was the first African American to gradu-
ate. It so happens the incredible irony of
history that she died last week at the
young age of 86.
I remember going on campus at the
University of Alabama just last week to
speak before another assembly of our
students, and to see students, black and
white, people from the power structure of
Tuscaloosa, people from all over Tusca-
loosa gathering together to honor her
sacrifice. I am reminded, Mr. Speaker,
of a cover of Newsweek Magazine in 1963.
It showed Vivian Malone Jones, who was
a very beautiful young woman, it showed her standing there
on the campus, and beneath her image
was the anonymous quote: “We owe
them and we owe ourselves a better
country.”
Mr. Speaker, I would submit that the
Vivian Malone Joneses and the Rosa
Parkses, what made them such icons,
what makes them icons to us now, is
the fact that they challenged us. They
made us realize that we owed them a
better country, and they also made us believe that we owed ourselves a better
country.
One of the last points that I will make
tonight is that there ought to be a
change for the better, both for us, because not only do we owe our successors a
ter better country, we owe the people who are
wounded in America, who are coming back from Iraq, a better country. We
owe the people who are working every
day, striving to earn a living and falling just short of the water’s edge,
owe them a better country. We owe the
children who are sliding into pov-
erty in this country a better country and a
country and a better vision. That is what we
have to understand.
This legacy of civil rights, this his-
tory of individuals rising above oppres-
sion and segregation is a long-running
tHEME in human history. The story of
people standing up against oppressive systems, asserting their dignity, is a
long-running theme in human history.
It is a theme of courage, and it is a
uniquely American theme.
As I prepare to yield to some of
my colleagues tonight, I will simply
make these two final points. I am very
proud to be from Montgomery, Alabama.
Very proud to be a son of this
modern South, because every day that
we build bridges of reconciliation, we
pay our own tribute to Rosa Parks.
Everyone finds a way to transcend
across racial lines, every day that we
find a way to transcend new bound-
aries, every day that we find a way to
make better the lives of all the people
who live in our community, we pay a
silent tribute to Rosa Parks and to
Vivian Malone Jones, and we ought to
remember that.
The final point that I will make is
simply, once again, to talk about the
power of individual choice. I heard one
of my colleagues on the other side of the
aisle talk about the enormous
courage of our soldiers in Iraq, and it is
such a thing that inspires us, their
courage. Well, there is a common
theme between what they do and what
Rosa Parks did. It is believing that
there is a higher cause that can sustain
you, just as our soldiers believe when
they get up every morning and face the
bunkers and the missiles and the gre-
ades, they believe that there is a
higher cause that sustains them. So
did Rosa Parks. When she sat on that
bus, she believed that there was some-
thing beyond her mortal existence, and
that moved her.
The last thing I say today is that
our country can be moved if we simply un-
derstand the power of individuals as-
serting their dignity, if we put enough
of a foundation beneath them so that
they can live their destinies.
With that said, I am very happy to
turn over the management of this Spec-
al Order to my colleague, John Con-
yers from Michigan, who employed
Rosa Parks for a number of years,
someone who was a friend of hers, and
someone who has been an advocate for
many years, almost 40 years now, in
this Chamber for so many progres-
sive causes.

REMEMBERING ROSA PARKS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr.
WESTMORELAND). Under the Speaker’s
announced policy, and on the designa-
tion of the Minority Leader, the balance
of the hour will be controlled by
the gentleman from Michigan (Mr.
CONYERS).

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I ask
unanimous consent that all Members
may have 5 legislative days within
which to revise and extend their re-
marks and include extraneous material
on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there
objection to the request of the gen-
tleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.
Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I want
to thank my colleague from Alabama
(Mr. DAVIS) whose district I had the
pleasure of being in, and with him,
only a few days ago.
Mr. Speaker, this is a sad moment for
me. The truth of the matter is that we
have known that Mrs. Rosa Louise
Parks had been in poor health; that
frequently we would ask, how is she
doing this week? Is she any better?
How are things going? And now that
she is gone, that she has died, I want
to say that I am not giving up. We
cannot accept this reality of this
dear, powerful, gentle lady going to her
reward after 92 years of being with us
on this Earth.
She has been regarded as an ordinary
person, as an example of what an ordi-
nary person can do in our system. But
I am not convinced that she is an ordi-
nary person, because I have seen her at
very close range. The fact of the mat-
er is I believe she is an extremely ex-
traordinary person because of these
traits of all she was: a mother, a
gentle lady. She was soft-spoken. She
had never in the years I have known
her ever raised her voice in anger. She
did not debate anyone. She was a very
mild-mannered person. She never
sought the limelight. She never, ever
issused a press release. She never sought
awards or commendations. Yet she
received more than most people do in
this field that we love her, and now she is
gone.
So that was this one aspect of her,
but there was another. There was
inside her forged a set of principles of
which two were very prominent in
in her life. One, she was a very religious
woman. She attended church with great
regularity, but, more than that, she worked
in the church. She helped out. She was
during the week. And combined with her religious convictions was this
fierce antipathy to segregation. And I
do not know how many people can
think of that combine these two kinds
of characteristics, soft spoken and
humble, and yet fiercely prepared, in
a nonviolent way, to fight segregation.
So she came to this activity not as
something that she just happened to
get into or that she moved one day, she
did something different; she had always
been an activist in her community. She
was a member of the NAACP, she was always
the first to sign the membership card,
and it is hard to remember that this
could be the case, but in the 1940s,
being a member of the NAACP in the
South, and publicly acknowledging it,
was a very daring and courageous move
in and of itself.
She subscribed to the theory of
nonviolence. So when, on December 1, 1955,
she decided that she would not give up
her seat on a public bus in Mont-
gomery, Alabama, some thought
that was the first time that she had ever
done it. But to the contrary, previously
she had refused to give up her seat, but
she was ordered off the bus. She had
never been arrested. And so this
time they told her, you will be arrested, you
are going to be arrested.

