

mother is not transformed from a fetal container into a mother by the birth. A mother is a mother at conception and from that point on. And we use that language consistently.

But another piece comes to mind when I think about the President of the United States and this subject matter, and that is that I look back on the Saddleback Church debate that took place there, very well handled by Reverend Rick Warren, who offered the prayer just a few feet behind me here on the west portico of the Capitol Building at the inauguration of the President of the United States. But there they sat with JOHN MCCAIN and President Obama, and he asked the question of then-Senator Obama, When does life begin?

Senator Obama's answer was, "That's above my pay scale." When life begins—when his life began—is above his own pay scale.

Now, there is significant evidence that President Obama got a raise put in since August of last year because he decided right away in January that it was in his pay scale. He decided that he would rescind the Mexico City policy which prohibited our taxpayer dollars from funding abortions in foreign lands. By executive order, he wiped that out, that very conscience decision that was debated on the floor of this House over and over and over again and defended by the pro-life effort in this Congress and across the United States. And he also by executive order decided that he wants to fund with Federal tax dollars the ending of human life in the form of experimenting on embryos, little frozen embryos, little snowflake babies, some of whom I've held in my arms that were frozen for 9 years. Loving, giggling, laughing little children wiped out by executive order that now seems to have found its legs and decided life must not begin or it must not be sacred yet if it's in the early stages, when it can't scream for its own mercy. So the Mexico City policy wiped out, the embryonic stem cell prohibition of using Federal dollars to experiment on them has already been moved. And now we see the appointment of Dawn Johnsen. And we have a President that's going to be soon speaking in South Bend, Indiana, at Notre Dame University, directly in conflict with the teachings of the church. It is a hard thing for us Catholics to watch. It's a hard thing for the pro-life people in this country to watch.

□ 1900

But I have seen hundreds of thousands of Americans come to this city to stand up for innocent unborn human life. They will come to this city in greater numbers if Dawn Johnsen is confirmed, and I think the President will keep that in mind, and I pray that he will pull her nomination.

COMMEMORATING ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. KOSMAS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield to Member SHEILA JACKSON-LEE. I believe she wanted to address the floor.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Let me thank the distinguished gentleman, and as I rise, let me add my appreciation for his leadership of the Asian Pacific caucus and join him in celebrating Asian Pacific history month.

This is a time in our Nation that we are able to celebrate the many diverse cultures that make up those who are of Asian ancestry in the United States of America. And so my hat is tipped to the leadership in this Congress, the distinguished gentleman from California, and the many Members who have been such leaders.

I pay a special tribute to the late Bob Matsui who, of course, was a dear friend and someone that we all cherished.

I will speak briefly about the recent supplemental and the crisis that we face in this Nation. This is more than a tough challenge, to be able to address the concerns and the need for moving forward by a new President and the questions that are raised as this war supplemental makes its way through.

I will be asking questions as relates to our final solution, or legislative vote, as to whether or not language goes into this supplemental that will direct the administration to have an exit strategy for Afghanistan. I believe it is important as this bill makes its way through the Senate and back to the House, through conference, that there is a more definitive mark or standards and procedures for downsizing the war in Iraq, moving out equipment and bringing our soldiers home.

We now face a different conflict in Afghanistan. It is one of insurgents, the rise of the Taliban. We face as well the rising conflict in Pakistan, although the civilian government has maintained, in their visits here to the United States, they are committed to democracy, and I do believe them. Many of us have visited with President Zardari and leaders of his government, and we frankly believe that there is an opportunity to promote continued democracy in Pakistan, a friend of the United States for many years.

Just a few minutes ago I was meeting with a Pakistani American who was leaving to go help the internally displaced persons who are, as a result of the Pakistani Government, trying to rid that area of the Taliban and other insurgents who want to do harm to peace-loving people.

We need to be assured that the nuclear materials that Pakistan has are secure. But this bill, I believe, had mer-

its in that it did promote the developmental assistance, the foreign aid, to help Pakistan get on its feet.

The questions that I had, of course, were the monies used to surge up the war in Afghanistan. And so this will be a time to review how this bill will make its way back, and whether or not we can get an end time, and whether or not we can tell family when their young people will come home, and whether or not we can answer those families whose returning soldiers suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder, as evidenced by the five bodies who came back at the hands of another soldier.

War is horrible, and so I believe it is important, as we have given this vote to the President, that it be such that it is a vote that ends these wars and focuses on building nations and building democracies so that they can take care of their own war and hopefully be unconflicted, if you will.

I am grateful for the resources in this bill that will help military families, mothers and fathers and children, the salary that comes about through those soldiers who lost salaries that have been put in this bill; the disaster aid, although I would have wanted to have a match, a 100 percent match for Galveston that is still suffering from Hurricane Ike. I hope we will be able to work on this issue as we move forward.

Again, I want to thank the gentleman from California for yielding to me, because I wanted to ensure that the support that has been given by some of us is based upon finding a way to end these conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

And in finality, I might say that what I hope to have happen is that we find a way to ensure the end of the tenet, the term, if you will, of Osama bin Laden and of the insurgents that are destroying countries. I would hope, also, that we would be able to work to expand resources for posttraumatic stress disorders, and I am continuing to work to procure such a center in the 18th Congressional District for the large number of active soldiers that are in the Houston and Harris County area, noted as one of the major areas where active soldiers are in place.

