

pigmentosa, and Ushers syndrome belonged to a group of diseases that were underrepresented and under-funded. It was clear that if there was any hope for finding a cure, funding was needed. In 1990, the Hardages established the Vision of Children Foundation (VOC), with a mission to cure hereditary childhood blindness and vision disorders, and to improve the quality of life of visually impaired individuals and their families. It is the only international, non-profit foundation that funds genetic vision research into ocular albinism and connects affected families all over the world.

Until there is a cure, the VOC works hard to provide educational support and services. Families of the visually impaired often feel isolated and confused, and need support to face day-to-day life. The VOC believes communication between families, educators, healthcare professionals, and researchers who care for these children is critical, and the VOC does all that it can to facilitate the process. The Foundation maintains a worldwide Family Network that provides information and support via constant communication, a biannual newsletter, and an informative Web site. Joining the Family Network enables parents to contact other families who face similar challenges in their geographic region to offer support, and share experiences and local resources and programs. Hundreds of families around the world belong to the VOC Family Network.

The VOC strives to enable thousands of children to have a clear image of the world around them. The foundation continues to gather and share information and tools available to ease the daily challenges that the visually impaired face. For example, VOC developed a computer monitor system designed to accommodate students and adults with low vision. This system works to alleviate the stress and strain that individuals with low vision face when using computer technology. The Foundation donates monitor systems to schools and individuals nationwide.

VOC also partners with book publishers to provide educational books to eye clinics, schools, libraries, doctors' offices, and families, such as the illustrated storybook, "All Children Have Different Eyes." These books help to raise awareness, reduce emotional stress, develop social competencies, improve academic performance, and increase confidence in low vision children.

These efforts to provide support, education and needed assistive resources to children diagnosed with OA have enabled Chase and many others like him to have a more normal and functional life. Chase played varsity football on a championship team and was his high school's first CIF wrestling champion in 28 years. Today, he is a sophomore studying business at Southern Methodist University.

To foster scientific communication and collaboration, VOC hosts a biennial World Symposium on Ocular Albinism and genetic vision disorders. In this forum, the Foundation brings together top vision and genetic eye researchers from around the globe to present and discuss the latest discoveries and research efforts involving OA and related genetic conditions.

This year's World Symposium theme: "Understanding the Pathway—Discovering a Cure" was reflected in each of the presentations. The symposium was highly successful, with researchers agreeing to openly discuss

their latest discoveries and research efforts. Updated results from the successful recent human gene therapy trials provide continued hope for a cure. One of the most important outcomes of the symposium resulted in the formation of an informal, web-based forum for attendees to continue the collaborative relationships that were formed. The Vision of Children Foundation is a leader in fostering these kinds of relationships and helping move science forward.

For eighteen years, the Vision of Children Foundation has been a driving force in the worldwide quest for a cure for genetically caused childhood blindness. Progress and problems are discussed on a regular basis as VOC researchers gather for an invitation only Symposium sponsored by the Vision of Children Foundation. In October 2006, Dr. James Bainbridge of Moorfields Eye Hospital in London attended VOC's European Symposium and described his lab's plan for a human gene therapy trial to cure Leber's Congenital Amaurosis. In March 2008, his team achieved the world's first successful gene therapy trial on a human. Their success was quickly followed by the University of Florida and Children's Hospital in Philadelphia, successfully restoring the vision of nine young adults who were nearly blind. These young people can now see and some can even read lines on an eye chart. All nine patients had the treatment in one eye and all have volunteered to have their other eye treated. I am told that the medical community is equating this discovery to the first heart transplant.

The Vision of Children Foundation is one of the largest sources of non-governmental funding in the world for genetically caused childhood blindness research. The urgent mission of the Vision of Children Foundation is to drive the research that will provide preventions, treatments and cures for children affected by ocular albinism and the entire spectrum of hereditary childhood blindness and vision disorders. The Foundation has invested millions of dollars to support scientific research of diseases of the retina, which cause blindness. I commend the steadfast support of and determination of the Vision of Children Foundation to eradicating genetically caused vision disorders and blindness in children.

HONORING THE LIFE OF SPECIALIST PAUL E. ANDERSEN OF SOUTH BEND

HON. JOE DONNELLY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Mr. DONNELLY of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Specialist Paul E. Andersen of the 855th Quartermaster Company based out of South Bend, Indiana, for his dedication and service to the United States of America. A 24-year-veteran of the armed forces, Paul was completing his second tour of duty in Iraq when he was killed in action on October 1, 2009, by indirect fire of enemy forces. Paul risked everything in service to America, and for that we are eternally grateful.