And she said, I am not giving up
my seat. You can do whatever you want.
And so we marched into this great his-
tory, to decide that day.
Now, I wanted to point out that she
was the one that brought Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr., into the civil rights
movement. Martin Luther King, Jr.,
was at that time 29 years old, and he
was called in to come after she had
been arrested; and it was decided that
everyone was going to boycott the
buses as a result.
And so it is ironic that she had this
role in addition to restarting the civil
rights movement in America. She
brought in the person who would ulti-
ately lead it at the same time.
I am sure Dr. King may not have
been thinking that he would not
be able to lead, and I am sure that Mrs.
Parks could not anticipate what this
one movie was going to mean. And so I am
very happy to tell you that I had the
opportunity to meet her, to know her,
but her legacy was a blessing and what
a blessing it was to find out that she
ultimately with her husband left Mont-
gomery.
Why? Because she wanted to go somewhere else? No. She was fired from her job. She was black-balled. She could not get employment. And she and her husband and family were receiving death threats regularly. So they decided to relocate with staff that were in Detroit and so it was my good fortune to be able to get to know her.

She joined in my campaign. I said, the first person I am going to ask to be on my congressional staff when I get elected would be Rosa Parks. And I asked her. And she said, Mr. C. don’t ask me for a job. I asked her to please come and join me, and it was a great source of pleasure and delight that she was a minor celebrity.

People came to my office to see not the Congressman on a constituent basis, but merely to get a picture of Rosa Parks or get a signature or ask if they could talk with her, and she was as accommodating with them as she was with everybody else.

She was a confidante I was able to connect up, The biggest legislative challenge of my first year was the passage, the consideration and passage of the Voter Rights Act of 1965. And she was right in the middle of that, working with the likes of Ralph Abernathy and Andrew Young and Fred Shuttlesworth, and of course Dr. Martin Luther King, and many other of the great names that were around that original group that started the civil rights movement, the modern civil rights movement as we know it.

She had a great passion for young people, and she and her husband formed the Raymond and Rosa Parks Foundation which still exists today and which she and her husband and staff trained young people, and then they went visiting the major civil rights sites throughout the South, so much so that they could get the flavor of what was going on, and what happened and when it transpired.

And so, ladies and gentlemen, I see in the firmament of the great trilogy of leaders of freedom and justice, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rosa Louise Parks.

When Nelson Mandela came to Detroit and found out that Rosa Parks had come out to join him in welcoming him as he came out of 27 years of imprisonment, he began a chant for Rosa Parks, Rosa Parks. And here were these two great icons, both well aware of each other and their contributions. So it is with some pride that I have had the privilege of associating my congressional career with both Dr. King and Rosa Louise Parks.

And this Special Order will continue the discussion that has already begun to take place about all of the roles, the contributions, the feelings, the legacy of Rosa Parks; and that is how I think she will be remembered, as this great person with the determination of steel.

So it is with great pleasure that I yield now to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE). Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for yielding.

I am moved by the gentleman’s words. I want to thank him for this Special Order. I want to also thank him for mentioning him at that time for the friendship and relationship that he established with Mrs. Parks and the fact that she served and honored all of the congressional staff by being a congressional staffer and working with us for years.

I want to point out a few items regarding Mrs. Parks and thank her so very much for the service that she has given. John Hope Franklin made a commentary that I think is very telling of Rosa Parks: her prominence endures. And she did not strike a cord for African American women, but she struck a cord for Americans. And when we look at the fabric of history, American history, world history, and particularly American history, there were certain volcanic historical incidents in America: the founding of Plymouth Rock, the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World War I, World War II, certainly Dr. King, certainly Malcolm X, and the beginning of the birth of the civil rights movement in the 20th century.

No one can be more attributed to than Rosa Parks. For those of us who are the beneficiaries of that simple act of an unassuming woman, the act of refusing to adhere to an unjust law, we owe her an enormous debt of gratitude.

For those of us who had the pleasure and opportunity of interfacing with her during her lifetime, simply as any one of us would acknowledge being in her presence, again we owe her a debt of gratitude. And, frankly, I think it is important to note that as she sat down on the bus, with intentions to be arrested, there was certainly difference, and the beginning of the birth of the civil rights movement.

But the word that comes to my mind, because Rosa Parks was a great person, you must first of all know yourself, know thyself. If you are committed to finally breaking the cycle of segregation, discrimination, and racism in this country. We owe Rosa Parks that commitment that we will forever be indebted to her by our words. Rosa Parks, will you please rest in peace, and I know that you will fly away.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased now to recognize the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, this is indeed an extraordinary time. I want to thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for allowing me to participate in this great testimonial to an extraordinary woman, Mrs. Rosa Parks.

