

It is a pleasure to honor Leamon King, who has made and continues to make a difference for California youth and the Latino community.

CONDEMNING HEINOUS ATROCITIES THAT OCCURRED AT SANTANA HIGH SCHOOL, SANTEE, CALIFORNIA

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM DeMINT

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 13, 2001

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. Speaker, what are we to make of the most recent school shooting in California? How do we respond to events that are so beyond belief, so tragic that goodness in our world appears no stronger than a flickering flame on a shrinking wick?

The accused is a scrawny, quiet fifteen-year-old named Andy. He was relentlessly picked on at his new school in San Diego. A victim of bullies, he found no refuge in his broken home. He longed for a relationship with his estranged mother. He searched for acceptance. "He tried to act cool, but he wasn't cool," said one skateboarder who saw him trying to fit in with a rougher crowd. He was relentlessly hounded for his haircut, his voice, and his clothes. Andy reached out to old friends. "He told me many times that I was the reason he hadn't killed himself," his closest friend from Maryland said.

Within minutes of the shooting, the televisions blared with quick-fix commentary. Gun control. Lack of self-control. Blame the parents. Blame the schools. The answers seemed empty, earthly, leaving many with more questions and more confusion.

I trust you will agree that Andy's actions are a condition of the heart. The answer lies in something more than smaller classroom sizes or higher test scores.

Tragically, a dark shadow of spiritual emptiness has eclipsed our reliance on the truth and dignity that come from a belief in God—the very essence of what provides us with guidance, worth, and meaning. I humbly offer this saying from Dorothy Sayers who writes that the problem is "the sin that believes in nothing, cares for nothing, seeks to know nothing, interferes with nothing, enjoys nothing, lives for nothing, finds purpose in nothing, and remains alive because there is nothing for which it will die."

That, my friends, is the challenge of our time. It is the desperate calls of Andy and the despondent cries of the victims. Our youth are looking for something beyond the nothing. It is my prayer that we give them a reason to believe.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN E. RUDOLPH

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2001

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to salute an exceptional citizen and good friend of mine, John E. Rudolph.

John, the founder of Lima, Ohio-based Rudolph Foods Company, was recently pre-

sented with the Snack Food Association's (SFA) 2001 Circle of Honor Award. John and his wife, Mary, have transformed their small company that sold Mexican specialty snacks into the world's largest producer of pork rinds. In 1984 he was the first non-potato chip manufacturer to be elected SFA chairman. John's career path certainly exemplifies the American dream.

John has been an asset not only to his business, but also our country and his community. After graduating from college he served as an artilleryman in World War II. An active member in the community; he has been president of the Lima Rotary Club, president of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, chairman of the Lima YMCA and a member of the board of directors of Lima Memorial Hospital.

I would like to thank John on behalf of the people in the snack food industry, and the city of Lima for all of his service and devotion. Congratulations, John, on the fine award.

MARCH SCHOOL OF THE MONTH

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2001

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I have named Powell's Lane Elementary School in Westbury as School of the Month in the Fourth Congressional District for March 2001. In February, Powell's Lane won Newsday's Stock Market Game for the third time.

John Ogilvie is Principal of Powell's Lane Elementary, and Dr. Constance R. Clark is the Superintendent of Schools for the Westbury School District.

I'm so excited to have such an innovative and remarkable school as School of the Month. Powell's Lane is singlehandedly training future Wall Street investors. There was a time when the stock market was too daunting and confusing even for adults, but new computer technology and the use of the web has cut through to many barriers—and Powell is making that happen every day.

Recently, Powell's Lane received the New York State School of Excellence Award, and is one of seven schools nominated by the state for the U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Schools 2000–2001 Elementary School Program.

Powell's academic record—and their national recognition as a "Blue Ribbon School" nominee—displays the qualities of excellence that consistently train Long Island's students to excel through the rest of their lives.

The mission of Powell's Lane Elementary School focuses on child development, blending in academic achievement and social relationships. Powell's Lane Elementary teaches students in grades 3, 4 and 5, and has many achievements and programs of note. The students are involved in community outreach such as helping with Newsday's "Help a Family" campaign.

I commend Powell's Lane Elementary School for its innovation, and I look forward to great achievement from Powell's students.

IN HONOR OF GEORGE BECKER

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2001

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of George Becker, the recently retired president of the United Steelworkers of America. Through his leadership, courage and determination, labor unions across our nation have been revitalized and reenergized with a newfound strength.

