

people, local athletes are heroes to the young in their home towns. I admire the discipline and dedication these high schoolers have shown in successfully pursuing their dream.

The memories of this storied year will last a lifetime. I encourage all involved, but especially the Eaton players, to build on this experience by dreaming bigger dreams and achieving greater successes. I offer my best wishes to this team as they move forward from their State 3A Championship to future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING ST. GREGORY THE ILLUMINATOR CHURCH OF FOWLER

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate St. Gregory the Illuminator Church of Fowler, CA, upon its re-opening. St. Gregory the Illuminator is the fourth oldest Armenian Church in the United States.

St. Gregory first opened its doors in 1906 as the Armenian Apostolic Church. The services were held in the Episcopal Church of Fowler, and officiated by Father Sahag Vartabed Nazarean, pastor of the Holy Trinity Church in Fresno. During this time, the congregation of the St. Gregory Church consisted of 75 to 100 families.

In 1907, the First Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Apostolic Church was celebrated. Immediately following the liturgy, the congregation elected a board of trustees, their objective being the selection of a suitable site for a church building. On April 15, 1909, the present church site in Fowler was selected and purchased.

Construction of the church building on February 3, 1910. On April 17, the church was consecrated in a ceremony in the presence of a large congregation. The St. Gregory Church became the fourth established Armenian Apostolic Church in America, under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America.

Over the years, the original church building has expanded, and a church hall and Sunday school classes have been added. In 1993 the church decided to expand further. The site has since been enhanced by a park, basketball and volleyball courts, a playground and a courtyard, all of which are frequently used and enjoyed by parishioners. Most recently, construction has taken place to expand the sanctuary and church offices; a library and conference room have also been added. During this time of construction, services have been held in Markarian Hall, and a drastic increase in the congregation has been observed, making the re-opening of the sanctuary highly anticipated.

It is the memorable event that St. Gregory celebrates as it serves its third generation of Armenians, as well as many converts. It is the prayer of the parish that St. Gregory will be able to meet the challenge of inspiring those who worship in and make St. Gregory their spiritual home.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating St. Gregory the Illuminator Church of Fowler on its longtime serv-

ice to the Christian community, and its efforts to serve better through expansion. May it long continue its growth and success.

UNITED CONFEDERATION OF TAINO PEOPLE DAY

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the taino people and the importance of observing the United Confederation of Taino People Day.

The Taino people are the descendants of the first Native Peoples of the Americas to greet Cristobal Colon (Christopher Columbus) in the year 1492, and have a distinctive spiritual and material relationship with the lands, territories, waters and coastal seas which they have traditionally been connected to, occupied and used from time immemorial.

The Taino people have the collective and individual right to identify themselves as indigenous, to be recognized as such, and to practice, revitalize, develop and transmit to coming generations the past, present and future manifestations of their distinct identity, ethnic, cultural and spiritual traditions, history, language, and customs.

The Taino people, beyond international and political borders, have taken positive steps for the recognition, promotion and protection of their collective and individual rights and freedoms, by organizing themselves for their spiritual, social, political, economic, and cultural enhancement.

The Taino people, being represented by indigenous organizations, such as Caney Quinto Mundo, Concejo General de Tainos Borincanos, Fundacion Social Luz Cosmica Taina, Presencia Taina, Taino Ancestral Legacy Keepers, Ciboney Tribe, and Cecibajagua, have in solidarity chosen representatives themselves and established the United Confederation of Taino People.

The United Confederation of Taino People is celebrating its first historic anniversary, which coincides with, and recognizes the United Nations International decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples, and the equinox that signals the beginning of the planting cycle that the Taino People have observed for thousands of years.

Mr. Speaker, March 27, 1999 is the United Confederation of Taino People Day. I encourage my colleagues and all of the people of the United States to observe that day with the respect and dignity it deserves and to learn more about the great contributions of this people to our country and civilization.

TRIBUTE TO ONORINA LEACH

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring to your attention an honor received by Onorina Leach, Science Teacher at Highland High School, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mrs. Leach was profiled in the November 1998 na-

tional magazine *Cable in the Classroom* for her innovative methods to use technologies in the classroom.

