

from voting even after they have finished their sentences. Once these people have returned to society, become good mothers and fathers, have jobs and are taxpayers, why should they not be allowed to vote? And because of the disproportionate impact of racism in this country, blacks and Latinos bear a disproportionate share of the burden of the loss of the right to vote. If Canada and other countries can take affirmative action to register former prisoners and bring them into full citizenship, then so can America. That's why I have cosponsored and plan to sponsor legislation having this effect on the federal level.

I strongly support creation of black-majority legislative districts. In a winner-take-all system in which 50.1 percent of voters can win 100 percent of power, they often are the only vehicle for people of color winning representation. But why should we accept these winner-take-all electoral rules that by definition deny representation to any political grouping that is in a minority in an area? What makes Republicans living in a majority-Republican district any more deserving of a chance to elect someone than Republicans living in a majority-Democratic district? Why should the black voters who were so happy to help elect me in my original congressional district no longer have that chance just because the courts ordered my district changed? How can some downplay the role of race in voting in America even as no blacks or Latinos serve in the U.S. Senate—and no State has a black or Latino majority?

I work hard to represent everyone in my district, but I have no illusions; a large number of my constituents would prefer another Representative. And as the only Congresswoman from Georgia and the only black woman Representative from the deep South States of South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana, I feel an obligation to speak for many people outside my district. Different voting systems would allow elections to be based on this reality, rather than the fallacy that Members speak only for the people in their districts.

Our entire electoral system should be reformed to make our institutions more reflective of America's voters. That's why I have authored in each of the past three Congresses the Voters Choice Act which allows the States to adopt proportional voting systems. Of the world's 36 major, full-fledged democracies, 33 use forms of proportional representation for national elections. Proportional systems also have a history in the United States. For example, then-governor George W. Bush signed legislation in Texas that has contributed to more than 50 localities moving to proportional systems in Texas. In May 2000, Amarillo used cumulative voting for the first time to elect its school board. It resulted in victories by the first black candidate ever to win a seat, the first Latino candidate to win since the 1970s, a tripling of voter turnout and widespread acceptance of the new rules. It is proportional representation in the Republic of South Africa that allows the Afrikaaner parties to have representative in the South African Parliament despite majority rule.

The principle of proportional voting is simple: That like-minded voters should be able to win seats in proportion to their share of the vote without hurting the rights of others—which is to say that 20 percent of like-minded voters in Peoria call fill one of five city council

seats with its cumulative voting system, and 51 percent will elect a majority of three seats. Its mechanisms range from party-based systems, which allow small parties to win seats, to candidate-based systems that would simply widen the "bid tent" of the major parties. Either way, its impact would be powerful in reinvigorating American politics, encouraging more cooperative policy-making and giving voters a greater range of choice.

Campaign finance reform must become more than a slogan, but law if we are to really give voters a choice in candidates. Right now, the special interests select the candidates before we even get to vote, so our choices as voters are severely limited due to the influence of special interest political money. I have benefited from current laws, as my incumbency helped me raise enough money to have the chance to reach new voters and hold onto my seat in Congress even after it was converted into a white-majority district. But that doesn't stop me from wanting to establish a political playing field in which all Americans have a chance to play, not just those with money or rich friends.

America is increasingly becoming a country of people of color. We know that southern resistance to minority gains of the Civil Rights Era never ended. But as America becomes a country of color we have seen southern resistance spread across our land. We must remain vigilant. Any policy that has the effect of suppressing or diluting the votes of people of color is not sustainable and violates the Voting Rights Act. We have severe problems facing us today. A black boy born in Harlem has less chance of reaching age 65 than a boy born in Bangladesh. Twenty-six black men were executed last year. And too many black men have been relegated to the streets, underpasses, and heating grates of America's urban cities. It is only through the vote that we will be able to change the conditions in our community and to right the multitudinous wrongs that have been foisted upon our condition. We have the power to change the status quo and our opponents know that well. That is why the practice of minority voter suppression is alive and well. However, until now, we didn't realize the power that we have. The Emperor is naked now. And as a result, the devious acts of minority vote suppression have been laid bare for the world to see. We have seen them too. I predict that the black electorate will never be the same. Just like white America, we now know that our votes count and as a result we will demand that our votes be counted.

HONORING CAROLYN GOLDEN FOR HER PORTRAITS OF SUCCESS AWARD

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2001

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Carolyn Golden for receiving the Portraits of Success Award. This award pays tribute to Ms. Golden's involvement in the African-American community. Her active involvement has made her a role model for the members of her local community.