Mrs. Rosa Parks was indeed an extraordinary lady who made extraordinary contributions at an extraordinary time in American history. You know, sometime in the main moments in life you feel that there are no words that are adequate to really tell the true story and to give the worth that a life like Rosa Parks deserves.

But the word that comes to my mind, as I think of Rosa Parks, is that word “great,” because Rosa Parks was a great lady. But she was a great lady of greatness.
When that question was put to the great Roman general, Marcus Aurelius, what does it take to be a great person, Marcus Aurelius said, in order to be a great person, you must first of all discipline yourself. She was disciplined. She was focussed. She had her mind set on the goal of freedom and quality for everyone.

When that question of greatness was put to the great abolitionist Frederick Douglass, of what does it take to be a great person, Frederick Douglass said, in order to be a great person, you must have courage. Well, Rosa Parks certainly had courage. She was a woman of extraordinary courage. Think about that time when the Ku Klux Klan was running rampant, when black men were getting lynched for barely not tipping their hat or getting off the sidewalk. These were tough, dark days for a woman to sit and defy the white power structure. Courage, courage.

Finally, when that question of greatness was put to the Messiah Jesus Christ what a great person is, he said, you first of all have to sacrifice yourself. And Rosa Parks sacrificed herself. She had what I call the great Isaiah instinct, that instinct when God said, “Who will go and tell our people? And whom shall we send,” Isaiah cried out, “Here am I, Lord, send me.”

At that moment of history when Rosa Parks on December 1, 1955, when God called out, “Who will go for us and who will stand?” Rosa Parks said, “Here am I, Lord, send me.”

My God, what a woman. How much gratitude we have that we must give for her. And as an African American sitting and standing in the well of this House of Representatives, it is important for us to understand that when Rosa Parks sat down and did not get up to give that white man her seat on that bus in Montgomery, as she so eloquently stated, many people said they thought there was something wrong with her feet were tired. Well, that was not the truth. Rosa Parks said, it was not that my feet were tired, it was because my soul was tired of being a second-class citizen. When I sat down and would not give up my seat, I was standing up for justice and for equality for all.

So as an African American standing here, yes, I know she stood up for all of us. She certainly stood up for black people. But let it be said that more than that, Rosa Parks stood up for America, for black people, for Jewish people, for brown people, for yellow people, for everybody who believes in that American dream of justice, of equality, of freedom for all of us. God bless Rosa Parks, and we thank God for sending this extraordinary sojourner of truth our way.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize the gentlewoman from Oakland, California (Ms. Lee).

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, first let me thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONyers) for his leadership in organizing this tribute to a great leader, Mrs. Rosa Parks. My heart goes out to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONyers) in his personal loss. He is truly a remarkable human being, and I know that his memories and the love Mrs. Parks had for the gentleman will sustain him during this very difficult time.

My deepest condolences and prayers are with Mrs. Parks’s family and her friends tonight as we lift her up, lift up her great spirit on this House floor on this very somber occasion.

Mrs. Parks on Monday evening jolted the world. A giant has gone home. This has been a very difficult year full of losses. Rosa Parks joins other great African American heroes who recently passed away: Shirley Chisholm, Judge Constance Baker Motley, and C. Dolores Tucker, to name a few, all who faced opposition, stood their ground and sacrificed so much for freedom and for justice.

Mrs. Parks’s simple nonviolent act 50 years ago to refuse to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, opened the doors of opportunity for many, including myself. And, yes, I remember the closed only faucets and not being able to go to the theaters and on the train only being able to ride in one car and not being able to attend public schools. I remember those days very vividly.

Let me quote Mrs. Parks’s simple nonviolent act from the Montgomery bus in 1955: “I am tired of being a second-class citizen.”

Daphne Muse, the director of the Women’s Leadership Institute at my alma mater, Mills College in Oakland, wrote an essay entitled “Our Week With Rosa Parks—Her Presence is a Gift that Remains Part of our Hearts and Home.” And in this essay she wrote:

“Three thousand miles away and 50 years later, my constituents in the East Bay of California still honor Mrs. Parks’s legacy. Students enrolled at the Parks Science Magnet School in Berkeley are reminded every day of her example by the painting of Mrs. Parks in the front seat of a bus that hangs above the door to the campus’s main office. Their school anthem the words for her role in bringing segregation to its knees.

She also inspired my constituents to create the Martin Luther King, Jr., Freedom Center, on which I serve as a founding board member. The MLK Freedom Center teaches social justice, equality and nonviolence in our community, especially with its outreach efforts to our youth. In fact, the young people about the Park’s visit, held in the 40th anniversary of the historic civil rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, where they visited the bus stop where Rosa Parks protested and dared not to get up, and the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church where Dr. King preached.

It is an important historical reminder of where we have been, just what Rosa Parks really did for us and for the country. It is a reminder of how far we have come, but also it reminds us of how far we have to go, as we have been recently reminded by Hurricane Katrina.