This is, of course, an important step. And as we fight for education health reform, I think what we first of all must do is resolve these conflicts so that resources can be used to build a better America.

Mr. HONDA, again, I salute you on this great month and great leaders. You can count me as a friend as we move forward on so many different issues as we improve the lives of all Americans.

Mr. HONDA. I thank the gentlewoman from Texas and always count on her support for the issues that we care about together.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Asian American and Pacific Islander community and to commemorate the Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. As Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus,

what we call CAPAC, I feel privileged to be here tonight with my colleagues to speak of the Asian and Pacific Islander American history and accomplishments. Additionally, I will be highlighting those issues affecting our community and the priorities for CAPAC.

In celebrating the Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I want to give thanks to the late Congressman Frank Horton from New York and my good friend, former Secretary Norman Mineta, along with Senators DANIEL INOUE and Spark Masayuki Matsunaga of Hawaii.

It is because of their efforts that May is now designated as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. The first 10 days of May coincide with two important anniversaries: one, the arrival of the first Japanese American immigrants on May 7, 1843, to the United States, and the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869.

In 1992, Congress passed Public Law No. 102-450, the law that officially designated May of each year as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. Today the Asian Pacific Islander community is quickly expanding.

Currently, there are approximately 16.2 million APIs living in the United States. By the year 2050, there will be an estimated 43 million Asian Pacific Islanders, comprising 10 percent of the total U.S. population. My home State of California has the largest Asian population at 5 million. The States of New York and Texas followed at 1.4 million and close to 1 million, respectively.

The population is also growing in States beyond the usual hubs of New York and California. We are also seeing growth in other areas in our country such as Virginia, Nevada, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Florida.

I encourage my congressional colleagues to learn more about the Asian American Pacific Islander populations in their districts and become a member of CAPAC.

At this moment, Madam Speaker, I yield to my colleague from California, the gentlewoman, LAURA RICHARDSON.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, it's with great pleasure that I come here today to stand with my colleague, Representative MIKE HONDA. Some people might ask what would make me come and stand in support.

In my district, very recently, this Congress, in addition, with the support of the President, we authorized the long-time held benefits of Filipino Americans who served in a war side by side with many of our soldiers protecting them, and that was a great day in my district.

As I was growing up and I went to college, I had an opportunity, when I was getting my master's, to travel to China and to go to Shanghai and Beijing and Hong Kong and to see the beauty of different cultures and to understand how people have come here now to the United States, not as a sep-

aration or a wall, but, rather, for us to work together and to see the things of how this country could grow. So that's why I am here today, Madam Speaker, and I have a few comments that I would like to share.

I rise today in support of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. I proudly represent California's 37th Congressional District, one of the most diverse districts in the United States. Asians make up 11 percent of my district, and I am the 37th largest Asian population congressional district in this country. That means we are in the top 10 percent.

In fact, my district has the largest Cambodian population outside of Cambodia, only second to the population in Cambodia. And for the last 8 years, I have worked with the Cambodian community as we look at the challenges that we have and how we can better assure that folks understand the resources that we worked so hard to deliver to our communities that they know they are there to help them.

Because of this diversity, I am a proud member of CAPAC, which is the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. I am a member of 30 other caucuses that also advocate to this very Congress. But, together, the three caucuses, the Hispanic Caucus, the Black Caucus, and the Asian Pacific Islander Caucus, were members who worked together advancing the goals of minorities and underserved communities. Although Members represent everyone, there's an inadequate delivery of resources to many of those that we represent.

This year, for Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, the theme is "Lighting the Past, the Present, and the Future."

The past is filled with rich contributions of cultural, economic, and technological value from the Asian community. One of the main reasons the month is used, this month of May, to honor the Asian community is, as Mr. HONDA mentioned, the transatlantic railroad that we saw that traveled thousands, hundreds of miles across the United States, that we would not have had, that we would not have progressed at the level and the speed that we did in this country, had we not had working people who wanted to come and to contribute.

The present demonstrates the great progress we have made as a country together. I have much hope for the future, though, even more so of Asian Americans in our country, but realize that we must all work together and work hard to achieve equality amongst everyone.

Dalip Singh Saund was the first Asian American elected to Congress in 1957. Less than a decade later, Patsy Mink, whom many of us think of fondly, became first Asian American woman elected to Congress; both overcame adversity and paved the way, not only for Asian American Members of Congress, but Members such as myself as well.

Today we have seven Members of Congress, and Mr. HONDA is leading the charge of this caucus today. And recently, we had an unprecedented number of three Asian Americans who were recently named to President Obama's cabinet: Energy Secretary, Steven Chu; Commerce Secretary, Gary Locke; and Veterans Affairs Secretary, Eric Shinseki.

One of the simplest ways for Asian Americans to ensure a brighter future that we can all participate in, because isn't that what this country is all about, is to fully participate in the 2010 census. Everyone in our Nation must be accounted for so that Members like Mr. HONDA and I, together, can garner the appropriate resources to those communities which they so richly deserve.

Minorities are historically undercounted, sometimes due to language, sometimes due to a concern of why someone is knocking at their door, and they don't know the process of what's happening every 10 years, and sometimes it's just understanding differences. In other countries, it's very common for many members of the family to live together.