George Becker became a member of the United Steelworkers of America when he became a mill worker in Granite City, Illinois. His determination and dedication to helping others allowed his ascent to the presidency of the union. As a vice-president of the United Steelworkers, George Becker organized a strike against Ravenswood Aluminum Corporation. Lasting over twenty months, the eventual resolution benefited steelworkers. The first major strike in years to offer positive tangible results, the Ravenswood protest was just the beginning of how George Becker worked to organize and lead the labor movement.

Upon becoming the president of the United Steelworkers of America, George Becker promptly restructured the union, bringing new efficiencies and operational improvements. He also worked to redefine its mission, so that the union would help foster new leaders for tomorrow. Creating the Legislative Internship Project, George Becker invited young people to become involved in the labor movement. He fostered a sense of community from within, and as President Becker was able to create a stronger labor union with a newfound political clout.

George Becker has continually fought and stood up for the steel industry in the United States. He founded Stand Up For Steel, an alliance of unions and steel manufacturers. United to help stop unfair trade practices, Stand Up For Steel has become an important organization in the battle to promote fair trade.

As George Becker ends his long term of service to the United Steelworkers of America, he leaves behind a stronger, more assertive union. He has spent a lifetime helping his fellow workers by representing and expressing their needs and concerns. My fellow colleagues, please join me in honoring Mr. George Becker.

TRIBUTE TO VERA FIGUEROA

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2001

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to salute Vera Figueroa, of California. Vera has been recognized by Adelante, California Migrant Leadership Council and American Legion Merle Reed Post 124 as an outstanding individual who has made significant contributions to the improvement of education opportunities for Latino Children in California.

Delano High School Board Member, a highly respected community leader and cultural dance instructor, Vera has made major contributions to the youth and parents over the past years.

Born in El Paso, Texas, on January 4, 1937, daughter of Mrs. Elvira Villegas, Vera has five brothers and two sisters. Her family moved to Delano in 1946. Married since 1955 to Johnny Figueroa, they have three children: Lorriane Melendez, 28 years of age, who resides in McFarland, Johnny Figueroa III, 24 years, of Delano, and Edmundo Figueroa, age 14, a student at Delano High School.

Attending Fremont Elementary, Richgrove Elementary, and Delano High School, Vera graduated in 1955. She worked as a Community Aide at Delano High School from 1979 to 1985, and currently works at the school as a Record Clerk, since 1985.

Vera has been an active community volunteer, freely giving of her time, efforts, and talent. She has served as a coach for Delano Parks and Recreation, coaching 3rd to 12th grades, all sports. In honor of her achievements and volunteerism, Vera was appointed Delano parks and Recreation Commissioner, July 1980—December 1984.

Vera is also known for dance. She has served as Dance Instructor at Albany Park and Fremont School for 2nd, 3rd and 4th graders.

She started dancing as "Vera" for the soldiers at Ft. Bliss and other places in Texas. While still in El Paso, she studied classical Spanish Dances. In Delano she continued to learn on her own. In the late 40s and early 50s she danced at both the Albany Park and Fremont Schools.

In the '70s she started the Figueroa Troup. It was multicultural group, featuring dances of Spain, Mexico, Russia, Hawaii, Japan and the Philippines. At one time the group included her daughter, and several other Cinco de Mayo Queen Contestants. They performed for the Boy Scouts Jamboree in Hayward and for the Men's Prison in San Luis Obispo. They performed in San Jose, Santa Ana, San Fernando, and Bakersfield.

Vera's love of dance and her Mexican culture inspired her to devote many hours to teaching the cultural dances of Mexico and Spain. She choreographed most Cinco de Mayo queen show pageants. She devoted thousands of hours to their celebration.

Vera served as Grand Marshal of the 30th Fiesta and Parade for Cinco de Mayo Fiesta, Inc., in Delano, in honor of her accomplishments and devotion to preserving the culture.

She also helped found Community of Concerned Parents for Better Education, (CCPBE), and has been President for four years. The group works for better education and greater parent participation. Under her leadership, CCPBE raised \$2,000 for the Fremont School Track. They also provide \$1,000 scholarship awards for Delano High graduates. Vera has always worked for better education for the community's economically and academically disadvantaged.

Vera has been a member of Delano High PTA and Terrace School PTA. As president of the CCPBE, she has been instrumental in helping with back-to-school nights at the Delano schools, contributing monies to Fremont School and many other local school activities.

It is a pleasure to honor Vera Figueroa, who has made and continues to make a difference for California youth and the Latino community.

