

H.R. 1833, "yea."  
 H. Res. 178 "yea."  
 Rollcall vote No. 152, "no."  
 Rollcall vote No. 153, "no."  
 Rollcall vote No. 154, "no."  
 Rollcall vote No. 155, "no."  
 Rollcall vote No. 156, "no."  
 Rollcall vote No. 157, "no."

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN STEPHEN  
 ERIC BENSON OF THE UNITED  
 STATES NAVY

**HON. OWEN B. PICKETT**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 27, 1999*

Mr. PICKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Captain Stephen Eric Benson, Commanding Officer of Naval Air Station Oceana, who has served in the United States Navy for twenty-five years of faithful duty to his country.

For the past three years, Captain Benson has served as the Commanding Officer of Naval Air Station Oceana Virginia Beach, Virginia located in my congressional district. During his tenure as Commanding Officer, Captain Benson has distinguished himself by his exceptional efforts to establish and improve upon the relationship between the community and the Naval Air Station. It is a testimony to these efforts that as he leaves his post in June of this year, the relationship between the base and the City of Virginia Beach is one of the best in the nation.

The tenacious efforts of Captain Benson to enhance the cooperation with the surrounding community and his goal of serving as a "good neighbor" has not only helped the Navy achieve its mission, but also has made a direct contribution to the goals of the City of Virginia Beach. His open communication policy with both the Mayor of Virginia Beach and with the local congressional delegation has been exemplary and productive for all concerned.

Captain Benson has worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life for the sailors stationed under his command. New living quarters and recreational improvements have been either built or have been funded. With the assistance of congressional leadership, local political leaders and businesses, a new Barracks for enlisted personnel and a new recreational facility have either been funded or are near completion as he executes his next assignment.

Captain Benson has overseen the movement of ten F/A-18 squadrons and their families to Naval Air Station Oceana from Naval Air Station Cecil Field, Florida. A total of one hundred fifty-six aircraft and nearly nine thousand personnel and dependents have made the transition to their new home in Virginia Beach with minimum impact to operations and family members.

Again enhancing community relations, he has developed and nurtured the local Military Air show into a community affair, aligned with the City of Virginia Beach's Neptune Festival. This event, once known as the NAS Oceana Air Show is now known as the Neptune Festival Air Show. The show has been not only profitable to the Military Welfare and Recreation Fund which has a direct impact on the improvement of quality of life issues for the

sailors at NAS Oceana, but was awarded the Best Military Air Show in North America for 1998 by the International Council of Air Shows. This is a true win-win scenario which has brought recognition to not only the base, but to the community at large.

Captain Benson has personally conducted hundreds of community presentations fostering the best base-community relationships within the Hampton Roads region. He has been lauded by both the Mayor of the City of Virginia Beach and myself for his efforts in working with the local political groups and businesses for the betterment of all concerned.

Under his charge, Naval Air Station Oceana has won two consecutive Environmental Awards in 1998 and 1999 for efforts to maintain the environment on this installation. From these efforts, to rapid response teams for fuel spills, to responses to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) inquiries, NAS Oceana has been praised on all fronts.

Captain Benson is an active member of the Hampton Roads Rotary and the City of Virginia Beach Neptune Festival Committee, further enhancing the cooperation and community leadership between the base and the public at large.

A totally dedicated professional, Captain Benson has set a superior personal example of all military leaders to emulate. His many contributions will continue to be felt for many years to come in the Hampton Roads area. Because of his outstanding and distinguished record of accomplishments, his tenacious efforts to keep the local community informed and his outgoing personality, Captain Benson is truly worthy of recognition. We will surely miss him at Oceana Naval Air Station.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOSEPH  
 POSEDEL

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 27, 1999*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to recognize Joseph F. Posedel who is retiring as Business Manager of Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 343 under the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry.

In his 36 years with the union, Mr. Posedel has worked to create a solid foundation for Local 343.

He joined the union in 1963 as a building trades apprentice. He became a trustee for the Trust Fund in 1970. Subsequently, he served as Vice President, President, Business Agent and Apprenticeship Coordinator for the union. In January 1996 he assumed the important leadership position of Business Manager.

As Business Manager, Mr. Posedel successfully negotiated an improved wage package, including health, welfare, and pension benefits, for union members.

Mr. Posedel is a native of the San Francisco Bay area. He grew up in Rodeo and attended St. Mary's High School, graduating in 1955. He also attended St. Mary's College in the same community.

He and his wife, Patricia, have been married for 39 years. They have three children and six grandchildren.

Following his retirement, Mr. Posedel will continue to serve Local 343 as a Trustee of the Trust Fund.

Mr. Speaker, because of Joseph F. Posedel's long and devoted service to Local 343 of the Plumbers and Steamfitters Union, it is fitting and proper to honor him today for his accomplishments, and to wish him well in his retirement.

THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF TAI-  
 WANESE PRESIDENT LEE IN OF-  
 FICE

**HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 27, 1999*

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, permit me to take this opportunity to convey to Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui, on the eve of his third anniversary in office, our best wishes and congratulations. Taiwan is very fortunate to have Dr. Lee as its President.

A man of vision, President Lee supports the reunion of Taiwan and mainland China according to the principles of democracy, freedom, and the equitable distribution of wealth. During his tenure in office, he has made every effort to resume the cross Strait dialogue and to maintain peace and security in the Taiwan Strait.

