

what is perhaps the greatest Democracy to ever exist. By compromising, by understanding not only their own personal beliefs, but the beliefs of those opposed to them, congressmen and presidents inspire the people they represent to become involved in the American process because their electors believe that the system does work; that the system can solve serious problems without mindless bickering over irrelevant issues. There exist a social bond between electors and the elected in America: when the elected rise above politics and become statesmen, Americans will rise as well. When the elected fall, so too does the will of Americans to participate.

CONGRATULATING THE MY POSSIBILITIES HIPSTORE: OPEN FOR BUSINESS

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2012

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to recognize the great staff, board of directors, and Hugely Important People—or HIPsters—of My Possibilities in Plano, Texas as they celebrate the organization's newest venture, the HIPstore.

My Possibilities is a non-profit organization that provides daytime, year-round vocational training and other programs for adults with special needs. The first organization of its kind in Collin County, My Possibilities opened its doors in June of 2008 when caring moms joined forces to create a safe, social atmosphere for young adults who had "aged out" of secondary education. Today, ten full-time staff members serve 125 HIPsters each week.

Inspired by the My Possibilities motto, staff and HIPsters alike work hard to "Make every day count." The new HIPstore provides a great enterprise opportunity to do just that.

The store is a 3,000 square-foot facility that features gift items like candles, jewelry, and artwork all handmade by HIPsters. The HIPsters not only learn creative skills, put them into practice, and watch their handiwork make a profit, but learn the ins and outs of operating a retail outlet. For instance, they help to stock the shelves, monitor inventory, interact with customers, and operate the cash register.

To the folks whose hard work and forward thinking have made the HIPstore possible:

Thank you for your efforts. It is my pleasure to join you in celebrating this exciting new chapter of My Possibilities' service to the North Texas community. I'm glad to help announce that the HIPstore is "open for business!"

RECOGNITION OF IDA MAE BYRD

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2012

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute and to honor Ms. Ida Mae Byrd. A native of Waycross, Georgia, Ms. Byrd has enjoyed a very active life looking after her family and her community. We celebrate your 100th birthday.

Ms. Byrd was born to Maebelle and Jack Smith in Waycross, Georgia, on March 13,

1912. She is the third of six children. At the young age of 16, Ms. Byrd was looking for more opportunities so she moved to Brooklyn, New York. Once in New York City, Ms. Byrd worked diligently to bring her immediate family with her.

At the age of 19, Ms. Byrd married Wily Byrd, forming a strong union that produced five children. The family was a close knit group held together by her strict control and discipline. She set an example for her siblings on how to properly raise children—supporting a strict environment with a loving and warm personality.

In her younger days, Ms. Byrd loved to dance and one of her favorite places to dance was the Savoy Manor in the Bronx. Along with dancing, Ms. Byrd enjoyed her occasional Miller High Life beer and her beloved New York Mets. As an avid fan, she was rewarded with two World Series championships. Through the years she was an active member of Pilgrim Baptist Church under the leadership of Bishop Roy E. Brown. Ms. Byrd enjoyed these church events most with her family who attempted to make every moment a memorable one.

Ms. Byrd has lived through an incredible century that has witnessed two World Wars, the Jim Crow South, the invention of the television and the computer, and the Civil Rights movement. She has also lived to see apartheid end in South Africa and the election of the first African American President of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Ms. Ida Mae Byrd on the celebration of her 100th birthday.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FLORA-BAMA AND GULF COAST RESIDENTS SUPPORT OF NEW YORK CITY AND HARLEM AFTER SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 22, 2012

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 10th Anniversary of the Flora-Bama and Gulf Coast support of New York City and Harlem after September 11, 2001.

In 2002, Joe Gilchrist, owner of the Flora-Bama Lounge in Pensacola, Florida brought to New York a group of more than 100 visitors, including musicians and songwriters, to pay respect to the ground zero site and support New York. Gilchrist also encouraged the group to spend money to help uplift New York City's economy and provide moral and spiritual support to the victim's families. The group also toured New York City fire houses, the Empire State Building and Central Park. The visit culminated in a great celebration at the Waldorf Astoria, which included performances by Chuck Jackson, and other musicians and singers who participated in the Frank Brown International Songwriters Festival.

On Saturday February 4, the Harlem community, along with Joe Gilchrist and the Frank Brown Songwriters Festival celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the Flora-Bama and Gulf Coast historic visit to New York. Musicians, songwriters, business leaders and residents

from the Flora-Bama and Gulf Coast toured the 911 Memorial site and performed in lower Manhattan and in Harlem. This Cultural Exchange was promoted with the theme of, "Merging Manhattan Music with Southern Sounds." Kicking off the diverse musical tribute were original songs by "Lil Man," an eight year old "Hip Hop" artist who writes his own songs; stellar performances by Michael Jackson impersonator, Jesse Valenca; and Urica Rose, an electrifying singer and songwriter, representing the "New Generation of Rock" performers.

The group attended Open House events at the world famous Apollo Theater, including performances by Ballet Hispanico, the Dance Theatre of Harlem, Amateur Night winners and was given a tour by Apollo historian Billy Mitchell. The group joined Commander E. Randy Dupree at Harlem's historic Colonel Charles Young American Legion Post 398, where Flora-Bama musicians joined Hammond B3 Organist and Jazz legend Seleno Clark, Percussionist Don Eaton and the Harlem Groove Band for a jam session to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of their visit to New York City.

As Dean of the New York Congressional Delegation, I want to extend my thanks to Joe Gilchrist and the Frank Brown Songwriters Festival for their outstanding economic, moral and spiritual support to Harlem and the great State of New York.

PROTECTING ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5) to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system:

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chair, today, the House is considering legislation that would repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board, or IPAB. To be clear, I am not a big fan of IPAB—I had concerns with this new entity when it was first being discussed, and I remain concerned with it today.

I do find it interesting, however, that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are suddenly so troubled about IPAB's effect on Medicare, when their plan to end Medicare is so much worse.

I fear that today's floor action is less about a real concern for seniors, hospitals and physicians in the Medicare program, and more about trying to win a battle in the war against health insurance reform.

They have shown with their words and their actions, even down to their choice of offsets, that this yet another political exercise.

But that is a game that I refuse to play. Our seniors deserve real answers and real solutions, not yet another repeal-but-not-replace attempt.

So even though I don't think that IPAB is the best answer to strengthening Medicare, I can't in good conscience vote for this bill, at