A BILL TO ALLOW FOR PRIORITY IN THE ISSUANCE OF IMMIGRANT VISAS TO SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF FILIPINO WORLD WAR II VETERANS

HON. ED CASE
OF HAWAII
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce a bill that will provide for the expedited reunification of the families of our Filipino World War II veterans who have become citizens of the United States. This body has many times over recognized the courage and commitment of the Filipino troops who fought alongside our armed forces in the Philippines during World War II. In 1990, we provided a waiver from certain naturalization requirements for these veterans, and many thereafter became proud citizens and residents of our country. Most recently, in the 108th Congress, we provided a long-delayed and long-denied measure of justice by granting them a partial measure of veterans benefits which were unjustly denied to them in 1946.

But a huge gap still remains, for we did not allow naturalization in 1990 to the children of these veterans. In my bill we do allow for the sons and daughters of those veterans that became U.S. citizens through the process established in 1990 to have priority in their respective immigration categories.

These are real-life issues, for the stories of families who have waited, even decades, to be reunited are heartbreaking. For example, a veteran and his wife living in Hawai‘i filed immigration petitions for two of their six adult children; they have waited over ten years for a visa to be issued to either. Another veteran petitioned successfully for his wife’s immigration visa, but has not been as successful with the applications for their five adult children. Again, this family has been holding on for ten years with the hope that they will one day live in the U.S. as a complete family.

As we all know, our Filipino World War II veterans are entering the sunset years of their lives. We have addressed some small measures of the need to provide adequate veterans benefits for their commendable service. I look forward to working with my colleagues in recognizing and providing for the reunification of these families of our Filipino World War II veterans.

TRIBUTE TO MR. EARL NEAL
HON. BOBBY L. RUSH
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to honor and pay tribute to Mr. Earl Neal, a lawyer from my hometown whose untimely death on February 13, 2005, has left a void in the halls and the streets of Chicago. My deepest sympathy goes out to his wife Isabel Hoskins Neal, his son Langdon Neal and the rest of his extended family. Although his presence will be sorely missed, the contributions he left behind are considered hall-mark treasures of Chicago.

Mr. Speaker, the Triumphs Victims Protection Act of 2000 and its reauthorization in 2003 enjoyed bi-partisan support in both Houses of Congress. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this bill and enhance the good work underway to combat international trafficking in persons and to ensure that our government’s response to all who are victimized by trafficking—whether foreign citizens or United States citizens—is one of deep compassion.
Neal served as a trusted aide and confidante to six mayors of Chicago over the past 50 years, which included Richard J. Daley, Bilandic, Byrne, Washington, Sawyer and Richard M. Daley. Earl was responsible for using his law background to find common ground with the community and the city.

Born in Chicago in 1929, Mr. Neal’s future was guided by his educational path, which included Englewood High School, the University of Illinois and the University of Michigan Law School.

In 1975, Neal was appointed the first African American president of the University of Illinois Board of Trustees. A man who approached obstacles as opportunities, Neal attended the U. of I during a time in the 40s when African Americans were not allowed to live in the dorms or eat in the campus food halls. Throughout his life, Neal consistently rose from the bottom to the top, leaving an indelible impression along the way.

In 1983, Earl Neal was appointed chairman of the board of the First Federal Savings and Loan. He served on several business and civic boards and his legal career included more than 200 jury trials.

Many people leave legacies that you just hear about. Earl Neal has left a legacy that’s tangible and will be experienced for many years to come.

RECOGNIZING ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CENTER

HON. RAHM EMANUEL
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in proud recognition of the St. Vincent de Paul Center on the occasion of its 2005 Fleur de Lis Ball—an annual charity dinner to benefit underprivileged children, seniors and the homeless in the city of Chicago.

The St. Vincent de Paul Center is a pillar of our community and a shining example of public service for the Nation. For the past 90 years, the Center’s dedicated staff—led by Dr. Renee Jackson, Chief Executive Officer, and Sister Catherine Mary Norris, Site Director—has established a strong record in meeting the daily challenges faced by low-income families and disadvantaged individuals in our community. The Center’s programs cover a broad array of services from day care services for children through health care programs for the elderly.

The Center’s child care programs, for example, serve low-income families by providing a safe and enriching environment for children, giving parents the time to enroll in job training classes and pursue employment opportunities. The Center’s social services programs offer violence prevention, family counseling and support groups.