Daphne Muse goes on to say, Al-...
Mr. Speaker, the full text of this essay is as follows:

**OUR WEEK WITH ROSA PARKS: HER PRESENCE IS A GIFT THAT REMAINS PART OF OUR HEART AND HOME**

(By Daphne Muse)

Everyday, history is made by people whose names remain unknown as well as those who become eternal icons. In May of 1980, a woman who forever changed our country spent the night in my home. The East Bay Area Friends of Highlander Research and Education Center joined with founder Myles Horton to honor two of the Civil Rights Movements’ courageous pioneers: Rosa Parks and Septima Clark. Clark broke ground as a pioneering force in citizenship training and voter education. The two women were like Highlander in 1932, in a place where my own mother-in-law Margaret Lanedes was trained during the 1930s.

Founded in 1932, Highlander was a civil rights training school located on a 104-acre farm atop Bays Mountain, near New Market, Tennessee. Over the course of its history, Highlander has played important roles in many local, national, and global movements, including the Southern labor movements of the 1930s, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1940s-60s, and the people’s movements of the 1970s-80s. Through books in our home library, her teachers and my own work as a writer, Anyania knew about the role Ms. Parks played in changing the course of history.

Like millions of other African Americans, Mrs. Parks was tired of the racism, segregation and Jim Crow laws of the times. Through her commitment to freedom and training at Highlander Research and Education Center, her refusal to move to the back of the bus in Montgomery, Alabama on December 1, 1955, spawned a movement. Parks took a seat in the section of a Montgomery city bus designated for whites. She was arrested, tried and fined for violating a city ordinance. Mrs. Parks, a seamstress, often had run-ins with bus drivers and had been evicted from buses. Getting on the front of the bus to pay her fare and then getting off going to the back door was so humiliating. There were times the driver simply would shut the door and drive off. Her very courage turned such an economically crippling, politically dynamic boycott and ended legal segregation in America. A three hundred and eighty two Montgomery city bus designated for whites. She was referring. Along with pictures of Fannie Lou Hamer, Eleanor Holmes Norton and Jim Forman hangs a very precious photograph of Rosa Parks surrounded by my then seven-year-old daughter and her playmate Kai Beard. Dottie was simply undone that in all the years she’d come into homes like so many others simply thought the woman sitting next to Anyania was her grandmother. A few weeks after she returned to Alabama, a beautiful photograph of Mrs. Parks was sent by Paul Collins. That portrait now hangs in Anyania’s home in Brentwood, California where my grandchildren Maelia and Elijah live, read and play everyday.

**ROSA & RAYMOND PARKS INSTITUTE FOR SELF DEVELOPMENT, January 15, 2003.**

Hon. Barbara Lee, U.S. Congress, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN LEE: Never think you are alone when you stand for right because GOD is with you. We are very proud of you. It makes me feel good that you are a Congressional Member. Love, Peace and Prosperity.

ROSA PARKS.

Mr. CONYERS. What a beautiful remembrance of a great lady. I am sure the gentlewoman from California is one of the few people in Congress that have a written communication from Mrs. Parks. I congratulate the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Watson).

Ms. Watson. Mr. Speaker, Rosa Parks’s life is a milestone in American history. I stand here because she sat there. Her simple defiance of refusing to relinquish her seat 50 years ago on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, ignited the civil rights movement that transformed these United States. Without Rosa Parks there may not have been a Martin Luther King or a civil rights movement.

Her death at the age of 92 reminds us all that one person can make a profound difference in the lives of others and in the course of history. She is the embodiment and exemplar of today’s human rights movements around the world.

Part of Rosa Parks’s legacy was her quiet dignity and disdain for injustice. She was truly a woman of peace. What she determined that fateful day on the bus in Montgomery, Alabama, is that she would not compromise her essential humanity. Her grace and her strength exemplified a purity of spirit and commitment to truth.

The road less traveled by Rosa Parks was not always smooth or kind. She and her husband received numerous death threats and lost their jobs in the aftermath of the historic bus boycott. Her supporters’ houses were firebombed. Congress stood by and did nothing. Mrs. Parks finally moved north to Detroit where she had relatives and eventually ended up working for the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mr. Conyers), the esteemed Congressman, and Rosa Parks lived the rest of her life. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to her family, friends, and as many friends and colleagues here on the floor and particularly the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mr. Conyers), my friend. We are a better Nation and people because of Rosa Parks.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to briefly acknowledge the passing of the two other heroes in the struggle for civil and human rights. Dr. ‘Tucker had many firsts in her long public career. She was the first black woman to be named vice chair of Pennsylvania’s State Democratic Party and the first African American to serve as president of the National Federation of Democratic Women. She was also founder and chairwoman of the National Congress of Black Women. Dr. Tucker was always on the front line in the struggle for civil rights and the rights of African American women. She led with strength and dignity, always stood tall, and was concerned about inequities and justice for all. Her spirit lives on.

Mr. Speaker, Congressman Ed Roybal was a true pioneer in the struggle for human and civil rights in California. He was an advocate his whole life for the poor, the disenfranchised, and for seniors.

Ed stood up not only for the rights of Latinos but all people who have been denied an equal opportunity. I looked to him as he served on the Los Angeles City Council and then in Congress as a voice that could be trusted to consistently respond on behalf of those who could not speak for themselves. During his long career and many accomplishments, he never lost sight of those in need.

