

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. BECERRA. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, June 3, 2009, I missed rollcall No. 295–300. If present, I would have voted “aye” on rollcall votes 295, 297, 298, 299 and 300 and “nay” on rollcall vote 296.

NIKI GARCIA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Niki Garcia who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Niki Garcia is an 8th grader at North Arvada Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Niki Garcia is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential that students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Niki Garcia for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication she has shown in her academic career to her future accomplishments.

INTRODUCING A RESOLUTION TO ENCOURAGE UNITED STATES PARTICIPATION IN THE SHANGHAI 2010 EXPO

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce a resolution to encourage full United States participation in the Shanghai 2010 Expo. The upcoming 2010 Shanghai Expo—the World’s Fair—includes more than 170 countries, tens of millions of visitors, and thousands of displays of new and emerging technologies and products to spur economic growth and trade. But the United States is in danger of being a no-show. While we have made verbal commitments to participate, the necessary diplomatic and fundraising efforts have lagged, throwing into doubt an important opportunity to demonstrate our global leadership, improve relations with China, and convey to millions of visitors our country’s many technological and cultural achievements.

Madam Speaker, the World’s Fair is a lasting and venerable international institution dating back to the mid-19th century. It is older than the modern-day Olympics, and remains behind only the Olympics and the World Cup in global economic and cultural impact. The United States has a long history of involve-

ment in the World’s Fair, hosting over 20 fairs. Few people realize that these fairs, in addition to showcasing important American technological and cultural achievements, have also left behind lasting reminders of their importance, such as the Seattle Space Needle, the San Francisco Palace of Fine Arts, and the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry. Unfortunately, in the last decade the United States has declined to participate in many World’s Fairs and other international expositions, depriving the international community of experiencing unique features of American economic and cultural life.

Madam Speaker, the upcoming Shanghai Expo presents a unique and important opportunity for the United States to apply our “soft power” in relations with the international community, especially China. The Chinese government has generously allocated over 60,000 square feet for the American pavilion to anchor one side of the central promenade, sharing that honor only with China. This prominence will afford 170 other nations and millions of citizens the occasion to appreciate the United States’ technological innovations, cultural traditions, our participation in peaceful and beneficial global events, and our national respect for other nations and cultures. As a global leader, the United States has a responsibility to fully participate in this international affair.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

INTRODUCTION OF THE “CREDIT CARD FAIR FEE ACT OF 2009”

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the “Credit Card Fair Fee Act of 2009,” legislation that would help level the playing field for merchants and retailers negotiating with banks for the cost of certain fees, and ultimately reduce the costs of everyday goods for consumers. I am joined by Representative BILL SHUSTER.

Every time a consumer uses a payment card—at the mall, at the grocery store, at a gas station, or on the Internet—the merchant is charged a fee. This fee gets divided up three ways—between the merchant’s bank, the consumer’s bank, and the credit card company. It covers processing fees, fraud protection, billing statements, and other expenses such as system innovations.

As much as 90 percent of this fee comprises a so-called “interchange fee,” which is the payment made by the merchant’s bank to the consumer’s bank. The percentage is set by the credit card companies, generally Visa or MasterCard, and averages 1.75 percent of the total purchase. In 2008, interchange fees from these two companies totaled approximately \$48 billion, an increase of 189 percent since 2001. These fees are ultimately passed on to all consumers in the form of higher prices for goods and services, whether the consumers purchase these items by credit card, check or cash. The average U.S. family paid an estimated \$427 in interchange fees in 2008, nearly triple the amount in 2001.

These interchange fees are set by the credit card companies. The two largest, Visa and

MasterCard, control over 73 percent of the volume of transactions on general purpose cards in the United States and approximately 90 percent of the cards issued. Banks that are members of the Visa association are often also members of the MasterCard association.

Merchants are forced to deal within this system because it is simply not an option to refuse to accept Visa or MasterCard from their customers. They are presented with take-it-or-leave-it options and are not part of the process by which the fees are set.

The bill creates a limited antitrust immunity for negotiating voluntary agreements. This legislation is intended to give merchants a seat at the table in the determination of these fees. It is not an attempt at regulating the industry and does not mandate any particular outcome. This legislation simply enhances competition by allowing merchants to negotiate with the dominant banks for the terms and rates of the fees.

It is time to level the playing field for merchants and consumers. I am hopeful that Congress can move to enact this worthwhile and timely legislation.

CARLOS GONZALES

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Carlos Gonzales who has received the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Carlos Gonzales is an 8th grader at Drake Middle School and received this award because his determination and hard work have allowed him to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Carlos Gonzales is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential that students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic that will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations once again to Carlos Gonzales for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt he will exhibit the same dedication he has shown in his academic career to his future accomplishments.

HONORING THE EFFORTS OF THE FIRE MARSHAL JOHN J. HENRY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Fire Marshal John J. “Jody” Henry for his tireless and persistent efforts to solve the arson case of the old Cooke County Courthouse. His determination over past three years resulted in the conviction of Timothy York.

In his 30 years of service as a firefighter, this incident was one of the most important to Fire Marshal Henry. When the Cooke County Courthouse was attacked on February 21, 2006, Henry began combining efforts with

members of different governmental agencies to find the person responsible for the attack on the district judge and courthouse. He spent endless hours pouring over the details of the case in order to put it to rest.