□ 1915

And that may not necessarily be the tradition in all of our cities or all of our communities; but in some, it's very much the case.

Minorities historically have had these challenges. In California, we have the largest Asian population in the United States, which both Mr. HONDA and I serve. Currently, there are over 5 million Asians—and this number is growing rapidly.

Between 2006 and 2007, the population grew 106,000—that's 2.9 percent—which reflects the largest percentage growth of any group of individuals in this country.

In addition to participating in the census, health care is going to be one of the largest and most important issues that we will tackle on this floor this year. It is critical that within the broad scope of health care reform that there's focus on eliminating racial disparities of research and accessibility.

Last year, I introduced a piece of legislation, and I plan on reintroducing it again this year, and it's very similar in building upon the work of former Congresswoman Patsy Mink as she brought forward title IX legislation.

We all know what a tremendous effect title IX had on gender equality in sports and in programs. I was one who benefited from that. I was one of the first girls in my grade school who got to play with the boys on the playground, playing baseball and basketball. And it took legislation like Patsy Mink's to show that we could work side-by-side and that there should be an equality. Today, we face another tremendous challenge, and that inequality is health care.

Finally, I want to thank Congressman HONDA, the chair of CAPAC, which

I proudly serve with him, for organizing this time tonight to celebrate the accomplishments and the work that we still have yet to do. I'm looking forward to celebrating many more accomplishments this year, and beyond, and we're just beginning. I stand side-by-side as we take that trip together.

Mr. HONDA. I have a couple of comments to what you had shared with us. One is I'm very, very pleased that you have taken the initiative to join CAPAC, not only because you believe in it, but also there are folks in your district that need to be represented. Your knowledge and your understanding of the communities; that it has to be disaggregated to understand the different necessities and needs of each community rather than looking at one monolithic community, is greatly appreciated because, as you mention, about the census, it is about the census that drives us constitutionally to make sure that we count every person in this country. The fact that you express that there are different strategies of housing based upon family structures; that many times one family per household does not necessarily exist and that many families do live together to be with each other and give each other support, I wanted to thank you for that observation.

And one not very known fact about Patsy Mink. When she led the effort to pass the title IX legislation, that she did in fact open up quite a bit of avenues for women, but also I still remember the great tennis match between Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Billie Jean King is from my district, the Long Beach area.

Mr. HONDA. That was a great contest. I believe that Billie Jean King won, didn't she?

Ms. RICHARDSON. Yes, she did.

Mr. HONDA. Despite his tactics. And so what we do here has great impact not only in this country but worldwide. So I really do appreciate the time and thought that you have put into this presentation and the idea that Asian Americans have contributed to this country and in building this country, as you had mentioned, on the transcontinental railroad.

It's interesting to note that when you look at pictures of the golden spike being driven into the ground at Promontory Summit, there are no Asian faces there. I often wonder what happened. Were they given the day off or something like that?

I think it's very clear today that they were excused. And the kind of history that we see that is shared in our history books need to be brought up to date and be accurate.

This kind of forum, where we have a month dedicated to discussions about our contributions and our perspectives of how we see the communities in this country, is greatly appreciated. The fact that we have many people from different backgrounds in our caucus

only expresses the understanding and the sensitivity and the consciousness that each individual Congressperson representing their district, even though a district may have 14 percent or 1 percent, the fact that it is stated publicly that you are representing those districts and those communities is greatly appreciated.

So, to my sister from California, I really appreciate your time spent with us.

Ms. RICHARDSON. From my brothers and sisters of the Cambodian community, Arkon. Chem re lear.

Mr. HONDA. Thank you. The Asian American Pacific Islander community is often misperceived as an over-achieving monolithic group. However, our community is extremely diverse in our languages, ethnicities, income, educational attainment, language capabilities, special need and challenges.

Stereotypes about our communities make it difficult to understand the unique problems faced by individual communities and subgroups. Data that is disaggregated by ethnicity for our various communities is hard to come by, but critical to the understanding where we must direct Federal attention.

As a country, we need to better address the needs of the AAPI community when we discuss comprehensive immigration reform, health care, economic recovery, and education. We are also barely visible in corporate America, underrepresented in political and judicial offices throughout the country, and misportrayed in our mainstream media.

As our community expands, we must also continue to educate our fellow citizens about the uniqueness of our experiences. Despite the daunting challenges we face, this is a time of great optimism and hope for the communities.

This year, we are marking Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month under the twin banners of National Service and Recovery. We are at a pivotal moment in our Nation's history where the national spirit is shifting to a new era of volunteerism, public service, and working for the common good.

The Asian Pacific Islander American communities are no stranger to these changes, and our communities have taken hold of a new civic spirit engendered by President Obama's new administration.

At this time, Madam Speaker, I'd like to yield such time as she may consume to our gentlelady from the Aloha State, Mazie Hirono.

Ms. HIRONO. I thank my colleague for yielding me such time as I might use.

Aloha. I rise today to join my fellow congressional Asian Pacific Islander American Caucus members in celebrating Asian Pacific Islander American Heritage Month. Of course, I'd like to thank Congressman HONDA for organizing this Special Order tonight and for his continuing leadership through-

out the year and his service as the chair of CAPAC.

In 1978, a joint congressional resolution established Asian Pacific American Heritage Week. The first 10 days of May were chosen to coincide with two key anniversaries: The U.S. arrival of the first Japanese immigrant on May 7, 1843, and the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. In 1992, Congress expanded the week to a full monthlong celebration of the Asian and Pacific Islander American community.