My prayers and thoughts are with the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Roybal-Allard), his daughter, and his family during their period of grieving for the loss of a great American. Ed’s story reads that the voice of the voiceless will never be silenced. He leaves behind a spiritual, indelible legacy that will live on.
Mr. Speaker, we have lost a triumvirate.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California for her kind remarks and remembrances of Rosa Parks; and now, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT), the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, a veteran member of the North Carolina bar and member of the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

Mr. WATT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for yielding.

I was trying to decide how to approach this issue and decided that probably there were two things I need to do: number one, I want to thank the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS), my good friend and colleague, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), my good friend and colleague, the two States with whom Rosa Parks probably had the strongest personal connections, for convejing this Special Order for us to pay tribute to Rosa Parks.

I have listened to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) and my other colleagues talk about some of their personal connections to Rosa Parks. One would think that maybe the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus would have some personal stories, too; but when I reflect, I can only say that I never met Rosa Parks, nor for that matter but for the fact that Martin Luther King spoke at my high school graduation in 1963 did I ever meet Martin Luther King.

So why would we be here talking about somebody that we have never met? Because they have had an impact on our lives. What would compel a person to go visit a bus stop in Alabama? Simply because you know that there was a particular significance to that bus stop, that that was the stop at which Rosa Parks got on the bus.

I cannot talk about the personal things about Rosa Parks that some of my colleagues have talked about. I can only talk about the impact that she had on my life and the lives of other people who viewed her from a distance and respected and admired her gentle but defiant stand, the stand that she took of refusing to stand and refusing to sit and refusing to stand, and by knowing that it had a tremendous impact on everybody around us as we were growing up, because by her sitting down and refusing to stand up, it allowed other people to stand up and straighten their backs and raise their shoulders and look up and start to move in a direction that we had not been moving before, starting with a bus boycott, and then sit-ins and other public accommodations and the entry of Martin Luther King as a leader of a whole series of things that started to take place.

What does that say for us who never met this wonderful woman, except from a distance? It says that there are probably many, many, many people who are watching us and would it not be a wonderful tribute to have somebody someday pay tribute to us who never, ever met us in person, by saying this person had an impact on my life?

I cannot think of a better way to pay tribute to her. She had an impact on my life, and I cannot think of a greater challenge to issue to my colleagues in this body, to people who may be watching around the Nation, than to say that maybe some folks think that you could impact their lives by simply sitting down or taking a stand for what you know is right.

We have that opportunity every single day, and I am delighted to pay tribute to Rosa Parks for exercising that opportunity and for allowing me to stand taller on her shoulders, on that giant commitment that she made.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT) for his eloquent statement. Mr. Speaker, I am now pleased to yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD), who has been a strong supporter of civil rights, affirmative action, and the Voter Rights Act.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) so much for yielding, and I am absolutely privileged to stand here today on the shoulders of Rosa Parks, though her frame was so small. One act, infused with courage, changed this world.

Her act was a spark that ignited a movement that altered the course of history for America. She sat down in order for America to stand up and look at itself, look at herself, and to see the atrocities that they were doing on a group of people, we African Americans.

I am so privileged to have had the opportunity to hear this great woman talk. She came to California; and while she came to California, she and I both hailed from Alabama. Yes, she was a native Alabaman and so am I.

Rosa Parks, a seamstress who refused to get up from her seat to give it to a white man, that is the type of courage that she displayed; and yet she did not want anyone to showcase her. In California, when we showcased her in the State legislature, she said, I do not want the world to know to her. I am sorry, you have all of this, because you have made this country a better country because of one act that you did.

All Americans should be standing up at this point, praising Rosa Parks for what she did, not only for a group of people but for this country. She raised the consciousness of this country and brought it to its knees in terms of segregation.

I am looking at the Washington Post Style, and they say: “Appreciation. The Threatened. Untouched Segregation.” Indeed, she did. What a mighty force she was, a woman who used threads to make a living, and yet when she was about to make a dress for one of her persons, a person who was really not of her ilk, they told her, you have made this wedding dress so beautifully you should come to the wedding. She says, well, I would like to come to the wedding, but the officials at St. John’s Episcopal Church told Lucy, the young woman for whom she was making the wedding dress, that if Rosa Parks was to attend this wedding, she would have to wear a uniform like a servant or sit in the balcony. She refused to do that. She was a woman of such great spirit, great soul.

I know the time is passing, but I just want to say to my dear sister, she has made us all proud. My daughters met Ayanna, Ramia, and Blair did not meet her, nor my grandsons Myles; but they will know her because their grandmother will tell them how she stood tall in spite of her small frame.

Thank you, Rosa Parks, for the distinction of becoming the mother of a civil rights movement and having the courage to act on behalf of all mankind.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) for those remembrances, and we had no idea that she and Rosa Parks had so much in common.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes our list of people that wanted to speak tonight. The celebrations of her life and legacy go on, though we will be observing memorial activities in Montgomery, Alabama; in the Nation's capital; and in Detroit, Michigan, as well. Thank you to you, Rosa Parks, for the opportunity and for allowing me and other Members to come forward this evening for this round of tributes to the life and legacy of Rosa Louise Parks.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to pay tribute to the life and work of Rosa Lee Parks, a quiet but courageous woman who, by sitting down against injustice allowed a mass civil rights movement to stand up for justice.