SCHOOLYARD SAFETY ACT

HON. JENNIFER DUNN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2001

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, we continue to see tragic examples that reinforce the need for immediate action to stop the violence in our nation's schools. Today I am reintroducing, along with my colleagues PETER DEFAZIO and ZACH WAMP, the Schoolyard Safety Act. This legislation is aimed at keeping America's youth safe in their schools by establishing an incentive program for States to create a 24-hour holding period for students who bring guns to school.

The tragic May 1998 schoolyard shooting in Springfield, Oregon best illustrates the need for this bill's incentive program for States to impose a 24-hour holding period. As you may recall, a student showed up at school with a gun. He was immediately expelled and sent home. He was not, however, held to undergo psychological evaluation, nor was he placed in juvenile detention for further questioning. The next day, the student returned to his high school with a gun and used it to kill two classmates, and later, his parents.

Several hundred times a year, young people bring guns to school, and disciplinary action is taken. But we know that simply expelling a child does nothing to protect innocent students, communities, or the troubled youth himself. When a student brings a gun into the classroom, concrete steps must be taken immediately to deal with the problem. A 24-hour holding period would put the student into a secure environment where he can receive the attention he needs. This will not only protect the safety of other students and the public, but will ensure that the student carrying the gun receives proper counseling.

The Schoolyard Safety Act gives States access to Federal Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Programs if they seek to create a 24-hour holding period. It does not mandate another burdensome Federal program; rather, it gives States greater flexibility to use their Federal dollars how they see fit. We believe local officials and educators know best how to solve the problem of youth violence.

School shootings show us how easily gun violence can break the heart of a community. Every man, woman, and child across America have the right to expect to live on a safe street and send their kids to a safe school. Children who learn in fear are learning the wrong lessons and we have a responsibility to do whatever we can to prevent future tragedies.

INTRODUCTION OF THE VOTING EQUIPMENT MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2001

HON. STEVE C. LATOURETTE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2001

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced a measure called the "Voting Equipment Modernization Act of 2001" (VEMA) that will create a special tax "checkoff" segment on income tax returns so Americans can direct

\$1 to \$2 of their tax dollars to help defray the cost of replacing antiquated voting machines across the country.

Mr. Speaker, the temporary election modernization checkoff on income tax forms will be separate from the current checkoff for the Presidential Election Campaign Fund. As with the presidential election checkoff, the voting equipment modernization checkoff will not increase a taxpayer's tax bill. Those filing individual tax returns would be able to contribute \$1 and those filing jointly could contribute \$2. More than 120 million individual income tax returns are filed each year.

The idea for a temporary election modernization checkoff came from a constituent of mine in Mentor, OH, who was embarrassed by events surrounding the November election and the accuracy of voting equipment across the country. In my home State of Ohio, 60 of the State's 88 counties use punch-card ballots similar to those used in Florida.

Mr. Speaker, right now we have a patchwork quilt of aging voting systems across the country and if the November election taught us anything it is that the patchwork quilt is a frayed mess. We have lottery machines that are far more modern and accurate than our current voting machines and that is just wrong.

My bill, the Voting Equipment Modernization Act of 2001, will establish a temporary checkoff on income tax returns that would allow taxpayers to designate \$1 to \$2 to the Federal Election Commission, which would then distribute funds to newly created Election Administration Improvement Funds in each State. The funding level for each State will be based on population derived from Census figures.

I believe Americans want modern voting equipment and know that State and local governments are not capable of bearing the enormous costs of replacing antiquated equipment. The cost of replacing voting equipment in each of the country's 191,000 voting precincts is estimated to cost at least \$4 billion and some estimates have voting modernization costs exceeding \$8 billion.

The current presidential tax checkoff has had mixed results, but I believe Americans will respond favorably to an opportunity to help defray the costs of new voting equipment if it will ensure accurate election results. Using Census figures as a guide, if 12 percent of Ohio taxpayers opted for the checkoff, it would amount to \$1.35 million in revenue that could be used to update voting equipment and pay to train poll workers.

Participation in the checkoff to help pay for presidential elections has fallen since it was first initiated in 1972, and studies show that only 12.5 percent of Americans checked the box on their 1997 returns. The remainder left the box blank or checked "NO." Through 1999, about \$1.2 billion had been designed for presidential elections.

I blame the low participation for the presidential checkoff on two factors: The public's unwillingness to help pay for increasingly hostile presidential elections, and widespread misunderstanding that checking off the box increases one's tax bill.

It is my belief that folks will be willing to do a tax checkoff if it will ensure that their vote will be counted and counted accurately. I think when folks realize this won't negatively impact their tax refund or tax bill, they will be willing to check the box.

Secretaries of State across the Nation agree that voting machines need to be modernized