We certainly have added to the diversity and the cultural richness of our country. As a first generation immigrant myself, having come to this country when I was about eight years old, this country has afforded not just me, but the millions of immigrants, the first generation we call issei and nisei, opportunities that we never would have had in our home countries.

With 16.2 million residents, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are one of the fastest growing populations in the United States. In fact, the Census Bureau estimates that by the year 2050, more than 33.4 million Asian Americans will call the United States home.

Asian and Pacific Islander Americans have made valuable contributions to every aspect of American life—from business to education to politics to the arts to the military. For example, there are approximately 1.1 million APIA-owned small businesses all across the country that employ 2.2 million workers. There are also hundreds of thousands of APIA servicemembers and veterans, including more than 53,500 brave men and women who have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001.

Today, I was glad to join my colleagues in supporting passage of H.R. 347, which appropriately awards a Congressional Gold Medal to the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 42nd Regimental Combat Team in honor of their extraordinary and dedicated service during World War II.

Comprised predominantly of nisei, the American-born sons of Japanese immigrants, members of the University of Hawaii's Reserve Officers' Training Corps, the ROTC, aided the wounded, buried the fallen, and helped defend vulnerable areas in Hawaii after the attack at Pearl Harbor.

In spite of these acts of courage, the U.S. Army discharged all nisei in the ROTC unit, changed their draft status to ineligible, and segregated all Japanese American in the military on the mainland out of their units. In the meantime, more than 100,000 Japanese Americans were forcibly relocated from their homes to internment camps.

Undaunted, members of the Hawaii Provisional Infantry Battalion joined the 100th Infantry Battalion in California to train as soldiers. The sheer determination and pursuit of excellence displayed by this battalion in

training contributed to President Roosevelt's decision to allow nisei volunteers to serve in the U.S. military again, leading to their incorporation into the 442nd.

Members of the 100th and 442nd risked their lives to fight for our country and allies in Europe. The 442nd "Go for Broke" unit became the most decorated in U.S. military history for its size and length of service, with its component, the 100th Infantry Battalion, earning the nickname "The Purple Heart Battalion."

I'd like to thank Congressman SCHIFF, the chief sponsor of H.R. 347, for providing us with the opportunity to bestow this body's most distinguished honor, the Congressional Gold Medal, to these brave soldiers on the behalf of a grateful Nation.

I would be remiss if I did not mention one of Hawaii's favorite sons as we celebrate this month, and that is President Barack Obama. While not ethnically Asian American or Pacific Islander himself, his ties to our community are strong ones, and his support on our issues could not be more heartfelt.

He has appointed, as mentioned earlier, Asian Americans to key cabinet positions: Steven Chu, Secretary of Energy; Gary Locke, Secretary of Commerce. By the way, Gary Locke is the first Asian American to be elected Governor outside of Hawaii. And Kauai's own General Eric Shinseki, Secretary of Veteran Affairs.

One of the issues that President Obama has supported is self-determination for the indigenous people of our State of Hawaii—native Hawaiians who deserve to have the same right to self-determination enjoyed by other indigenous groups such as the American Indians and the Alaskan natives.

H.R. 2314, the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act, would set up a process for native Hawaiians to organize a governmental entity. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House and our President in passing this important bill.

I would also be remiss if I did not pay tribute to my predecessor, Congresswoman Patsy T. Mink of Hawaii, a trailblazer in every sense of the word. I thank my colleague, Congresswoman RICHARDSON, for mentioning Patsy Mink, for whom title IX was renamed the Patsy T. Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act.

Title IX changed the lives of women and girls across our country. In fact, a couple of years ago, several of the high schools in my district were given a special recognition for really promoting title IX and participation of high school girls in sports. When I attended one of these high schools to present them with a special recognition, one of the girls asked me a question that totally floored me. That question was, if you could pick a sport, what sport would you have participated in? And it floored me because it was a question that had never been asked when I was in high school.

That's the kind of difference that title IX is making. In fact, Patsy's own daughter, when she applied to a particular school and did not get accepted, the reason for that was, they told her, We have enough women in our university. This all preceded title IX. Literally thousands and thousands of lives have been change by title IX.

In closing, I'd like to also once again thank Chairman HONDA for allowing us this opportunity to reflect upon how far our APIA community has come, and yet we must remember how much further our community has to go.

As we say in Hawaii, mahalo nui loa. Mr. HONDA. Mahalo.

Ms. HIRONO. Thank you, Congressman.

Mr. HONDA. I'd like to thank the gentle lady from Hawaii. It appears that the mainland Asian Americans have to strive real hard to catch up to the contributions that many of the folks from Hawaii had accomplished.

You mentioned Patsy Mink. I think a lot of us understand that when we come from humble backgrounds—and she often shared that she was born on a plantation; went for many years without shoes. She understood what it meant to be a woman. And I suspect your background has been very similar.

□ 1930

Mr. HONDA. The idea of title IX and equity for women was probably one that formulated in her life and in her work, and the opportunity came about when she was able to walk the Halls of Congress. She did that, but she didn't stop there because I understand there is a story about her where she led a contingent of women to protest that there were no gymnasiums here for women and only for men. That must have been a real sight.