She was a small woman who had a large impact.

Rosa Parks was more than the “Mother of the Civil Rights Movement.” The three civil rights workers—Schwerner, Goodman and Cheney—were inspired by Rosa Parks before they set out on their journey to register people to vote in Mississippi prior to their tragic deaths.

Viola Gregg Liuzzo, an Italian American Detroit housewife who was killed driving marchers back to Selma after the 1965 Selma to Montgomery march, knew of the witness of Rosa Parks.

In 1966 James Meredith gained strength from Rosa Parks as he led a “March Against Fear” from Memphis to Jackson, Mississippi— in which he was shot.

Her dignified leadership inspired those abroad to engage in courageous acts—for example, the young man who stood in front of the tank in Tiananmen Square.

Nelson Mandela knew of her actions before he spent 27 years in a South African jail.

She burst on the scene before Pope John Paul II was able to use his pontifical office to
oppose communism. And when those in Eastern Europe struggling for independence from the Soviet Union sang “We Shall Overcome,” they were paying tribute to Rosa Parks, not Ronald Reagan.

Believing in American democracy she affirmed that one person—without money or military might—could make a difference.

In the face of danger, entrenched racism, a “states’ rights” philosophy—and a belief by many that any effort toward civil rights for “Negroes” was communist inspired—this graceful woman named Rosa McCauley Parks, born September 24, 1913, in Tuskegee, Alabama, was a young man, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and a mass movement to end legal apartheid in America.

Rosa Parks took the legal principle of “equal protection under the law” for all Americans in the 1954 Brown decision and applied it to public transportation—which eventually led to a 1964 Civil Rights Act, a 1965 Voting Rights Act and a 1968 Open Housing Act, all of which helped to build a more perfect union among the states and make America better.

Do so with tributes like these around the nation? Absolutely.

But it also occurred to me that there are few statues of people of color and women in the Capitol. I think Rosa Parks deserves to be honored, with a statue in Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol. And, therefore, today I introduced H.R. 4145, legislation to design, sculpture and place her among the greats who have helped to make America and the world a better place in which to live. I think that is the most appropriate way to permanently memorialize Rosa Parks.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, it was with great sadness that I learned of the passing of Mrs. Rosa Parks on October 24, 2005. I rise today along with my colleagues to celebrate and remember the life of a remarkable woman. I know that I speak for my colleagues here today when I say that America has lost one of its greatest citizens.

Rosa Parks became one the Nation’s first heroes of the Civil Rights Movement. Her refusal to give up her seat on a Montgomery Alabama bus solely because of her race sparked a result that no one could have predicted. The 381-day boycott of the Montgomery Alabama bus system and Mrs. Parks’ court case were the first nationally recognized battles of the Civil Rights Movement. This movement eventually brought about legislation to end segregation in public accommodations, to secure the voting rights of all citizens, and to eliminate discriminatory housing practices, effectively changing the face of American society forever.

Although Mrs. Parks’ actions were pivotal in creating laws, her actions also galvanized public support for the equal treatment of African Americans. It’s important to remember that Mrs. Parks’ actions did not exist in a vacuum. Less than a year had passed since the grisly lynching death of Emmett Till in Mississippi. Violence was a constant threat to those who longed for freedom for everyone. Although the boycott was a success, Rosa Parks later lost her job. But, despite of this mistreatment she still held on to what she believed in “freedom and equality.”

Ms. Parks’ valor, on that particular day, helped to make Americans aware of the history of the civil rights struggle. She was truly an example of courage, determination and inspiration to all Americans and for our courageous deed, Rosa Parks was hailed “the mother of the civil rights movement.” Therefore, on December 15, 1999, we in Congress honored Ms. Parks’ bravery by awarding her the Congressional Gold Medal in an historic ceremony at the Capitol Rotunda.

It was truly an honor to meet such an outstanding woman, and I will never forget her action and dedication that led to the end of segregation. Her heroism inspired the freedom and equality that African Americans so rightly deserve.

As the House’s majority leader, I hope that Rosa Parks’ legacy will be carried forward by future generations so that African Americans will continue to experience equality amongst all mankind.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and memory of the civil rights icon Rosa Louise Parks. Almost a century ago, Mrs. Parks’ refusal to surrender her bus seat triggered the first organized actions in the civil rights movement. Because of her action that day, Mrs. Parks will always be remembered as the “mother of the civil rights movement.”

Rosa Parks was born in Tuskegee, Alabama on February 4, 1913. As a girl, she wrote, “I had a very strong sense of what was fair.” She led a life dedicated to improving civil rights and acted as an inspiration to many Americans.

On December 1, 1955, Mrs. Parks sat in an unreserved section of a city bus. When asked to give up her seat for a white man she politely refused. It is a common misconception that Rosa Parks was unwilling to give up her seat because she was tired from a long day at work. As she told it, “the only tired I was, was tired of giving.”

Mrs. Parks’ act of civil disobedience is the popular inspiration that led to Martin Luther King Jr.’s decision to lead a bus boycott that lasted an amazing 381 days. On November 13, 1956, in an important victory for civil rights, the Supreme Court outlawed segregation on buses. The civil rights movement would experience many important victories, but Rosa Parks will always be remembered as its catalyst.

