

IN RECOGNITION OF GREEK
INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Greek Independence Day as people of Greek heritage around the world gather to remember and celebrate those who partook in the heroic struggle for freedom.

On March 25th people around the world will celebrate Greek Independence Day which commemorates the beginning of the Greek War of Independence. For four hundred years the Ottoman Empire had controlled Greece and attempted to suppress Greek language, culture, and religion. In 1821, behind the leadership of Bishop Germanos of Patras, the citizens of Greece began their long and difficult fight for liberty. After nine long years, the Greeks eventually won the freedom they had previously been denied. The Bishop also chose March 25th as the annual celebration of The Annunciation of the Mother Christ.

This year marks the 12th Annual Greek Independence Day Parade for the Northeast Ohio Greek American Celebration. The parade will be led by Father Dean Dimon of the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church and other area clergy members. The celebration will include local Greek dance groups and a church service.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues please join me in recognizing the anniversary of Greek Independence, and wish the Greek Americans in Northeast Ohio a joyous celebration.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RACIAL
PROFILING PREVENTION ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2012

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, as we await a surface transportation bill, I rise to introduce a bill to reestablish a federal grant program for states that desire to develop racial profiling laws, collect and maintain data on traffic stops, design programs to reduce racial profiling, and train law enforcement officers, which I worked to get included in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) in 2005. Despite the fact that the grant program was just a small piece of the very large SAFETEA-LU bill, nearly half of the states participated in the program for multiple fiscal years. Racial profiling is a form of racial discrimination that is now back in the forefront of national concern because of the tragic killing of Trayvon Martin.

Racial profiling on roads built with federal funds is a violation of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, because it amounts to a government subsidy of discrimination. However, while it remains a widespread problem in our country, there is little experience in developing legislation in this sensitive area to address racial profiling while allowing for appropriate law enforcement. My bill would help states to better develop their racial profiling laws and to help law enforcement understand what role racial profiling plays in traffic stops.

My bill imposes no mandates on states. Instead, it simply authorizes a grant program, but does not require states to participate. However, it provides resources that many states and localities clearly need if they are to curb racial profiling.

HONORING EULESS FIREFIGHTER
BATTALION CHIEF GARY THOMPSON

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2012

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize Battalion Chief Gary Thompson for his 34 years of public service with the City of Eules. He served 32 years of his tenure with the Eules Fire Department.

Thompson began his service in 1976 in the Eules Public Works Department. In 1977, Thompson left public service and attended Tarrant County College where in 1979 he earned more than 50 hours toward an Associate's Degree in Fire Technology. After studying in college, Thompson rejoined the Eules Public Works Department in 1979 and then left that department to join the Eules Fire Department in 1980.

After only a month as a firefighter in 1980, Thompson was promoted to Second Driver. Thompson's talents were often recognized by his superiors, and from 1980 to 1996, he was continuously promoted up the ranks. During his tenure, Thompson was promoted to Driver Engineer (1981), Lieutenant (1983), Captain (1986), Captain-Paramedic (1989), Battalion Chief (1995), and finally Battalion Chief-Paramedic (1996).

Throughout his career, Thompson has received numerous awards from the City of Eules for his outstanding service. The awards include Firefighter of the Year (1981), Supervisor of the Year (1986), Supervisor of the Year (1988), Paramedic of the Year (1992), Distinguished Service Award (1993), Supervisor of the Year (1995), EFD Employee of the Year (1998), Lifesaving Award (1999), Distinguished Unit Award (2004), Distinguished Unit Award (2006), and Distinguished Unit Award (2009).

Thompson grew up in Eules where he attended Oakwood Terrace Elementary, Eules Junior High, and Trinity High School. His father, Bill Thompson, also served the Eules community as a police officer for 25 years where he retired in 1989 as an Assistant Police Chief. Thompson is married to Delia, and their family includes three daughters and three grandsons.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in thanking Gary Thompson for his 34 years of public service.

IN HONOR OF MR. GEORGE B.
SOBIERAJ

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mr. George B. Sobieraj, a gentleman whose dedication to the Polish-American community of Cleveland has led the Cleveland Society of Poles Foundation to name him the 2012 recipient of the "Good Joe" Award.

Mr. Sobieraj was born and raised in the St. Hyacinth area of Cleveland. He graduated from the University of Dayton with a degree in Business Management. He has since been a successful entrepreneur and venture capitalist. In 1980, George founded Rubber City Machinery Corporation in Akron, Ohio and is the only certified appraiser of rubber machinery in the U.S.

Many organizations within the Polish-American community in the Greater Cleveland area have benefitted from Mr. Sobieraj's leadership. He serves as Vice President of the Polish American Cultural Center and Union of Poles in America Group 33. He is a member of the Kosciuszko Foundation, a finance committee member for St. John Cantius Church and a member of the boards of trustees of the Polonia Foundation and the Cleveland Society of Poles, of which he is also a past president. Mr. Sobieraj is responsible for Polish Night at the annual "Polish Open" golf tournament at Progressive Field.

Mr. Sobieraj has also been honored many times throughout his life for his service to the Polish community. Among his many awards, George is the recipient of the Polish Heritage Award and was the Honoree of the Ohio Chapter of the Kosciuszko Foundation in 2011.

Mr. Speaker and Colleagues, please join me in honor and recognition of Mr. George B. Sobieraj, whose tireless devotion to the Polish-American community has been an inspiration to many.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2012

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$15,661,574,232,598.82. We've added \$5,034,697,483,685.74 to our debt in just over 3 years. This is debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

CONDEMNING THE NORTH KOREA
ROCKET LAUNCH

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2012

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, last week, the despotic regime in North Korea