Ms. HIRONO. I can tell you, having gone to the women's gym in the Rayburn Building, things have changed. We have full-size lockers now. Truly, in terms of gender equality, Patsy was a leader because she had to fight every step of the way. And, in fact, one of the other stories about Patsy is when she applied to medical school. And she was a very smart woman. She wanted to become a doctor. She applied to medical school and was refused because she was a woman. When she finally applied to law school, they put her in the international dorm because they thought she was a foreign person.

We have come a long way.

I did want to mention as long as we are talking about the challenges that immigrants face. There was a historic poll done recently focusing on immigrant women and the fact that so many of them come to this country to truly create a new life of opportunity for their children. Many of them were professionals in the countries from which they came, and so they did not come to make money. Often the kind of jobs they were able to get in this country were very poor paying with not very many benefits.

This was so reminiscent of when my mother brought us to this country. We came literally with nothing, and she started off in a very poor-paying job with no benefits. But what guided her was this immigrant spirit of wanting to create a new life for her children. That kept her going. She wanted for herself to be able to take care of her family, but to have us have opportunities that she never had.

That story is replicated in thousands and thousands and thousands of stories by the waves of immigrants from Japan, Korea, China, the Philippines, over and over. And to know that even now these women and their families face particular challenges should reinforce in us our desire to not only celebrate all of the accomplishments of the APIA community, but to know that there is much more work to be done.

Mr. HONDA. Thank you for sharing that. I guess in English we say you weren't born with a silver spoon in your mouth, nor golden chopsticks. Knowing your history of political participation, being the lieutenant governor of Hawaii and now representing Hawaii, I guess one can say that you are a statistical aberration of probabilities, and who would guess except for the fact that your mom had such great strength.

Ms. HIRONO. One of the things that I always say is that this is a great country, and even if we are not perfect, what a country. I am reminded once again of that with the election of our first African American President.

Mr. HONDA. Thank you very much.

For the record, I know I said I would go until 7:30, but it seems we have gotten verbose and more comfortable with this kind of presentation so we will move on as designated.

Madam Speaker, for the first time we are marking Asian Pacific American Heritage Month with an American President with close ties to Asia, as has been mentioned previously. President Obama grew up in Hawaii and Indonesia. His sister is half Indonesian, and his brother-in-law is Chinese Canadian, and he has maintained close ties with Asian friends and colleagues throughout his life.

President Obama's campaign made unprecedented efforts to reach out to the APIA communities, and we have found a receptive and engaged administration with a close ear to our shared interests.

Many APIA community members have responded to President Obama's call for public service.

The President's Cabinet appointments include a record three Asian Americans: Energy Secretary Steven Chu; Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, the former Governor of Washington; Veterans Affairs Secretary General Eric Shinseki of Hawaii; and General Shinseki is joined at Veterans Affairs by Colonel Tammy Duckworth, who serves as Assistant Secretary.

He has chosen AAPIs for positions in the White House and throughout his

administration, including Peter Rouse, Chris Lu, Tina Tehen, Kal Penn, Nicholas Rathod, Kundra Vivek, and Sonal Shah.

Among many others in the White House, CAPAC's own Victoria Tung transitioned from her position as CAPAC executive director to an appointment Under Secretary Locke at the Department of Commerce.

The ranks of Asian American Pacific Islander Members of Congress also increased this past year with the election of ANH "JOSEPH" CAO from Louisiana's Second District, GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN from the Northern Mariana Islands, and STEVE AUSTRIA from Ohio's Seventh District.

Representative CAO has the distinction of being the first Vietnamese American elected to Congress.

Representative SABLAN is the first Member to represent the Northern Marianas, and the only Chamorro person serving in Congress today. Representatives CAO and SABLAN are also the newest members of the CAPAC executive board. Our newest associate members are Congresswoman CAROLYN MALONEY of New York and Congressman JERRY MCNERNEY of California, and we have many more lined up to join.

It is a testament to our evolving national character as a nation of immigrants to have our newest Members of Congress come from upbringings beyond our shores.

Talking about beyond our shores, the Northern Marianas, the most western outpost of the United States, here to speak with us is the gentleman from Northern Marianas, Congressman SABLAN.

Mr. SABLAN. Thank you very much. I am very happy to join the chairman of our caucus here before you, Madam Speaker, as part of the celebration of the Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

On May 1, 2009, President Obama proclaimed May 2009 as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands celebrate our heritage and praise those who pass on our history to our children.

The people of the Northern Mariana Islands have much to celebrate: our strength and our relationship with the United States. We have two distinct but related people: the Chamorros and the Carolinians. Our culture and language are witness to the evolution and strength of our people. From the over 300-year occupation of the Spanish beginning in the early 1500s, to the purchase of the islands by the Germans in 1899, to the annexation of the islands by Japan before World War II, to becoming a trust territory for 30 years under the United States after the war, the Chamorro and the Carolinian people remain proud of who they were and who they are today.

The strength is seen in the eyes of our elders and passed on to generations

thereafter. Despite the tragedies that have fallen on our elders and their elders before, our people are very hospitable. We have embraced people from all over the world, not just into our islands, but into our own homes. For instance, we have cultural exchanges between our schoolchildren and other children from other nations who come to the Northern Marianas. Families host and have barbecues for visiting military personnel during their R&R visits, and we have several yearly festivals showcasing the many beautiful faces and cultures of the Marianas.