Carolyn graduated from Fresno University in 1973. In 1974, she began work as a Deputy

Probation Officer. From 1978 to 1991 she served as a Campus Probation Officer, a Placement Officer, and a Superior Court Investigator. In 1991, Carolyn became the Probation Services Manager for the Fresno County Probation Department. She also serves as the Project Coordinator of the Victim/Witness Program in Fresno County.

Her involvement with volunteer and professional organizations include: KVPT, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Black Catholic United, N.A.A.C.P., YWCA Marjorie Mason Center, Big Brother/Big Sister, Central Valley March of Dimes, African-American Museum San Joaquin Valley, Citizen's Advisory Committee for Pleasant Valley State Prison, Women's Criminal Justice Association, Black Peace Officer's Association, California Victim Witness Coordinating Council, AD HOC Committee Member, Domestic Violence Round Table, California Probation & Parole Correctional Association.

Her accomplishments have earned her a Portraits of Success Award, presented by KSEE-24 and Companies That Care in recognition of African-American History Month.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Carolyn Golden for her commitment to improving the lives of the people in the community. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Carolyn Golden many more years of continued success.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICAL RESEARCH INVESTMENT ACT

HON. JENNIFER DUNN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2001

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce bipartisan legislation, the Paul Coverdell Medical Research Investment Act.

Under the current tax code, deductible charitable cash gifts to support medical research are limited to 50% of an individual's adjusted gross income. This bill would simply increase the deductibility of cash gifts for medical research to 80% of an individual's adjusted gross income. For those individuals who are willing and able to give more than 80% of their income, the bill also extends the period an individual can carry the deduction forward for excess charitable gifts from five years to ten years.

In what is perhaps the most important change for today's economy, the bill allows taxpayers to donate stock without being penalized for it. Americans regularly donate stock acquired through a stock option plan to their favorite charity. And often they make the donation within a year of exercising their stock options. But current law penalizes these donations by taxing them as ordinary income or as capital gain. These taxes can run as high as 40%, which acts as a disincentive to contribute to charities. How absurd that someone who donates \$1,000 to a charity has to sell \$1,400 of stock to pay for it. The person could wait a year and give the stock then, but why delay the contribution when that money can be put to work curing disease today. The MRI Act is premised on a simple truth: People should not be penalized for helping others.

PriceWaterhouseCoopers, relying on IRS data and studies of charitable giving, conducted a study on the effects of the MRI Act.

It concluded that if the proposal were in effect last year there would have been a 4.0% to 4.5% income in individual giving in 2000. This amounts to \$180.4 million additional dollars in charitable donations for medical research—dollars that would result in tangible health benefits to all Americans. If the additional giving grew every year over five years at the same rate as national income a billion dollars more would be put to work to cure disease. Over the course of ten years, the number jumps to \$2.3 billion in new money for medical research. For many research efforts, that money could mean the difference between finding a cure or not finding a cure.

The returns from increased funding of medical research—not only in economic savings to the country, but in terms of curing disease and finding new treatments—could be enormous. The amount and impact of disease in this country is staggering. Each day more than 1,500 Americans die of cancer. Sixteen million people have diabetes—their lives are shortened by an average of fifteen years. Cardiovascular diseases take approximately one million American lives a year. One and a half million people have Parkinson's Disease. Countless families suffer with the pain of a loved one who has Alzheimer's. And yet these diseases go without a cure. We must work towards the day then they are cured, prevented, or eliminated—just like polio and smallpox were years ago.

Increased funding of medical research by the private sector is needed to save and improve American lives. New discoveries in science and technology are creating even greater opportunities than in the past for large returns from money invested in medical research. The mapping of the human genome is but one example. Dr. Abraham Lieberman, a neurologist at the National Parkinson's Foundation, was quoted in Newsweek as saying that the medical research community today is "standing at the same threshold that we reached with infectious disease 100 years ago."

The MRI Act encourages the financial gifts that will enable that threshold to be overcome. I hope you will join me in supporting it.

IN TRIBUTE TO NORWEGIAN
AMBASSADOR TOM VRAALSEN

HON. MARTIN OLAV SABO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2001

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the co-founders of the Friends of Norway Congressional Caucus—Representative EARL POMEROY of North Dakota, Representative JOHN THUNE of South Dakota, and myself—to pay tribute to a dear friend, His Excellency Tom Vraalsen, as he concludes his tenure as the Norwegian Ambassador to the United States. After five years of distinguished service here, Ambassador Vraalsen is leaving to become the Norwegian Ambassador to Finland.