Accordingly, I invite my colleagues to join in extending congratulations and best wishes to President Lee and we look forward to his continuing accomplishments in the coming years.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TEACHER  
 EMPOWERMENT ACT

**HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 27, 1999*

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, today I am joining with the distinguished Chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce, Mr. GOODLING, Mr. CASTLE, the Speaker of the House, the Majority Leader, Mr. WATTS, Mr. BLUNT, Ms. PRYCE, and other distinguished Members of the House to introduce the Teacher Empowerment Act. This legislation will make a significant and positive impact on how we prepare our Nation's teaching force by providing States and local school districts with needed funding for the provision of high quality teacher training and for the hiring of new teachers, where necessary.

In the development of the Teacher Empowerment Act, we have made every effort to put together a bill that is in the best interests of children, parents, and teachers. We have also tried to include the best elements of teacher training proposals from the Governors, the Administration, and different Members of Congress, on a bipartisan basis. I hope that by the time this legislation is considered by the full House, we will have a bipartisan proposal that will vastly expand training opportunities for our Nation's teachers and increase the achievement of all of our Nation's students. I intend to work closely with Mr. Martinez, the Ranking Democrat Member on the Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education,

Training and Life-long Learning, and others, on a bipartisan basis, to bring this bill to the floor of the House as rapidly as possible.

We believe that parents and other taxpayers have the right to information about student achievement and the quality of the teachers in their schools. Our bill holds schools accountable for raising student academic achievement, and we ensure that parents know the quality of their children's teachers.

We encourage intensive, long-term teacher training programs, focused on the subject matter taught by the teacher. We know that this works. If localities are unable to provide such professional development, teachers will be given the choice to select their own high quality teacher training programs. For the first time, we're giving teachers a choice in how they upgrade their skills. Our Teacher Opportunity Payments will empower individual teachers, or groups of teachers, to choose the training methods that best meets their classroom needs.

The Teacher Empowerment Act maintains an important focus on math and science, as under current law, but the legislation expands teacher training beyond just the subjects of math and science. The legislation ensures that teachers will be provided with training of the highest quality in all of the core academic subjects.

By combining the funding of several current Federal education programs, the Teacher Empowerment Act provides over \$2 billion annually over the next five years to give States, and more importantly local school districts, the flexibility they need to improve both teacher quality and student performance. This legislation also encourages innovation in how schools improve the quality of their teachers. Some localities may choose to pursue tenure reform or merit-based performance plans. Others may want to try differential and bonus pay for teachers qualified to teach subjects in high demand. Still others may want to explore alternative routes to certification.

The Teacher Empowerment Act continues to support local initiatives to reduce class size.

In fact, schools would be required to use a portion of their funds for hiring teachers to reduce class size. However, unlike the President's program, no set amount is required for the hiring of new teachers. Schools will be allowed to determine the right balance between quality teachers and reducing class size. Schools will also be allowed to hire special education teachers with these funds.

All of these are feasible in our legislation, because we don't try to tell schools what the approach should be. We don't want to impose any one system that every school must follow in order to upgrade the quality of its teachers. That won't work, because one size does not fit all.

The Teacher Empowerment Act is good, balanced legislation. It provides the flexibility that States and local school districts need to improve the quality of their teaching force with two goals in mind: increases in student achievement; and increases in the knowledge of teachers in the subjects they teach. I encourage all of my colleagues in the House to support this important legislation as we work to improve our nation's schools.

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SAN FRANCISCO STATE  
UNIVERSITY'S CENTENNIAL YEAR

**HON. NANCY PELOSI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 27, 1999*

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate San Francisco State University and to celebrate the 100th anniversary of its founding. It has grown from a teacher training school in 1899 with a student body of 31, to its status today as a racially and ethnically diverse, major urban university serving more than 27,000 students. While San Francisco State University was founded on March 22, this year graduation will be held on May 29. As SFSU graduates its 100th class, I'd like to recognize their contributions during the last century.

Throughout its first century, this University has led the way in providing accessible higher education for California's residents, promoting excellence in teaching and learning, embracing diversity, and creating community partnerships that enrich the cultural and economic life of the Bay Area, while strengthening the educational experience of our students.

San Francisco State University should be commended for its many achievements including, making global headlines for discovering new planets outside our solar system; establishing the nation's first College of Ethnic Studies; creating the only academic research facility on the San Francisco Bay; building one of the nation's top two Conservation Genetics Laboratories; creating the largest multimedia studies program in the country; and housing nationally recognized biology, creative writing and journalism programs.

SFSU should be proud of the linkages that its programs and quality faculty have built for sustained community involvement and partnership throughout its history. SFSU serves as a national model of a community-engaged urban campus, housing more than 100 centers, institutes and other special programs and projects addressing such varied issues as the health of the San Francisco Bay; K-12 student math skills; and small business success and science skills for inner city youth throughout the state. The University has also sustained collaborative partnerships throughout San Francisco and the Bay Area, including the Valencia Health Clinic, Step to College, Community Science Workshops for California, the Vistiacion Valley Community Service Center, the Muir Alternative Teacher Education program, and the Community Outreach Partnership Center.

San Francisco State is truly a model institution, making significant contributions in the Bay Area and beyond. They deserve to be congratulated for all their successes during the last 100 years and we wish them the best for the next century.