The homeless outreach programs provide day-to-day essentials such as food and clothing, counseling services, job search assistance and a mailbox for those who do not have their own addresses. Additionally, the senior services program assists Chicago’s elderly with health care and money management decisions, and promotes social interaction and friendship for isolated seniors.

The wide variety and high caliber of services offered by the St. Vincent de Paul Center serve as a national model of community outreach and are made possible by the selfless contributions of 3,200 volunteers who commit 50,000 hours of service annually. This strong sense of community service continues today in the new Center located at the corner of Webster and Halsted Streets in Chicago.

I commend the dedicated people at the St. Vincent de Paul Center for their faithful service to our community, and I wish them continued success in meeting the needs of disadvantaged Chicagoans well into the future.

BLACK HISTORY TRIBUTE TO JOHN E. BROWN

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON
OF MISSISSIPPI
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, throughout the month of February, I would like to recognize outstanding African Americans of the 2nd Congressional District of Mississippi, and their contribution to Black History. The 23 counties of the 2nd District are well represented from both a local and national perspective.

Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as "Negro History Week" and later as "Black History Month." In fact, black history had barely begun to be studied—or even documented—when the tradition originated. Although blacks have been in America as far back as colonial times, it was not until the 20th century that they gained a presence in our school books.

Though scarcely documented in history books, if at all, the crucial role African Americans have played in the development of our nation must not be overlooked.

I would like to recognize John E. Brown of Madison County, Mississippi, born October 22, 1949. Mr. Brown attended Canton public schools and graduated from Rogers High School in 1968 and graduated from Tougaloo College in 1974 with a B.A. degree in Sociology. Additionally, he received his M.S. degree in Environmental Education from the University of Michigan in 1975.

For the past 25 years Mr. Brown has served the people of his community as an advocate for social change and community development. For the past 10 years, Mr. Brown has served as President of the Canton Branch of the NAACP. Currently, he serves as CEO of Madison County Union for Progress.

Mr. Brown is a member of Pleasant Green Church of Christ Holiness where he serves as a member of the Board of Deacons.

I take great pride in recognizing and paying tribute to this outstanding African American of the 2nd Congressional District of Mississippi who deserves mention, not only in the month of February but year round.

SUPPORTING NORMAL TRADE RELATIONS TREATMENT FOR UKRAINE—H.R. 885

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the gentleman from Illinois, Chairman HENRY HYDE, in sponsoring this important and timely legislation that would grant Ukraine normal trade relations status. With the historic triumph of Ukraine’s peaceful Orange Revolution President Viktor Yushchenko’s determination to consolidate democracy in Ukraine, the time has arrived to graduate Ukraine from the provisions of the Jackson-Vanik amendment to the Trade Act of 1974. Since 1992, Ukraine has been certified annually as meeting Jackson-Vanik requirements on freedom of emigration.

As Co-Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I have closely monitored developments and actively encouraged progress in Ukraine with respect to democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Since independence, Ukraine has made considerable progress as a participating State of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in ensuring religious liberties and respect for national minorities. Normal trade relations status is especially warranted given Ukraine’s embrace of freedom and the new government’s active steps to promote reform and build a genuinely democratic future for this transition partner.

Congress has been supportive of Ukraine’s efforts to develop as an independent, democratic and economically prosperous country that respects human rights and the rule of law, enjoys good relations with its neighbors, and integrates with the Euro-Atlantic community of nations. Today, Ukraine is positioned to realize these goals under leadership committed to democracy at home and beyond. No doubt there are significant challenges ahead. The granting of NTR to Ukraine would represent a tangible expression of support for the new government in Ukraine and ahead on their important historic agenda for change. President Yushchenko and the people of Ukraine deserve our support.

ARTICLE PUBLISHED BY RICHARD GILMORE

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN
OF MARYLAND
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, February 17, 2005

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to the following article, written by my constituent, Richard Gilmore. Mr. Gilmore is the President and CEO of the GIC Group. The GIC Group combines experience and strength in research, analysis, and marketing with financial services and asset management. They are able to offer this expertise to the agribusiness and biotechnology industries to gain access to global and domestic markets, to add value to current agribusiness activities, and to identify new markets. This article is not necessarily a reflection of my views.

US Food Safety Under Siege?
(By Richard Gilmore)

When it comes to the prospect of an agro-terrorist attack—the use of biological agents against crops, livestock, poultry and fish—US agriculture has rolled out the welcome mat. Integration and consolidation in the industry widen the potential impact of any single attack. Internationalization of the food chain offers limitless possibilities for consumption disruption, as well as economic and political instabilities. To combat and anticipate potential attacks to the