Ambassador Vraalsen's record of public service to his own country, and to the world community, is remarkable. Prior to his tenure as Norwegian Ambassador to the United States, he served as the Norwegian Ambassador to Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

He served as Norway's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 1975 to 1979. A member of the Foreign Service since 1960, Ambassador Vraalsen has also held several positions in Norwegian embassies in Peking, Cairo, Manila, and Jakarta.

Ambassador Vraalsen is a respected expert in international humanitarian and socio-economic development issues—having most recently served as Special Envoy of the U.N. Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs in the Sudan in 1998. In addition, he has written numerous papers and articles on African economic development issues, as well as conflict prevention and resolution, and he is author and co-author, respectively, of two books: *The U.N.—Dream and Reality* (1984) and *U.N. in Focus* (1975).

Our friendships with Ambassador Vraalsen have been complemented through our work with him on the Friends of Norway Congressional Caucus—an organization we established in the House of Representatives in 1999. Ambassador Vraalsen first developed the idea to create the Caucus, which he believed would help foster connections between American and Norwegian leaders and address issues of concern to the Norwegian-American community. Many members of our Caucus are of Norwegian heritage, or represent states in which a significant proportion of Norwegian-Americans live.

The Friends of Norway Congressional Caucus has grown, and today it boasts over 40 members. With Ambassador Vraalsen's cooperation and encouragement, the organization has served as an important medium for promoting cultural, commercial, and economic ties between the United States and Norway.

Ambassador Vraalsen has served his country well as Ambassador to the United States. We feel honored to have worked with him. As he embarks upon a new path in his career of service, we will miss his advice and counsel on issues important to our two countries.

Mr. Speaker, today we wish Ambassador Vraalsen the best of luck, and good health and happiness always. We will miss him.

COMMENDING THE COMMUNITY
SERVICE OF THE HOLYOKE
MALL AT INGLESIDE IN HOL-
YOKE, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. JOHN W. OLVER

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2001

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend the outstanding community service of the Holyoke Mall at Ingleside in Holyoke, Massachusetts.

Many communities in western Massachusetts have faced significant economic and social challenges since the paper industries which once dominated our region's economy moved south and west in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Holyoke, Massachusetts is one such city. But, fortunately for its residents, Holyoke has been blessed with superior creative leadership, both in the public and private sector. Economic revitalization, educational advancements and hope for a better tomorrow are all on the rise in Holyoke, and the Holyoke Mall at Ingleside, one of the city's best corporate

citizens, is a big part of Holyoke's bright future.

Each year for the past nine years, the Holyoke Mall has helped produce "The Future Begins Here" coalition event that supports children's programs throughout the Pioneer Valley. Some of Holyoke's neediest children benefit from "The Future Begins Here," and the Holyoke Mall should be commended for its strong commitment to the initiative. May 6, 2001 will mark the tenth year of the event, with the Holyoke Mall still on board as a key partner.

I commend the Holyoke Mall at Ingleside's focus on the children of the Pioneer Valley. It will help build a better tomorrow for everyone in western Massachusetts.

RECOGNIZING CLOVIS UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2001

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Clovis Unified School District for receiving the Meritorious Budget Award. The Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) International is given for excellence in the preparation and issuance of a school system annual budget.

ASBO International and school business management professionals designed the Meritorious Budget Awards Program to enable school business administrators to achieve a standard of excellence in budget presentation. This program has helped school systems build a solid foundation in the skills of developing, analyzing, and presenting a budget.

The Meritorious Budget Award is only given to school districts that have met or exceeded the Meritorious Budget Award Program Criteria. This is the only award program that is specifically designed to enhance school budgeting and honor a school system for a job well done.

The Association of School Business Officials International, founded in 1910, is a professional association that provides programs and services to promote the highest standards of school business management practices, professional growth, and the effective use of educational resources.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Clovis Unified School District for receiving the Meritorious Budget Award. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Clovis Unified School District many more years of continued success.

“REMEMBER THE TITANS”: EX-
TOLLING THE VIRTUES OF
BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2001

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Black History Month and to salute the millions of African-Americans who have made enormous contributions to our culture.

We in the Eighth District of Virginia are particularly proud to celebrate Black History