We celebrate the independence of our people as part of our heritage. The people of the Northern Mariana Islands decided the fate of their future after World War II. We chose, as an act of political self-determination, to be a governing commonwealth within the American political system.

Just last month on March 24, we celebrated 33 years of our relationship with the United States. Covenant Day is the recognition of the agreement made between the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States and which granted the Northern Mariana Islanders United States citizenship. Where else but in America can an individual who has only been a citizen for 22 years be allowed to be a Member of Congress?

While Covenant Day celebrates the union between the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month celebrates the very people who are part of this union. Pacific Islanders contribute much to the United States landscape, including teachers, service in the military, caring for those in need of medical assistance, defending and prosecution under our legal system, and volunteerism in so many ways.

And after 33 years, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands can contribute even more now that they have a voice in Congress. The people can become involved in policies that are beneficial to all, including Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. A voice in Congress is evidence of independence, but at the same time resonates with a theme of working together, which is exactly who we are.

For example, health care reform impacts not only Pacific Islanders on a local level, but affects all people on a national level. Our voice in Congress will seek to protect the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, as well as other people across our Nation.

Lastly, our cultural legacy is only as strong as we remember our past. There are not enough pages for me to list each and every person who has contributed to the preservation of our culture and language. In general, I would like to thank the people who have written books about the Northern Mariana Islands, who have taught our history to our children in classrooms, to the organizations that have sponsored debates, contests, and conversations, and the librarians who archive our important documents for future generations.

While May has been formally recognized as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, our people celebrate our heritage every day by speaking our native tongue, by reading books of our past, by visiting and paying respect to our elders, by learning from them, and by performing our cultural dances and singing our local music.

Madam Speaker, I recommend the following literature about the Northern Mariana Islands for those who are interested:

□ 1945

"Tiempon I Manmofo'na: Ancient Chamorro Culture and History of the Northern Mariana Islands"; "We Drank Our Tears: Memories of the Battles for Saipan and Tinian as Told by Our Elders"; "Estreyas Marianas: Chamorro"; "Ancient Chamorro Society"; "An Honorable Accord: The Covenant Between the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States"; "History of the Northern Mariana Islands"; "A Tidy Universe of Islands"; and "Tiempon Aleman: A Look Back at the German Rule of the Northern Mariana Islands, 1899-1914."

I would like to say in our native tongue, Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Ghilisow, and thank you.

Mr. HONDA. Thank you very much, Congressman KILILI, as you like to be called.

Many things that happen in the Northern Marianas is that—and a lot of people don't seem to understand or know—is that there is a dire need in those islands that we should be paying attention to. Many times when you're out of sight, you're out of mind; and your presence has brought to our sight and to our understanding the many things that the islands are facing, such as the situation in Saipan.

Could you just share a little bit about that.

Mr. SABLAN. Thank you. Let me put it this way; I have been told, actually, in my seventh week here in Congress, that, look, you can't catch up 33 years of absence in 7 weeks' time.

We are a small island. We have very little resources. I have always said that education is the number one resource we have, and as a member of the Committee on Education and Labor, I continue to forward that agenda for our islands and for our future. But obviously, because we have not had a Member in Congress since we became a United States Commonwealth, we have had a lack of resources.

Our island, for example, we just don't have 24-hour water. And not just that, but if you're lucky enough to get 2 to 3 hours of water a day, you can't drink that water anyway, so you use it to wash your clothes and bathe and those kinds of things.

Our number one problem is we have major parts of one island in Saipan and the other two islands have absolutely no sewer system. So, yes, we are trying to bring to the attention of Congress

and the Federal Government the needs of these islands.

We have a set of 14 islands in the Northern Mariana Islands that right now three are inhabited. At one time, seven islands were inhabited, but because of the lack of infrastructure in those islands, the absence of schools, public health and running water and utilities, those people actually uprooted and moved into Saipan. So we have the situation where we are so far removed—as you know, we are 15 time zones away from Washington, D.C. We are so far away, it is now 10 o'clock in the morning tomorrow, and so the time difference is amazing.

I would like to also admit that when I came here in January, since then I have been very welcomed by the Members of this Congress and by you, Mr. Chairman. I am so grateful for the hospitality, the courteousness that I was given, the decency and respect with which I am addressed. That just makes me much more convinced that America is truly a Nation of great people and generous people. Thank you.

Mr. HONDA. Thank you. And the admonition of you can't take care of 33 years in 7 weeks, if we all believed that, then we would still be back, perhaps, in the dark ages. Many people in the old days used to say, just be patient and by and by things will happen, but things don't happen without some initiative and some understanding and the information you bring with you. So the people of the Northern Marianas and this country, we are very responsible for many of the things that happened in the Pacific Islands because of the testing we've done out that way and things like that, really does speak to the responsibility of trying to find ways, with technology, to be able to afford and provide the necessary kinds of things that are required for living a quality of life, such as fresh water. So we thank you very much.

Mr. SABLAN. Thank you for having me.

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, our Nation was founded by immigrants who valued freedom and liberty, who sought to be free from persecution, from tyranny.

