

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 2499, the Puerto Rico Democracy Act of 2009, introduced by our colleague Congressman PEDRO PIERLUISI. As the chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife, I fully support this bill, which the full Natural Resources committee reported out favorably on July 22nd of last year.

H.R. 2499 is an important bill for both Puerto Rico and the other U.S. Territories. As the delegate from Guam, I understand the desire of residents in the territories to decide their future and make a determination about their political future. Guam and Puerto Rico were both ceded to the United States after the Spanish American War in 1898. The communities in Guam and Puerto Rico have long traditions of patriotism and loyalty to the United States. In fact, both Guam and Puerto Rico boast some of the highest per-capita rates of military service in the United States. But while we are proud and fortunate to be Americans, we must be given an opportunity to decide our future political status. H.R. 2499 will provide the people of Puerto Rico a congressionally-sanctioned process to express their preferences regarding their political status. The bill's broad, bipartisan base of cosponsors as well as the unified support it enjoys among Puerto Rico's elected and governing leaders should not be overlooked, and in fact, should prompt us today to decisively pass this bill. Appropriate deference on questions about ballot format and process should be given to Governor Fortuño, the legislature leaders of Puerto Rico, and our colleague, Congressman PIERLUISI of Puerto Rico. They are the democratically elected leaders of the people desiring Congress to sanction a process for them to exercise their fundamental right to self-determination.

Mr. Chairman, Article 4, Section 3 of the Constitution makes it clear that Congress has the power to make needful rules and regulations governing the territories. Passing the Puerto Rico Democracy Act will fulfill the responsibility this body has to over 4 million American citizens.

Each territory is on a different path toward self-determination, and what is appropriate for Puerto Rico may not be suitable for the other territories. But I firmly believe that the process established by H.R. 2499 is the best way for the people of Puerto Rico to exercise their right to self-determination and express their desires to Congress to ultimately resolve their political status. I urge my colleagues to vote yes on this important and needed legislation.

CELEBRATING THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF FIFTEENTH AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. JIM COOPER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 4, 2010

Mr. COOPER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize the members of Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Church, located in Nashville, Tennessee as they celebrate their 125th Anniversary.

The church was organized in 1885, just 20 years after the end of the Civil War, by a loyal band that included Irene Smart, Bill Smith, Ed

Marshall and others. Ten years later they called their first pastor, Reverend A.W. Porter. The first revival service was held at a lively stable. Since those humble beginnings, five pastors have shepherded this faithful congregation: A.W. Porter (1895–1931), Walter R. Murray (1929–1953), Leroy Crinel (1953–1960), Enoch Jones (1961–1994) and William F. Buchanan (1994–present).

Under the leadership of Pastor Buchanan, a new model of ministry was initiated. The image he had for this faith community was "Servant Model"—a church that exists to serve others. The ministries include a "Love Kitchen" that serves weekly hot meals to the homeless; a seniors ministry that provides a place for seniors in the community to come and fellowship, play games and have a hot meal weekly; a community development corporation that delivers services to assist people in meeting their physical, emotional and spiritual needs; "Christ Fund," an endowment that provides scholarships for high school graduates; "Life Spring," a grief and pastoral counseling ministry; "Psalm 46," a disaster preparedness ministry; "Ninevah," an outreach program that provides holistic ministry from the church to the community; a prison ministry; bus ministry; radio worship program, and many other initiatives that expand the church beyond the walls of the physical building.

For 125 years, the Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Church has been an invaluable presence in the North Nashville community. When many growing congregations were faced with the dilemma of remaining in the inner-city or moving to the suburbs, Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Church voted unanimously not only to remain an urban congregation, but also to be an agent for transformational change in North Nashville.

Several years ago, a local newspaper wrote, "what's exciting about Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Church is they have taken ownership in their neighborhood to address conditions in their community to make it better for all the people there." Additionally, a nationwide survey funded by the Lilly Endowment cited Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Church as one of 300 outstanding Protestant churches in America and Canada.

Madam Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Pastor William F. Buchanan, and the entire congregation of Fifteenth Avenue Baptist Church on the occasion of their 125th anniversary and wish them many more years of service to our great nation.

IN MEMORY OF CORNELIUS E. MAREK, JR., BELOVED FATHER AND GRANDFATHER

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 4, 2010

Mr. ANDREWS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and memory of Cornelius E. Marek, Jr., of Morris Plains, New Jersey, who passed away on March 14, 2010. Mr. Marek's contributions should not go unrecognized.

Mr. Marek, the son of Cornelius Marek, Sr., and Grace Bowden-Marek, was born January 28, 1942, in Morris Plains, New Jersey. He

served in the United States Army from 1964 until 1966 as a private first class prior to attaining his associates degree from the County College of Morris in 1968.

Mr. Marek dedicated his career to improving healthcare in New Jersey. He worked for Healthcare Materials Purchasing at Morristown Memorial Hospital from 1970 to 1980 before becoming Vice President of Purchasing at the New Jersey Hospital Association. Mr. Marek then joined FJD Ventures in 1994 before retiring in 2005. He came out of retirement to work for Liberty Health in Secaucus, NJ, from 2008 until 2010. In addition, Mr. Marek was a member and president of the Hospital Materials Management Society of New Jersey. Mr. Marek inspired all those around him and has passed along his love of politics, reading, and classic movies to his children and grandchildren.

He was diagnosed with cancer in 2008 and bravely fought the disease for 2 years, continuing to work full time at Liberty Health until January of 2010 and serving on the Board of Hospital Materials Management Society of New Jersey until March 3rd of 2010. He passed quietly in his sleep on the morning of March 14 surrounded by family and friends and was laid to rest next to his mother and father at Greenwood Cemetery in Boonton, New Jersey.

Madam Speaker, Cornelius Marek, Jr.'s commitment to his family and to healthcare in his country should not go unrecognized. I express my deepest condolences to his family for their loss and pay tribute to the memory of this outstanding individual.

IN HONOR OF POLISH CONSTITUTION DAY, 2010

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 4, 2010

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Poles, Polish-Americans and the Honorable Ambassador from Poland, Robert Kupiecki, and his wife, Malgorzata Kupiecki, on the occasion of Polish Constitution Day, celebrated on May 2, 2010.

Polish Constitution Day is a day when people of all cultures, in America and around the world, join with the people of Poland to celebrate the rich culture, traditions and history of Poland. After almost five centuries of struggle and perseverance, the Governmental Statute of Poland became the first written constitution in Europe on May 3, 1791. An important document in the history of democracy, the Polish Constitution established the separation of government powers, freedom of religion, and abolished key elements of serfdom.

The first Polish immigrants arrived on American shores in 1608 at Jamestown, Virginia. Today, more than 10 million Americans trace their ancestry to Poland and nearly 700,000 report that they speak Polish at home. Many Polish-Americans find strength from their family, faith, and hard work. They also find strength and inspiration in their unbreakable bonds to their heritage and their homeland. From Poland's courageous freedom fighters to the Solidarity leaders who rose from the union lines, Poles have been an inspiration.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me today, Polish Constitution Day, in honoring