Paul devoted his life to serving our country. He graduated from Buchanan High School in Michigan in 1979 and enlisted in the Army Reserves in 1985. He worked to better our

armed forces, and was prepared to answer the call for duty whenever his country needed him. In 2003 that time arrived, and Paul served his first tour in Iraq.

Upon his return home, he met his beloved wife Linda at the home of a friend. They fell in love and enjoyed listening to country music, watching old movies, and savoring strawberry milkshakes together. Within months, he proposed to her. Three weeks later they were married. Linda fully appreciated and understood the commitment that Paul had to his country. Paul had recently re-enlisted for six more years of duty, but only with the consent and blessing from Linda. When he asked her how she would feel if he opted to redeploy, she told him, "Go ahead." "I knew I married an Army man," Linda said. Her love for Paul was unwavering, as she said of Paul, "He's my world, my life, my friend."

After beginning his second tour in November 2008, Paul had the honorable duty of serving his country with the 855th Quartermaster, QM, Company, from South Bend, Indiana. Paul's mission in Iraq was to provide both shower and laundry services as well as operating a clothing repair, SLCR, shop supporting Coalition forces based in 10 different locations throughout the Iraqi theater. These locations are often dangerous, but despite the adversities the 855th QM Co. successfully accomplished their SLCR mission. Services of the SLCR team provided great contributions to the welfare and morale of the Soldiers they supported. Without their support, the Soldiers would not have been able to perform their duties and accomplish their own combat missions. It was a necessary job that his family and friends admired. Linda was in constant contact with Paul, and he was even allowed to take a leave in August to celebrate their fifth wedding anniversary. Paul had recently been informed that he was due to come home November 4, 2009.

Paul will be remembered as a devoted husband, father and grandfather. As a civilian, Paul worked at a tube and bending company. He loved to tinker with machines, and was notorious among family members for going overboard on the Christmas lights every year. He lived a life full of love and joy. He is survived by his wife; three biological children; three step-children; one biological grandchild; and eight step-grandchildren.

It is my somber duty to honor and remember Paul and a life cut tragically short. I am saddened by the loss to his family, our community and our country. We were all blessed by his presence and diminished by his passing.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, on October 13, 2009, I was unable to cast votes, due to personal reasons. I was not present for roll-call votes 772 and 773. Had I been present, I would have cast a "yea" vote for final passage of H.R. 3689. Also, I would have cast a "yea" vote on final passage of H.R. 3476.

IN HONOR OF GEORGE SMITH

HON. JOHN H. ADLER

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Mr. ADLER of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate an important member of New Jersey's 3rd District, Mr. George Smith. Mr. Smith, 79, was awarded the Nobel Prize in physics for his work developing technology that is the basis of digital photography.

Mr. Smith worked at Bell Laboratories until his retirement in 1986. He was born in 1930 in White Plains, New York, served in the United States Navy, and briefly studied mathematics before switching to physics. In 1959, he earned his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. Mr. Smith currently resides in Waretown in Ocean County, NJ.

George Smith was awarded the 2009 Nobel Prize in physics along with colleague Willard Boyle for their work creating an image semiconducting circuit, or charge coupled device, CCD. Their research laid the foundation for digital images and lightning-fast communication by developing fiber-optic cable and the sensor found at the heart of digital cameras. They share their prize with Hong Kong professor Kuen Kao for his work on fiber optics.

Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in commending Mr. George Smith for his much deserved Nobel Prize. May his dedication and innovative thinking serve as a model for all those who seek to achieve original solutions within their respective fields.

HONORING THOMAS O'BRIEN UPON
BEING NAMED THE NEW YORK
STATE PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Mr. ISRAEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the accomplishments of my constituent, Brentwood High School Principal Thomas O'Brien.

Mr. O'Brien has been recognized as the New York State Principal of the Year by the School Administrators Association of New York State. This award is given annually to a school administrator "who has set the pace, character, and quality of education for the children in his or her school."

Mr. O'Brien has served as an educator for 38 years, 14 in his current position—all within the Brentwood School District. He was recognized for his outstanding work at Brentwood High School, where he worked successfully to move the school from the New York State Department of Education's list of "Schools in Need of Improvement" to the list of "Schools in Good Standing."

I congratulate him on this accomplishment and applaud his long record of contributions to education on Long Island.

REGARDING S. 1707, THE ENHANCING PARTNERSHIP WITH PAKISTAN ACT OF 2009

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, the following is an explanation of S. 1707, the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009. The final text of the legislation reflects an agreement reached by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. The purpose of this Explanatory Statement is to facilitate accurate interpretation of the text and to ensure faithful implementation of its provisions in accordance with the intentions of the legislation.

