters continues to serve the people of God through a variety of Ministries.

Today we salute the Sisters of St. Joseph for 125 years of ministry as educators, pastoral ministers, innovators, evangelizers and social justice ministers. We thank the Sisters for their loving service to our communities.

The Sisters of Saint Joseph have provided quality, values-based Catholic education to countless students and we are grateful for their immeasurable impact.

COMMENDING THE PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES ON ALLOWING
FAMILY TRAVEL TO CUBA

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 23, 2009

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the President for his leadership and commitment to improve the United States' relationship with Cuba.

Lifting restrictions on family members' travels to the island and removing restrictions on remittances to Cuban families responds to both Cuban-American and Cubans' needs as well as it builds bridges between the American and the Cuban people.

I believe that keeping the family ties alive and allowing family members to assist one another are essential for Cuban citizens' quest for reform and a critical step towards the building of a trustworthy relationship.

Cuban-Americans are the best ambassadors to the Cuban people for democracy's core values. Diplomatic relations can begin with familial and cultural exchanges. This is especially true with Jazz music, which has always shown the sense of freedom.

Cuba has a rich musical tradition that has many admirers throughout the World, particularly in America. As more Cuban-Americans travel to Cuba, there will be increased opportunities to access this rich tradition. Reaching out in an effort to expand our common interest in culture and the arts will deepen our understanding of one another and serve as a bridge builder to more substantial bilateral relations.

In that spirit, I would like to submit this letter, from the US-Cuba Cultural Exchange, into the RECORD. This letter, written last March, urges the President to build a respectful and critical dialogue between the United States and Cuba through cultural exchange.

US-CUBA CULTURAL EXCHANGE,

Albuquerque, New Mexico, March 3, 2009.

President BARACK OBAMA,

*The White House,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR PRESIDENT OBAMA: We are artists, arts presenters, arts educators, cultural entrepreneurs and scholars, and cultural heritage and policy professionals from diverse political persuasions. We have been adversely affected by the cultural embargo imposed by the U.S. government against both Cuban and American artists and cultural institutions. We are writing to request that you make concrete changes in U.S. policy towards Cuba that will allow for the uninhibited flow of art, culture, information, ideas and debates, as well as travel by artists, cultural workers and professionals, and arts and cultural aficionados between the two countries.

U.S. policies towards Cuba—worsened many times over by the previous administration and criticized throughout the world—have prevented us from engaging in critical communication and collaboration with our Cuban counterparts, compromising our nation's cherished ideals of freedom of expression and preventing cultural interchange between two societies that share a historic relationship lasting over two centuries.

In 2007 we requested policy changes from the Bush Administration so that respectful, critical dialogue and principled exchange could take place between the peoples of Cuba and the United States and our respective governments. Our petition fell on deaf ears. As citizens, artists, scholars, educators and cultural workers from all artistic practices and from advocacy and service organizations in the arts, we now call upon your Administration to:

1. open a respectful dialogue with the government and people of Cuba in accord with established protocols supported by the community of nations;

2. end the travel ban that prevents U.S. citizens from visiting Cuba, and allow for Cuban artists and scholars to visit the United States, thus eliminating the censorship of art and ideas, and

3. initiate, by working with the U.S. Congress, a process that can result in the development of normal, respectful bilateral relations between our countries.

The artistic and cultural communities in the United States and in Cuba are catalysts of imagination and creativity. We are committed to serve as bridges for our fellow citizens. Now, we need our government to take leadership and re-open the pathways of exchange.

We look forward to working with you to advance the interests of the United States and of Cuba.

Sincerely,

(Sampling of over 1,100 signatures from arts & culture as of March 2, 2009)

Patch Adams; Michael Alexander, Exec Dir, Grand Performances* & Chair, California Arts Council*; Stuart A. Ashman, Cabinet Secretary, State of New Mexico Cultural Affairs; Stephen Bailey, Executive Director/CEO, Grand Opera House; Amiri & Amina Baraka; Harry Belafonte; Laura Bickford, Film Producer; Beth Boone, Artistic & Executive Director, Miami Light Project; Jackson Browne, Songwriter; Jimmy Cobb, NEA Jazz Master, Drums; James Early, Artists & Intellectuals in Defense of Humanity; Charles Fishman, Executive Producer, Duke Ellington Jazz Festival; Danny Glover, Activist-Actor; Charlie Haden, Educator/Musician; Herbie Hancock, Musician/Chairman, Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz.*

Donald Harrison, Musician & Composer; Louis Head, US-Cuba Cultural Exchange; Oscar Hernandez, Musician/Composer; Mike Kappus, President, The Rosebud Agency; Robert Kraft, President, Fox Music; Vivien Lesnik Weisman, Filmmaker; Sandra Levinson, Director, Cuban Art Space/Center for Cuban Studies; Bill Martinez, Arts Attorney & Presenter, Martinez & Associates; Graham Nash; Lukas Nelson, Musician; Arturo O'Farrill, Musician & Founder, Afro Latin Jazz Alliance & 2009 Grammy Award Winner; Michael Orlove, Senior Program Dir, Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs; Eddie Palmieri; Armando Peraza, Musician; Dafnis Prieto, Musician.

Bonnie Raitt, Musician & Activist; Awilda Rivera, Radio Personality, WBGO-Jazz 88; Tito Rodriguez, Jr., Musician, Tito Rodriguez, Jr. Orchestra; Ann Rosenthal/Cathy Zimmerman, Co-Dirs, MAPP International Productions; David Rubinson, Music Producer; Poncho Sanchez, Musician; Carlos Santana, Musician; Pete Seeger; Scott Southard, Director, International Music Network; Mavis Staples and