Families fled their home countries to seek refuge in this great Nation because they, too, believed in liberty, justice, and freedom for all. It is in this spirit that CAPAC supports immigration legislation that shifts the debate from an exclusionary, anti-immigrant, enforcement-only approach to one that confronts the social and economic realities behind immigration, honors the dignity of all families and communities, and recognizes the economic, social, and cultural contributions of immigrants to our great country.

Today, AAPIs constitute a growing and vibrant piece of the American fabric. In 2007, approximately 10.2 million of the Nation's foreign born were born in Asia, constituting over one-quarter of the foreign-born population and over one-half of the total Asian American Pacific Island population.

Even with a relatively high naturalization rate, Asian undocumented immigrants living, working, or studying in the U.S. represent approximately 12 percent of the undocumented immigrants in the U.S. These include victims of immigration fraud who have become undocumented due to no fault of their own. Many work and study hard and pay taxes, yet live in fear with no hope of gaining a path to legal permanent resident status.

We must also recognize that reuniting families gives strength to American communities and are the bedrock of a vibrant and stable economy. We must eliminate the long backlogs keeping families apart for years and often decades. We have the tools and resources to remove the obstacles of massive backlogs, insufficient staffing, and unused visas that cause unnecessary misery for our newest Americans.

Let's keep families together. By strengthening the social fabric of our communities and integrating workers, we can get our economy back on track while reuniting American workers with their families.

The American people spoke in a united voice last year when they voted down the politics of division and embraced the politics of change. President Obama, the son of a Kenyan immigrant, has made comprehensive immigration reform a high priority. CAPAC is prepared to work with our colleagues to push through the long-deferred changes needed to ensure a fair, efficient, and secure immigration system. We join with the other caucuses to make sure that becomes a reality.

Madam Speaker, a common misperception of AAPIs is that as a group we face fewer health problems than other racial and ethnic groups. In fact, AAPIs as a group, and specific populations within this group, do experience disparities in health and health care. For example, AAPIs have the highest hepatitis B rates of any racial group in the United States. We must bring attention to and educate our communities about prevention of hepatitis B through testing and vaccination.

In the United States, 12 million people have been infected at some time in their lives with the hepatitis B virus, and more than 5,000 Americans die from hepatitis B-related liver complications each year. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders account for more than half of the chronic hepatitis B cases and half of the deaths resulting from chronic hepatitis B infections in the United States.

In order to break the silence surrounding this deadly disease and bring awareness to the American people, Congressman EDOLPHUS TOWNS, Congressman CHARLIE DENT, Congressman ANH CAO, and I will introduce a resolution to support the goals and ideals of Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month and World Hepatitis Awareness Day. I hope my colleagues will join me in educating our communities about the dangers of this disease.

Furthermore, according to the Census Bureau, 16.8 percent of AAPIs went without insurance in 2007, up from 15.5 percent in 2006. This means that the uninsured are not only more likely to go without care for serious medical conditions, they are also more likely to go without routine care, less likely to have a regular source of care, less likely to use preventative services, and have fewer visits per year. At the same time, without appropriate language translation services or properly translated materials, limited English-proficient immigrants cannot receive adequate care as well as State and Federal benefits for which they may be eligible.

In the AAPI community, 76 percent of Hmong Americans, 61 percent of Vietnamese Americans, 52 percent of Korean Americans, 39 percent of Tongans speak limited English. Therefore, eliminating health care disparities in the AAPI community must include data collection, linguistically appropriate and culturally competent services, and access to health insurance.

CAPAC has been working with both the Congressional Hispanic and Black Caucuses on the Healthcare Equality and Accountability Act to eliminate ethnic and racial health disparities for all of our communities. The act would expand the health care safety net, diversify the health care workforce, combat diseases that disproportionately affect racial and ethnic minorities, emphasize prevention and behavioral health, and promote the collection and dissemination of data, and enhance medical research. CAPAC has also joined the Congressional Black, Hispanic, and Progressive Caucuses to strongly support a public health insurance plan option, such as Medicare.

In addition to immigration and health care reform, expanding educational access for all Americans is also a high priority for CAPAC. This Saturday marks the 55th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education. As we celebrate, we must remember that education is at the very center of our democratic meritocracy, and it is imperative that every American should be afforded the true opportunity to achieve their highest potential.

I have reintroduced the Educational Opportunity and Equity Commission Act, H.R. 1758, to begin the process of overhauling the country's education system and to finally address the disparities among America's schools. This legislation creates a national commission charged with gathering public opinions and insights about how government can improve education and eliminate the disparities in our educational system. I hope you will join me as cosponsors to this legislation.

As we celebrate Brown v. Board of Education, we must remember the needs of all young people, including Asian American and Pacific Islander students, many of whom struggle in low-income communities, refugee communities, and do not have sufficient English skills. Brown paved the way

for future Supreme Court rulings, such as in 1974, the Supreme Court's unanimous decision in *Lau v. Nichols*. That decision enumerated the educational rights of English language learners and established that education is a civil right. As Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, we should be proud of our community and its participation in our country's civil rights movement and not forget that we have a long way to go yet.

According to the 2000 Census, only 9.1 percent of Cambodian Americans, 7.4 percent Hmong Americans, 7.6 Lao Americans, 19.5 percent of Vietnamese Americans, and 16.5 of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders who are 25 years and older have a bachelors degree or higher. These numbers show that we must do a better job of disaggregating data and information about our communities and to assess the needs of those hardworking Americans who still falter behind.