The core intent of the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act is to demonstrate the American people's long-term commitment to the people of Pakistan. The United States values its friendship with the Pakistani people and honors the great sacrifices made by Pakistani security forces in the fight against extremism, and the legislation reflects the goals shared by our two governments.

The legislation does not seek in any way to compromise Pakistan's sovereignty, impinge on Pakistan's national security interests, or micromanage any aspect of Pakistani military or civilian operations. There are no conditions on Pakistan attached to the authorization of \$7.5 billion in non-military aid. The only requirements on this funding are financial accountability measures that Congress is imposing on the U.S. executive branch, to ensure that this assistance supports programs that most benefit the Pakistani people.

SUMMARY OF CONGRESSIONAL INTENT

The Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009 (the "Act") establishes a legislative foundation for a strengthened partnership between the United States and Pakistan, based on a shared commitment to improving the living conditions of the people of Pakistan through strengthening democracy and the rule of law, sustainable economic development, and combating terrorism and extremism. It is the intent of Congress to strengthen the long-term people-to-people relationship between the United States and Pakistan by investing directly in the needs of the Pakistani people. This legislation is intended to fortify a lasting partnership with Pakistan based on mutual trust.

The overall level of economic assistance authorized annually by this legislation is tripled over FY 2008 U.S. funding levels, with the bulk of aid intended for projects such as schools, roads, medical clinics, and infrastructure development. The funds directly authorized by this Act—\$1.5 billion in economic and development assistance annually for five years, with a similar amount envisioned for a subsequent five years—place no conditions on the Government of Pakistan. The only requirements are accountability measures placed on the United States executive branch to ensure that the aid directly benefits the Pakistani people.

This Act fully recognizes and respects the independence of Pakistan as a sovereign nation. The purpose of this Act is to forge a closer collaborative relationship between Pakistan and the United States, not to dictate the na-

tional policy or impinge on the sovereignty of Pakistan in any way. Any interpretation of this Act which suggests that the United States does not fully recognize and respect the sovereignty of Pakistan would be directly contrary to Congressional intent.

The certifications in the Act regarding certain limited forms of security assistance are consistent with previous Congressional legislation regarding security assistance to Pakistan and other nations. In all cases, they align with the aims of, and serve to reinforce the publicly-articulated positions of, the democratically-elected Government of Pakistan, and Pakistani military leaders, to combat extremists and militants.

SECTIONS 1-4: STRENGTHENING A RELATIONSHIP
FOUNDED ON MUTUAL RESPECT

Sections 1-4 establish the framework and context for the legislative provisions that follow. The Findings and the Statement of Principles demonstrate an unequivocal appreciation for the friendship of the Pakistani people, and for the sacrifices made by the Pakistani security forces and people in fighting extremism. The Findings in Section 3 include:

Section 3(1): "Congress finds the following: The people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the United States share a long history of friendship and comity, and the interests of both nations are well-served by strengthening and deepening this friendship."

Section 3(4): "Pakistan is a major non-NATO ally of the United States and has been a valuable partner in the battle against al Qaeda and the Taliban, but much more remains to be accomplished by both nations. The struggle against al Qaeda, the Taliban, and affiliated terrorist groups has led to the deaths of several thousand Pakistani civilians and members of the security forces of Pakistan over the past seven years."

The Statement of Principles in Section 4 include:

Section 4(1): "Pakistan is a critical friend and ally to the United States, both in times of strife and in times of peace, and the two countries share many common goals, including combating terrorism and violent radicalism, solidifying democracy and rule of law in Pakistan, and promoting the social and economic development of Pakistan."

Section 4(4): "The United States supports Pakistan's struggle against extremist elements and recognizes the profound sacrifice made by Pakistan in the fight against terrorism, including the loss of more than 1,900 soldiers and police since 2001 in combat with al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other extremist and terrorist groups."

TITLE I: DEMOCRATIC, ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT
ASSISTANCE FOR PAKISTAN

This Title contains the core intention of this legislation: To make a long-term commitment to the people of Pakistan by tripling non-military assistance, free of any conditions on the Pakistani government. The purposes set forth for the \$7.5 billion that is authorized here are all intended to reflect the expressed priorities of the Pakistani people. Specifically, Section 101(a) provides that:

"The President is authorized to provide assistance to Pakistan to support the consolidation of democratic institutions; to support the expansion of rule of law, build the capacity of government institutions, and promote respect for internationally-recognized human rights; to promote economic freedoms and sustainable economic development; to support investment in people, including those displaced in on-going counter-insurgency operations; and to strengthen public diplomacy."