Mrs. Leach is a regular user of video in her science class. She has found that by supplementing the traditional text method of teaching she is able to reach different kinds of learners. Some students favor auditory and visual information processing. Mrs. Leach has found that to reach more students more effectively she must present the material in as many different ways as she can.

In addition to her responsibilities as a science teacher, Onorina Leach is the coach of Highland High School's United States Academic Decathlon team. Also, Mrs. Leach is using video to help prepare the Highland High School Decathlon team for competition. The students participating in the United States Academic Decathlon learn study skills, time-management skills and social skills. A compliment given to Mrs. Leach by a student she had years ago summarizes Ms. Leach's dedication to her students. "You know, Mrs. Leach, Academic Decathlon did not necessarily prepare me for graduate school, but it did prepare me for life."

Please join me in honoring and thanking Onorina Leach for the difference she is making in the lives of her students and to our great community of Albuquerque, New Mexico.

MY COMMITMENT TO FREE AND FAIR TRADE FOR AGRICULTURE

HON. BOB SCHAFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. SCHAFER. Mr. Speaker, Colorado agriculture increasingly depends upon the export market to expand sales and increase revenues. The expanding world trade in agriculture has a significant impact on both the U.S. trade balance and on specific commodities and individual farmers.

No sector of the U.S. economy is subject to more international trade barriers than agriculture. The import quotas, high tariffs, government buying monopolies and import bans imposed by other nations, coupled with the overwhelming number of trade sanctions and embargoes imposed on other countries by our own government, cost the American agriculture industry billions of dollars each year in lost export opportunities.

These barriers continue to grow in spite of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Without question, they are devastating the ability for American agriculture to effectively compete, particularly at a time when exports now account for 30% of U.S. farm cash receipts and nearly 40% of all agricultural production. It is abundantly clear, that in addition to free trade, America must guarantee fair trade.

The 1996 Freedom to Farm Act returned control of farming operations to producers in exchange for sharp restrictions on the level of government support. The goal was to provide U.S. farmers with the flexibility to run their operations according to the marketplace. But in exchange, the U.S. government has a clear responsibility to ensure that our farmers and ranchers have the ability to compete fairly

against other exporters, not against foreign governments. I will continue my efforts in Congress to compel the executive branch to vigorously fight foreign trade barriers and utilize available tools such as the Export Enhancement Program and the Market Access Program to promote U.S. products abroad.

Furthermore, the State Department and the current administration must be forced to understand the economic consequences of utilizing food as a diplomatic weapon. Our farmers and ranchers cannot continue to bear the overwhelming burden of ineffective unilateral sanctions. The federal government should be required to identify funding sources to reimburse farmers for the reduction in prices caused by our government's actions, and this must occur before such actions are permitted to take place.

Agriculture is the bedrock of the American economy, and our agricultural productivity is the envy of the world. Assuring Colorado's farmers keep this edge in the global economy is one of my highest priorities in Congress.

COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION
ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 820) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2000 and 2001 for the Coast Guard, and for other purposes:

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Chairman, the U.S. Coast Guard provides many valuable services to our country. Among them are ice rescues. As many of us along the Great Lakes know, the Coast Guard has saved countless lives and provided invaluable services to our communities.

In the district which I represent, Macomb and St. Clair Counties, recreational uses of Lake St. Clair, the St. Clair River, and Lake Huron are not just limited to summer activities. Ice fishing is a growing and popular recreational activity, but from time to time wayward fishermen find themselves in need of help.

Our communities do a great job in rescuing individuals from critical circumstances, but their rescue capacity could be greatly aided by a Husky Airboat stationed at the St. Clair Shores Coast Guard Station. As we consider the Coast Guard authorization bill, I hope the Coast Guard and committee authorizers will consider the import role the Coast Guard plays in ice rescues and will work toward providing adequate resources to satellite stations, like the one in St. Clair Shores, to fulfill their mission. I look forward to working with the Coast Guard and the committees of jurisdiction in this important matter.

THE WORK INCENTIVES
IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. RICK LAZIO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 18, 1999

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill that has one goal and one goal only—enabling individuals with disabilities to pursue their desire to work. In today's workplace, less than one-half of one percent of disabled Americans successfully move from disability benefits to employment and self-sufficiency. A recent Harris Survey, however, found that 72 percent of Americans with disabilities want to work but nearly 75 percent of persons with disabilities are unemployed. What is the problem, here?