Mrs. Parks was a shy, soft spoken woman who was uncomfortable being revered as a symbol of the civil rights movement. She only hoped to inspire young people to achieve great things. However, in 1996 her place in U.S. history was cemented when she was awarded the Nation’s highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Bill Clinton. Mrs. Parks passed away October 24th at the age of 92, at her home in Detroit.

Rosa Parks will be remembered for her lasting contributions to society. Her legacy lives on in the continued struggle for civil rights around the world. She will be missed.

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, in 1913, a little girl name Rosa Louise McCauley was born in Alabama. As she grew up, her mother, Leona McCauley, encouraged her daughter to “take advantage of the the Supreme Court outlawed segregation on buses.”

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks’ life changed forever and she became an icon of the civil rights movement when she refused to give up her seat on a public bus to make extra room for white passengers. She was arrested and convicted of disorderly conduct for violating a local ordinance. Parks’ arrest led to the formation of the Montgomery Improvement Association, which organized a boycott of public buses until the U.S Supreme Court ruled that Montgomery’s policy of segregation on buses was unconstitutional.
Later, Parks moved to Michigan, where Rosa initially worked as a seamstress and later as an aide to the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. CONVYERS, from 1965 to 1988. She cofounded the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development in 1987 with, which sponsors a summer bus tour for teenagers that will live on forever. Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a courageous American hero, Rosa Parks. Mrs. Parks passed away on Monday evening at the age of 92 in her home in Detroit, Michigan. On February 4, 1913, Rosa Louise McCauley was born in Tuskegee, Alabama. The daughter of a carpenter and a teacher, Rosa was home schooled until the age of 11 when she attended Industrial School for Girls in Montgomery. She obtained her high school diploma at State Teachers College, while caring for her ailing grandmother. Rosa married Raymond Parks in 1932 and volunteered for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP from 1943 to 1966 while she worked as a seamstress and housekeeper. She and her family eventually moved to Detroit and joined the staff of Congressman John CONVYERS (D-MI) in 1965, where she worked for 23 years. Mrs. Parks’ finest hour occurred on December 1, 1955, when four black passengers on a bus were asked to give up their seats for a single white man. Three of the passengers complied, one did not. It was at that moment that Rosa Parks changed the course of history forever. What seemed like a simple gesture that Rosa Parks changed the course of history, and by doing so, improved the lives of us all. Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, we all have the opportunity to make choices in our lives. We have the choice to take the easy route, to blindly follow societal values no matter how false they may be. Or, we have the choice to take a stand and do what is right no matter how challenging the consequences may be. December 1st this year will mark the day 50 years ago when one brave, great American took a stand that, while resulting in many challenges, would spur a civil rights movement that shaped a growing country in a very positive way. In 1955, when Rosa Parks boarded that bus on her way home from work, she may not have been starting a revolution; she may not have been looking to change the world; she may not have been hoping to lead a noble cause. Rosa Parks was presented with a choice: to accept the restrictions forced on her by false values or to take advantage of the opportunity to do the right thing. Rosa Parks, right then and there in Montgomery, Alabama, decided she would not give up her seat that day because as a leader in the NAACP, she understood that by accepting the restrictions imposed on her under segregation she was only enabling it further. Although by two white men who had also worked as a seamstress, Rosa Parks found the strength to challenge that plague of conformity so that she and others might no longer have to endure another day under its agonizing curse. Making the choice to stand up to the monstrous ill of segregation, Rosa Parks joined heroes that have adorned legendary stories throughout the centuries when a common individual displays unconscionable valor in the name of righteousness and against all odds. Rosa Parks set off a chain of events that, over time, would sway that dragon of segregation. Her bravery would inspire other common individuals moved by the desire to promote equal rights to band together to form an army committed to a mission. Their mission would force a society that has accepted an immoral practice to stop and reevaluate its priorities and values. That day, Rosa Parks did start a revolution. That day, she inspired the Civil Rights movement that changed the world. That day she led a noble cause that she spent her entire life dedicated to seeing that we all have a seat of our choice at mankind’s table. It all began with Parks making the choice to stand up for what she knew, in her heart, was right. America has reaffirmed that Rosa Parks was “right” in Montgomery, Alabama and “right” still today and in the future. On October 25th, 2005, our great American hero, Rosa Parks, died at the age of 92 in her adopted home of Detroit, Michigan. While our country grieves for the loss of one of its most treasured patriots, we can rest assured that the stand Rosa Parks took nearly 50 years ago and the contributions she made therefrom continue to shape and change the values of this growing country. We are reminded that we must evaluate our priorities and values each day if we are to protect the equal rights endowed to us by our Creator. Most of all, as common individuals, we are reminded that each of us has the uncommon valor to stand up for what is right no matter the consequences because, just like Rosa Parks, each of us has a hero within. Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, there are many today who may not understand why December 1, 1955, will long be remembered throughout American history. That was the day a quiet, somewhat shy, 42-year old African American seamstress named Rosa Parks was ordered to get up and give her seat to a white passenger on a city bus in Montgomery, Alabama. For many years, countless times, all day, every day, all throughout the American South, African Americans had submitted to that humiliating demand. But that one December day, Rosa Parks simply refused to get up. It is true, she volunteered for the local NAACP chapter in Montgomery, but she had not planned that protest day. She was just trying to get home. She was tired, and she had had enough. Through that one simple act, Rosa Parks displayed nothing short of raw courage. It was dangerous—very dangerous—to defy the customs, traditions, and laws of racial discrimination and segregation in the South. The Brown v. Board of Education decision had been issued by the Supreme Court only 18 months before. In reaction, violence and intimidation erupted all across the South. There was so much tension, so much hate. In August of 1955, a 14-year-old African American boy, named Emmett Till had been murdered and mutilated by two white men. Mr. Parks reported the incident, causing the Great Spurt of Money, Mississippi. I believe there is a force—call it God or the spirit of history—that tracks us down and selects us to participate in a cause much greater than ourselves. Rosa Parks followed her own heart, and I am sure, had she been there, she would have known as Rosa Parks, the news spread like wildfire. And people began to say, “If Rosa Parks can do it, so can I.”
By sitting down, Rosa Parks was standing up, and with her she carried the hopes, dreams, aspirations, and yearnings of hundreds and thousands of oppressed people. She inspired an entire generation to take a stand by sitting-in at lunch counters and restaurants, by standing-in at schools, and by integrating public transportation on the Freedom Rides, and by organizing voter registration campaigns in the deepest and most dangerous part of the South. It was also in response to Rosa Parks' protest that a new, young minister named Martin Luther King, Jr. was called upon to be the spokesperson and leader of the movement that would ultimately become the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

