

care of for so many years in order to take care of the bills for him, his family, and his family farm, but now, that right has been lost because government action has taken that right away from Mr. Vitale.

There is Bob Brace in Pennsylvania, who was ordered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the EPA to stop farming 30 acres of his land as they were determining it to be a wetland.

Mr. Brace has been farming that land for years. He had to go through court. He went to the U.S. district court, and they said he is okay. He can keep farming the land.

That wasn't enough for Big Government. They took it up to the court of appeals, and ultimately, the court ordered that Mr. Brace had to stop farming that 30 acres and pay a \$10,000 fine and also hundreds of thousands of dollars in order to restore that property to the property that he has been using in his family for generations. When Mr. Brace tried to go to court to seek compensation for that right that was taken away, the court said: No, you don't have a right here.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is against my fundamental belief in this country of private property rights and freedom. In the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution, it says that the government can act and it can take action, but it must provide just compensation when it impacts people's private property.

That is why here in Washington, D.C., I have taken two concrete actions to address this issue, Mr. Speaker. Recently, I started the Private Property Rights Caucus with my colleagues in Congress. This is a caucus that has been made up of 14 original members, spanning from Maine to California, to highlight this issue and to say to Big Government, enough is enough.

I choose to stand with the individuals and the fundamental property rights that they have paid for, they have earned, that they take care of in maintaining their property, paying taxes on their property, and living the American Dream.

I also introduced the Defense of Property Rights Act. The Defense of Property Rights Act is based on just a simple reading of the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution. It says just that, if you take action as Big Government has done, Big Government will have to take into consideration the impact on private property rights.

If private property rights are taken, we clarify the ability of individuals to go and follow the Constitution and at least get compensation from the government for taking those private property rights away from these individuals.

Mr. Speaker, these are commonsense, simple principles that I think my colleagues on both sides of the aisle can join with me and say that is only fair because, if you really care about our fellow Americans, when their property

rights are taken away because of Big Government action, we should at least say to them: we will stand with you as individuals and as Americans who believe in the fundamental principles of freedom and of private property rights, and we will at least get you some sort of compensation for the injury that you have suffered.

As a result of that, I urge my colleagues to join the caucus, support the Defense of Property Rights Act, and join me in highlighting this issue so that we can say enough is enough.

It is time to stand with our individuals, the constituents that we represent here in Washington, D.C., rather than the interests of Big Government and Big Government on all levels, Federal, State, and local.

RECOGNIZING FRANK E. LEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Frank E. Lee who, after 35 years as the familiar afternoon personality at WXRT, Frank welcomed his much-deserved retirement last week.

As the afternoon voice of WXRT, he is a Chicago institution unto himself. Frank's boss, Norm Winer, put it best when he said: "Frank's wide-ranging love and knowledge of music, his remarkable verbal skills, his wry and sardonic sense of humor, impressive sense of professionalism, and generous nature have distinguished him among Chicago's all-time great air personalities."

I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring Frank E. Lee for his career as one of Chicago's finest radio personalities and most recognizable voices. We thank him for his years of service on the air.

I was there in the studio as he closed off his career with the Stones' classic, "Moonlight Mile." We tried to capture the essence of how Chicagoans felt when he left. All I can say is I got silence on my radio.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MAHAFFEY THEATER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. JOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an institution that, for 50 years, has been the cultural heart of the city of St. Petersburg, Florida.

This month, in May, the Mahaffey Theater celebrates its 50th anniversary. Opening in 1965, the venue was originally called the Bayfront Center Complex, a combination arena and theater along the city's most beautiful downtown waterfront.

It quickly proved to be a gathering place for community and civic groups, and its many shows drew tourists from around the State. The artists that have

performed at the Mahaffey could easily fill an entertainment hall of fame, from Louis Armstrong to Dionne Warwick to Liza Minelli to Johnny Mathis, Kenny Rogers, and even "The President's Own" United States Marine Band, an event that was secured by the invitation of my predecessor, Congressman Bill Young.

The first significant makeover for the venue occurred in 1987, and the Bayfront Theater became the Mahaffey Theater after a generous gift from St. Petersburg's Mahaffey family. In 2011, Big3 Entertainment took over the management of the Mahaffey, with CEO and chairman Bill Edwards privately funding a number of major enhancements.

Today, the Mahaffey is home to the Florida Orchestra, and it is the annual host site for the Miss Florida Pageant.

The Mahaffey also supports, very importantly, the highly successful Class Acts program, which enables school children to experience the performing arts through in-theater performances, as well as in-school outreach and extension programs.

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The theater also has been the site of very important moments of American history. The theater was the site of the 1996 Vice Presidential debate between Al Gore and Jack Kemp. And in 2007, the Mahaffey hosted the nationally televised Republican Presidential primary debate, known as the very first YouTube debate, having Americans, for the very first time, submit questions via YouTube video clips.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Mahaffey Theater, celebrating a venue that today anchors a growing and thriving Pinellas County arts community and serves as a stage that celebrates the arts but, most importantly, celebrates the remarkable human spirit, the creativity of so many performers, and the dedication and commitment of the greater St. Petersburg community.

FREE AMERICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS IN IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor of the House of Representatives again to introduce and talk to this body and to the American people about my constituent, Amir Hekmati. Amir is an American. He is a United States marine. He is a brother. He is a son. He is a Michigander. He grew up in my hometown of Flint, Michigan. He served this country in uniform, as I said, in the United States Marine Corps. He is of Iranian descent, though he was born in the United States.

In 2011, for the first time, he traveled to Iran to visit family he had never met, a grandmother he had never seen. He traveled under his own name, notified the Iranian Government that he