Let me tell you about a man from my district. He is a 39-year-old Navy Veteran from Bay Shore, NY. Several years ago, he worked on Wall Street with the hopes of becoming a stockbroker. Unfortunately, an accident in 1983 left him a quadriplegic. Because of his injury, this man relies on a tracheostomy to help him breath and speak.

He requires nurses or caregivers to clean his tracheostomy and requires 24-hour home care to assist him bathing, dressing, housekeeping, and numerous other daily activities. This individual's physical challenge, however, does not inhibit his ability to become a stockbroker. Ten years after his tragic accident, he successfully passed the "Series 7" test, a grueling 6-hour exam, to become a licensed stockbroker. Except for Federal barriers, he would be a stock broker today. He cannot, however, because he would lose his Medicaid and Medicare, which he needs to survive.

His situation is not unique. His predicament is replicated all across this country—by the millions. Suffolk County, NY, alone has 261,000 disabled individuals—most of whom want to work. Yet, disabled Americans must choose between working and surviving. Federal benefit programs such as Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provide benefits, including eligibility for health coverage through Medicare and Medicaid. Services that many disabled workers require, such as personal assistance, are often not covered by employer health care. So, when a disabled American secures a job and earns income, he or she may lose their government benefits and, subsequently, their health coverage.

This is why I have introduced the Work Incentives Improvement Act in the House of Representatives. The Federal Government should remove existing barriers and allow these individuals to work. Like all other Americans, disabled Americans deserve economic opportunity. They deserve the satisfaction that only a paycheck can bring. They deserve to be in control of their lives and have the peace of mind of independence and personal security. The Work Incentives Improvement Act takes significant steps toward reforming Federal disability programs, improving access to needed services, and releasing the shackles of dependency.

Look at today's disability program: more than 7.5 million disabled Americans receive benefits from SSI and SSDI. Providing assistance to these individuals costs the Government \$73 billion a year—making these dis-

ability programs the fourth largest entitlement expenditure in the Federal Government. Now, if only one 1 percent, or 75,000, of the 7.5 million disabled adults were to become employed, Federal savings in disability benefit would total \$3.5 billion over the lifetime of the individual. Removing barriers to work is a major benefit to disabled Americans in their pursuit of self-sufficiency, and it also contributes to preserving the Social Security trust fund.

The Work incentives Improvement Act would create new State options for SSDI and SSI beneficiaries who return to work to purchase the health care coverage they would otherwise be entitled to if they did not work. It would support a user-friendly, public-private approach job training and placement assistance for individuals with disabilities who want to work, and it provides for new ways to inform SSDI and SSI beneficiaries of available work incentives.

The man from Bay Shore, NY, said, "I want to work. I do not want to be a burden to taxpayers." The Work Incentives Improvement Act will help him become a successful stockbroker. When he does so, he hopes to open to open his own firm and hire people with disabilities.

Now is the time to make major progress toward removing barriers and enabling people with disabilities to work. Millions of Americans are waiting eagerly to unleash their creativity and pursue the American dream. They are waiting for us to act, Mr. Speaker. Let's act now.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 975, REDUCING VOLUME
OF STEEL IMPORTS AND ESTAB-
LISHING STEEL IMPORT NOTIFI-
CATION AND MONITORING PRO-
GRAM

SPEECH OF

HON. HAROLD E. FORD, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 1999

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Bipartisan Steel Recovery Act of 1999. I believe this initiative provides a comprehensive approach to enforcing trade laws by stating clearly and forcefully that the United States does not and will not tolerate violations of trade laws by foreign corporations.

As we enter a new millennium, we must face and embrace globalism by ensuring that all our citizens have the skills required to compete in the international economy. Export-driven job growth ensures that our communities' living standards continue to rise.

The primary forces shaping our economy—globalization, digitalization, deregulation, and diversity—require that we consider a broader array of international trade and investment opportunities. The city of Memphis is considered America's Distribution Center, and trade liberalization will help us become the World's Distribution Center.

But, while I support free trade, I also support fair trade. When other countries employ unfair trading practices, we must respond in kind. The rules of the international trading system, as laid out in the World Trade Organization, are predicated upon fair trade. If a country violates these rules, the system itself suffers.