To address the disparities between subgroups of the larger AAPI community, we must support greater funding for Asian American and Pacific Islander-serving institutions. This program provides Federal grants to colleges and universities that have an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 10 percent AAPI, and at least 50 percent of its degree-seeking students receive financial assistance.

On behalf of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, Congressman DAVID WU and I will be working to increase the availability of loan assistance, scholarships, and programs to allow AAPI students to attend a higher education institution, to ensure full funding for teachers and bilingual education programs under the No Child Left Behind law to support English language learners; and to support full funding of minority outreach programs for access to higher education, such as the TRIO programs, to expand services to service AAPI students.

I am proud of our community's accomplishments, and I would like to recognize many of the AAPI "firsts" in the areas of art, film, sports, sciences, academia, and politics.

In 1847, Yung Wing, a Chinese American, graduated from Yale University and became the first AAPI to graduate from an American University.

In 1863, William Ah Hang, a Chinese American, became the first AAPI to enlist in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War.

In 1913, A.K. Mozumdar became the first Indian-born person to earn U.S. citizenship, having convinced the court that he was Caucasian, and therefore met the requirements of naturalization law that restricted citizenship only to free white persons.

□ 2000

In 1922 Anna May Wong, in her lead role in *The Toll of the Sea*, at the age of 17 became the first AAPI female to become a movie star, achieving stardom at a time when prejudice against Chinese in the U.S. was rampant.

In 1944 An Wang, a Chinese American who invented the magnetic core memory, revolutionized computing and served as the standard method for memory retrieval and storage.

During World War II, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team of the U.S. Army, comprised mostly of Japanese Americans, became the most highly decorated unit of its size in the history of the U.S. Army, including 22 Medal of Honor recipients.

It appears that my time is expiring. So let me quickly indicate that we have young people like Wataru "Wat" Misaka who was born in 1947 who became the first ethnic minority and the first AAPI to play in the National Basketball Association, the New York Knicks. Imagine that, an Asian American in basketball.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank you for this opportunity to share within a short hour the history of the Asian Americans and a variety of communities that reside in this country that have contributed, yet many of these names are still unknown.

Ang Lee is probably the most widely known today, the Chinese American director who was the first to win an Academy Award for Best Director.

Thank you very much, and we would hope that we have opportunities in the near future to be able to share more.

VACATING 5-MINUTE SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. HALVORSON). Without objection, the 5-minute request of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is vacated.

There was no objection.

THOSE WHO WEAR THE UNIFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It has been said that we sleep safe in our beds because bold men and women stand ready in the night to visit justice on those who would try to do us harm.

Madam Speaker, those bold men and women are those people throughout America that wear the uniform of a peace officer, a law enforcement officer that wears the badge on their chest to represent that symbol, to protect the community from those evildoers.

Each year, 50,000 police officers are assaulted in the United States. Let me repeat. Fifty thousand peace officers in the United States are assaulted by somebody.

On May 17, 1792, New York City's Deputy Sheriff Isaac Smith became the first recorded police officer to be killed in the line of duty. Since then, Madam Speaker, 18,340 police officers have been killed while on duty protecting the rest of us.

In 1961, Congress created Peace Officers Memorial Day and designated it to

be commemorated each year on May 15, which is tomorrow. I am proud to be the sponsor of this year's resolution that passed this House unanimously in February.

Every year the President issues a proclamation naming May 15 National Peace Officers Memorial Day. A quote by President George H.W. Bush is engraved on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial located in Washington, D.C., that summarized the mission of the 900,000 current sworn law enforcement officers in the United States.

Here's what it says, Madam Speaker: "It is an officer's continuing quest to preserve both democracy and decency and to protect a national treasure that we call the American dream." That is the mission statement of peace officers in this country, those who wear the American uniform.

Tomorrow, Madam Speaker, on the other side of the Capitol, on the west side of the Capitol, 140 families will be assembled together. They will be surrounded by thousands of other people. Most of those people will be peace officers from somewhere in the United States, wearing their uniforms, standing at attention to honor those 140 families who lost a loved one last year in the line of duty because 140 peace officers of the United States law enforcement community were killed last year in the line of duty. Ten percent of those, 14, were from my home State of Texas.

The names of those 14, Madam Speaker, are:

Deputy Constable David Joubert. He worked for the Harris County Constable's Office, Precinct 7 in Houston, Texas.

Police Officer Matthew B. Thebeau, Corpus Christi Police Department.

Corporal Harry Thielepape, Harris County Constable's Office, Precinct 6, in Houston, Texas.

Senior Corporal Victor A. Lozada Sr., Dallas Police Department.

Trooper James Scott Burns of the Texas Department of Public Safety, working for the Highway Patrol in Texas.

Police Officer Everett William Dennis, Carthage Police Department in Texas.

Sergeant Barbara Jean Shumate who worked for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

A personal friend of mine, Police Officer Gary Gryder who worked for the Houston Police Department.

Another personal friend of mine, Detective Tommy Keen of the Harris County Sheriff's Department. I knew him 25 years ago when I was a prosecutor and he was still arresting outlaws.

Game Warden George Harold Whatley, Jr. who worked for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Sheriff Brent Lee of the Trinity County Sheriff's Department in Texas.

Police Officer Robert Davis of the San Antonio Police Department.