

moved to the United States. He received his M.S. in Geodetic Science from Ohio State University, Columbus in 1989 and his Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of California, Irvine in 1994.

While looking for teaching positions, Dr. Enriquez discovered the community college system which, he says, appealed to him because the larger universities wanted professors to focus on research while he wanted to focus on teaching. He started teaching at Cañada College in 1994 and almost immediately started securing grants. In his view, bringing in money is just another way to help students succeed.

Dr. Enriquez is the chair elect of the American Society of Engineering Education, Pacific Southwest Section; the vice chair of the American Society of Engineering Education, Two-Year College Division; and a member of both the California Engineering Liaison Council and the California Mathematics Council Community Colleges.

He has received numerous best paper awards from the American Society of Engineering Education, the Hewlett-Packard Excellence in Technology for Teaching Award and the League of California Community Colleges Out-Of-The-Box Thinkers Award, among others.

When Dr. E is not mentoring students and inventing programs, he enjoys music, weight lifting, hiking, and reading.

He and his spouse David Childers live in San Francisco.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this body to rise with me to honor Dr. Amelito Enriquez, an exceptional teacher, mentor, and engineer who has opened the hearts and minds of thousands of students to the world of science, math, and engineering.

HONORING IRENE COFIE

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share these with my House colleagues.

Irene Cofie is a senior at Dawson High School in Brazoria County, Texas. Her essay topic is: In your opinion, what role should government play in our lives?

A JUST OVERSEER

Every man needs a leader: a mentor who will regulate that person's decisions while also serving as an overseer by making sure every decision formulated by the individual is civil and doesn't hold the potential to cause mayhem. In this sense, we as men, have the government as our leader to verify

that the decisions we take are astute and will not result in culpable consequences for the majority. Thus, a government's ideal role can best be described as an equitable overseer of men.

As an overseer, a government should remain open-minded to its citizens' desires and rights. Many governments follow a precept, in hopes of maintaining consistency in laws and regulations within their nation. This precept also limits a government's susceptibility to popular demands that are irrational. For example, in America, our government acts on the precept of securing freedom and civil liberties to its citizens, as established by the United States Constitution. Yet, even though the government of America vigilantly manages citizens' affairs through laws, the American government doesn't aggrandize its power over Americans through cruel tactics. However, in many communist countries, the government enjoins its citizens to do exactly as they command and as a result, many citizens of such nations lack the natural rights they deserve. Therefore, even though the role of a government is to serve as an overseer to its people through laws and rules, it is highly important for a government to not be straitlaced in its governing style. A government should instead regulate the masses to make sure that chaos doesn't erupt, while still granting citizens their natural liberties.

Governments' main concern should be providing a safe environment for citizens while assuring that citizens' freedoms are protected and mandated appropriately; thus, freedoms given to one will not counter the civil rights of another. Even though it is up to government to oversee the protection of the masses, citizens primarily have a higher influence in governing their own actions. As a result, citizens should act to control their behavior in society, instead of receiving condemnation by government in order to enable them to live virtuously. In other words, citizens do not need a "big brother" government to certify that they do not abuse drugs or alcohol. Rather, the axiomatic truth stands that citizens of any government are entitled to behave maturely and govern themselves as individuals.

It is common for citizens to complain that the role of government is too big and extensive. Ultimately though, the fault of this conflict belongs to citizens because it is the responsibility of all citizens to take care of themselves through moral reasoning and laudable ethics; we as citizens, should be caretakers of our own distinct lives. In turn, the government can maintain an efficacious nationhood, through enforcement of logical precepts as an overseer of the masses, not necessarily the individual. In conclusion, the government serves as a protectorate of everyone within its country, making sure that peace and order are maintained through laws and regulations, in benefit of the majority.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN  
HERITAGE MONTH

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. In 2010, my colleague, Congressman HONDA, introduced H. Res. 1316 to designate this month as a time to recognize the contributions of Asian Ameri-

cans and Pacific Islanders to the United States. As an original co-sponsor, I reaffirm my commitment to address the concerns and needs of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community.

The 37th Congressional District of California, which I am honored to represent, is home to one of the largest Asian constituencies in the nation, including large communities of Filipinos, Samoans and Cambodians. In fact, my district is home to the largest Cambodian population in the United States and the second largest Cambodian population in the world outside Cambodia. I am proud to be a member of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus and represent my constituents' interests. The month of May was chosen to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage for two significant reasons. On May 7, 1843, the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the United States, and on May 10, 1860, the first transcontinental railroad was completed. The transcontinental railroad transformed our nation and could not have been completed without the inclusion of Chinese immigrants.

Despite the challenges and adversity that Asian Pacific Americans have experienced, many have forged ahead and made significant contributions to this great nation. History was made with the election of President Obama, the first president to have such significant personal ties to the Asian Pacific community. President Obama spent his childhood in Hawaii and Indonesia. Also, one of President Obama's first guests to the Oval Office was the prime minister of Japan, Taro Aso.

This year, the U.S. Census Bureau has released data revealing that the Asian population now represents 6 percent of the total American population. This community has grown faster than any other racial group in the United States at four times the national average. Asian Americans are making significant contributions to the economy and own over 1.5 million businesses, employing 3 million people. The buying power of Asian American communities has also grown dramatically, increasing by 89 percent between 2000 and 2009 from \$269 billion to \$509 billion.

This month, however, also causes us to reflect on some challenges that remain for Asian Pacific Americans. For instance, immigration and language policies continue to disproportionately affect Asian Americans since they are more likely than any other racial group to be foreign-born. Harsh immigration policies and language barriers, therefore, limit many individuals' ability to integrate into American society and access important services. Along similar lines, Asian Americans are twice as likely as non-Hispanic Whites and African Americans to have not seen a doctor in the past five years, and Asian Americans are also more likely to be uninsured.

Mr. Speaker, this month, it is important to recognize the achievements of this incredibly diverse community while also addressing their policy concerns. Nevertheless, I have much hope for the future because Americans are working together, hand-in-hand, to ensure the equality and advancement not only of their community, but of all communities.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to celebrating the accomplishments of Asian Pacific Americans this year and for years to come.