That one simple, elegant act ignited a powerful non-violent movement that changed America forever. So when we pay tribute to Rosa Parks, we are saluting more than the mother of the modern day civil rights movement. We are honoring one of the founders of the New America, perhaps ultimately a foundress of the Beloved Community, a truly inter-racial democracy where we lay down the burdens of race and class.

Racial democracy where we lay down the burdens of the Beloved Community, a truly inter-racial democracy where we lay down the burdens of race and class.

As a young college student, I was inspired by the stories of Ms. Parks and the courage of her action. I traveled to the south as a “freedom ride” in support of the emerging civil rights movement.

Rosa Parks' courage, determination, and tenacity continue to be an inspiration to all those who are committed to non-violent protest and change. Nearly half a century later. She will be remembered as an everlasting symbol and advocate for justice and equality throughout America.

Thank you Rosa, America will forever be indebted to you.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McCaul of Texas). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for half the time until midnight.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to be here on the floor once again. I thank the minority leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Pelosi), and the majority leader, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Hoyer), and our Democratic Caucus leadership, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN).

I was moved by the statements that came to the floor to honor the great Rosa Parks, and also the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) who is a Member of this body for a very long time, and actually worked very closely with Mrs. Rosa Parks. I know she is smiling on the gentleman and this Congress tonight for recognizing her contributions. I thank the gentleman for standing up at a time it was not popular to stand up for Rosa Parks and allow her to be a part of your operation. And obviously she allowed you to be a part of her life. Thank you for keeping her memory alive.

Mr. Speaker, I entered my comments for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of conclusions to not only her family, but recognizing Rosa Park’s contributions to our great country, and to the world. Many leaders are not revered until they have passed on, and I can tell you that many Members of this Congress, especially in the Congressional Black Caucus, let Rosa Parks know how much we appreciated her contributions. I have read many letters to the editor from around the country from people from all backgrounds commending the life and memory of Mrs. Rosa Parks.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to come under regular order in the 30-Somethng Working Group to come to this floor once again and talk about some of the issues that are being worked on in our Federal Government and some of the issues that we need to continue to work on.

My State was hit recently by Hurricane Wilma, closely following damage by hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and there is a lot of work we have to do. I want to commend those first responders trying to save lives and making sure that we prevent accidents and future accidents. I want to thank Florida Power & Light and light companies from throughout the country for coming down to south Florida to try to restore power to so many Floridians.

But I can tell you it was very disheartening that yesterday, and I just got back this afternoon, there were thousands of people waiting on ice and water. Whatever the issue is as it relates to the communication lines, we are going to have to work on those issues. I know that in south Florida we have the most populated area in the State. We have the west coast hit, but we never can tell what Mother Nature is going to do. The east coast ended up being hammered quite a bit. A number of individuals were left without electricity. Roofs were ripped off. Things like that happened in category 2 and category 3 hurricanes. Water lines were ruptured, but hats off to the local government for making sure that we have potable water in many parts of Miami-Dade County and parts of Broward and Palm Beach counties.

But what we have to do is go back to what we were talking about originally, a Hurricane Katrina commission to make sure that we are able to work the kinks out so we can provide Americans with what they need in terms of aid. Unfortunately in this particular instance, that did not happen. I want to thank the National Guard for doing everything they could do, but the coordination is still not where it should be.

I wanted to talk tonight about what just happened, what has happened in the past, and how we can correct it in the future. I think that is something very, very important, especially as Members of Congress. I am joined by this phenomenal delegation (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ). Both of us rode the storm out and both of us live in communities where the lights are out.

Both of us called directly to the director of FEMA to recommend to the White House that we be granted individual assistance for households. In Hurricane Katrina, that was not granted. Many Floridians in south Florida lost their homes. They did not meet the $50,000 threshold for damage to their homes, something that we were able to do. That entire Florida delegation asked, with the leadership of the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ), for