Fire Marshall Henry shares the credit of success of this case with the individuals with whom he worked closely. His confidence and his teamwork earned him the respect of his peers. He served as the first vice president of the Texas Fire Marshal's Association and received the Jack Sneed Memorial Commendation Award. The Gainesville Fire Chief considers Henry one of the most dedicated public servants the city has known. He is known in the community for working passionately for the safety of firefighters and citizens alike.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to recognize the diligent efforts of Fire Marshall John J. Henry in solving the Cooke County Courthouse case. He has been an invaluable firefighter and his continuing efforts in saving lives in the Cook County Community are greatly appreciated. It is an honor to represent Fire Marshal John J. Henry in the 26th District of Texas.

TRIBUTE TO THE YMCA OF CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS MINORITY ACHIEVERS, WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the work and achievements of Fred Alexis, Brandon Wood, Robert Hill, Devon Moore, Tiera Givins, Josh Alexander, Sheena Agyemang, Ricardo Myers, Zakee Jenkins, Anesia Wright, Rohan Amarsingh, Latricia Harris, Amenze Enoma, Angelique Berry, Kofi Owusu, Malcom Evans, and Roshorn Morales. These students are high school seniors who are graduating from the Minority Achievers Program of the YMCA of Central Massachusetts.

Madam Speaker, through academic support, the YMCA of Central Massachusetts Minority Achievers Program creates a diverse, inclusive, and challenging environment for middle and high school students. This program helps primarily minority students advance and reach their academic goals and prepares them for the transition to college. It creates and inspires a diverse pool of future leaders by providing an environment in which students can realize their potential.

These students worked together and empowered each other while perfecting their own knowledge and learning to become well-rounded individuals. However, these achievements would not have been possible without the help and guidance of dedicated adult mentors. I also recognize Marie Boone, Mark Bilotta, James Bonds, Marion Wilson, and Annie Cox for their passionate commitment and unyielding belief in their students.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring these graduates of the Minority Achievers Program for their hard work along with the mentors who guided and supported them. They represent the tremendous promises of education and deserve our recognition.

RECOGNIZING FATHER JOHN A. FARRY

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the long and distinguished career of Father John A. Farry. On June 30, 2009, Father Farry will retire from his position as Pastor at Saint Andrew Parish, the most recent parish in his 44 years of dedicated service.

Born in Bronx, New York, Father Farry graduated from Quigley Preparatory Seminary in Chicago and continued on to St. Mary of the Lake Seminary—Mundelein in Mundelein, Illinois, where he was ordained a priest in 1965.

Throughout his career, Father Farry has served many areas of the Chicago community, including Saint Bernard Parish in Englewood, Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish in Hyde Park, and Saint Andrew Parish in Northcenter.

Father Farry also served in positions other than pastor when the community needed it, such as Catholic Community of Englewood Coordinator, leader of the Team Ministry at Saint Bernard Parish, and religion teacher at various schools in the area. He reached out to all members of the diverse community and is known for his selflessness and his compassion.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Father Farry on his lengthy and influential career, and thank him for his many outstanding contributions to the city of Chicago. I wish him the best of luck and continued happiness in his retirement and all his future endeavors.

CELEBRATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUSAN G. KOMEN RACE FOR THE CURE IN OUR NATION'S CAPITAL

HON. RON KLEIN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 109, recognizing the 20th anniversary of the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure in our nation's capital. The Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure has not only raised substantial funds for breast cancer research, but serves as a day to pay tribute to the loved ones we've lost, empower those who have survived, and support those who continue to battle this disease. Like many other Americans, my family has been touched by breast cancer. But due to advances in treatment, greater awareness, and increases in early detection, we can now fight this disease head on and bring new hope to the mothers, sisters, daughters, wives and friends that are diagnosed each year.

Susan G. Komen unfortunately lost her battle with breast cancer, but her story and her sister's perseverance to put an end to breast cancer once and for all has helped advance research, educate women on the importance of early detection, and bring men and women from all walks of life together to share their stories and struggles with this disease. I was proud to cosponsor this resolution, and partici-

pate in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure in my own community in Florida.

I'd like to thank my colleague, Congressman DONNELLY, for introducing this important legislation and urge adoption of the resolution.

HONORING MICHAEL KRASOWSKI

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Michael Krasowski 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 145, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Michael has been very active with his troop participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Michael 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 Michael Krasowski for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

HONORING LOTTE SCHILLER

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise with sadness today in honor of my friend Lotte Schiller who passed away on May 4, 2009, just before her 89th birthday. Lotte was well-known in Marin County, California, where she actively promoted the causes she believed in—from art and the public school system to progressive politics and voter education.

Born in Germany in 1920, Lotte was forced to flee to Palestine 14 years later with her Jewish family. She attended the Hebrew Teachers College for Women and then taught school and owned a nursery school in Jerusalem. She married architect Hans Schiller in 1940 and moved to Mill Valley in 1947 when Hans' practice with famed architect Erich Mendelsohn relocated to San Francisco.

With her strong background in education, it is no surprise that Lotte served four terms as a trustee for the Tamalpais Union High School District, including 12 years as President, as well as playing a part on education boards and commissions at the local, state, and national levels. Other affiliations included Family Service Agency of Marin, KQED Community Advisory Committee, National Women's Political Caucus, and the New Voter Education Research Foundation (of which she was a founding member).

Lotte and Hans were both active in the Democratic party, where we shared a commitment to achieving progressive goals. Hans was an architectural activist, who believed in public access to parks and open spaces.

Hans predeceased Lotte in 1998, and she is survived by her children Peter and Anita as well as three grandchildren and two great grandchildren.