

women and children, to be named after the woman who perhaps had done more for their cause than anyone else in the city's history. At the Center, volunteers help women and children get back on their feet by providing meals, medical care, childhood-development courses, and classes on computers and career planning. The Center provides them not only with new hope for the future, but a sense of a security and value that may have been taken away from them when their homes were lost. Ever humble, Ms. Travis was embarrassed by the attention of having her name immortalized, but the Georgia Travis Center will forever be a working tribute to Georgia's insatiable desire to empower, enlighten, and improve the lives of those in need of help.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of a friend and a role model. I had many opportunities to work with Ms. Travis, and what amazed me most about her was the ability she had to instill in others the same passion and resolve that she herself had in everything she set out to accomplish. The Bay Area should feel fortunate to be chosen as the beneficiary of her great works, and I personally feel fortunate to represent a district so deeply touched by her.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 15, 2002

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind Americans why the Pledge of Allegiance is so important in light of the 9th Circuit Appeals Court decision. I'd like to submit Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court Roy S. Moore's July 1998 statement titled "Our American Birthright." At that time, Justice Moore was a Circuit Court Judge.

OUR AMERICAN BIRTHRIGHT

(By Roy S. Moore)

One nation under God was their cry and declaration,
Upon the law of nature's God they built a mighty nation.
For unlike mankind before them who had walked this earthen sod,
These men would never question the sovereignty of God.
That all men were "created" was a truth "self-evident,"
To secure the rights God gave us was the role of government,
And if any form of government became destructive of this end,
It was their right, their duty, a new one to begin.
So with firm reliance on Divine Providence for protection,
They pledged their sacred honor and sought His wise direction.
They lifted an appeal to God for all the world to see,
And declared their independence forever to be free.
I'm glad they're not here with us to see the mess we're in,
How we've given up our righteousness for a life of indulgent sin.
For when abortion isn't murder and sodomy is deemed a right,
Then evil is now called good and darkness is now called light.
While truth and law were founded on the God of all Creation,

Man now, through law, denies the truth and calls it "separation."

No longer does man see a need for God when he's in full control.

For the only truth self-evident is in the latest poll.

But with man as his own master we fail to count the cost,

Our precious freedoms vanish and our liberty is lost.

Children are told they can't pray and they teach them evolution,

When will they learn the fear of God is the only true solution.

Our schools have become the battleground while all across the land,

Christians shrug their shoulders afraid to take a stand.

And from the grave their voices cry the victory has been won

Just glorify the Father as did His only Son.

When your work on earth is done, and you've traveled where we've trod,

You'll leave the land we left to you, One Nation Under God

RECOGNIZING RICHARD P. SESSLER

HON. SHERWOOD L. BOEHLERT

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 15, 2002

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Richard "Dick" Sessler for his 12 years of dedicated service to the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees. On June 28th, 2002, Mr. Sessler retired from his post as Executive Director for the Refugee Center. During his tenure, he was instrumental in the successful resettlement of close to 10,000 refugees from Bosnia, Russia, Vietnam, Burma, and Sudan to the Utica, NY area. Mr. Sessler is a visionary and a truly remarkable leader. Under his leadership the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees expanded significantly, initiated innovative services and formed many meaningful partnerships with a large number of community organizations.

Mr. Sessler's work with the center dates back to 1990 when he was first hired as Associate Director and later promoted to Executive Director in 1993. During that time the Center has grown tremendously. The Refugee Center now offers three well staffed and well developed programs that have been made more effective: a health program, an education program, and an excellent job placement program. In addition, Mr. Sessler was involved in the establishment of an on-site clinic, nighttime English classes (ESL), a dental program, a community relations program and citizenship classes.

Upon his retirement, Mr. Sessler plans to continue to offer his services to the refugee community. His plans include consulting and serving as an active member of the Lutheran Immigration Service (LIRS). I am confident that he will continue to offer his knowledge and experience and serve as a tremendous asset to the LIRS.

Mr. Sessler's commitment to the Refugee Center should serve as an inspiration to all. Mr. Sessler was and will remain to be well respected and well liked by all that have the pleasure to work with him. He has touched and reshaped the lives of many war-torn men,

women and children across the globe by helping them escape brutal religious and political persecution—I commend him for his efforts. I am confident that the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees will continue to maintain its excellent reputation, level of professionalism, and success that Mr. Sessler worked so diligently to instill within it.

VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY CONTEST

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 15, 2002

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate my constituent Allegra Guarino, New York's recent winner of the Veterans of Foreign Wars' Voice of Democracy Scholarship Contest. This very talented young writer from Marlboro, New York has written an essay entitled "Reaching Out to America's Future" that bears reading and reflection by all of us. I am very proud to represent her in Congress, and I'm sure that her family and friends are very proud of her accomplishment. I am certain that she has a very bright future and will go on to do great things for her community and our nation. We need more young people like her.

REACHING OUT TO AMERICA'S FUTURE (By Allegra Guarino)

When I hear the phrase . . . "reaching out to America's future" . . . I think of an outreach trip that I took this summer to Harlan County, Kentucky. Harlan County is one of—if not the poorest counties in America. The people here don't have running water, some of them don't have electricity, and what is even more shocking is that some of them don't have a sewage system. They live in hills of the Appalachian Mountains in conditions that many people wouldn't dream exist in our great country. One of the volunteers on the trip found a beautiful stone on the ground and gave it to a little girl that he met. He told her that it was a dream stone, and that if she held onto it when she was dreaming of the future, it would hold inside of it all of her hopes and her dreams. The six-year-old girl looked up at him with questioning eyes and said, "But I don't know how to hope and dream." How do you teach a child to dream? Most people don't have to be taught. Because they are lucky enough to live in part of our country where the reach of their dreams has no limitations.

Another child I met in Kentucky is named Bailey. She is a four-year-old that loves to play on the swing set, so on the third day of the trip I decided to teach her how to butterfly swing. I sat down on the swing and placed her on my lap so that she was facing me. I kicked off from the rocky soil and we began swinging. I told her to be sure and watch the shadow that we were casting on the ground. I watched her eyes light up as she saw the butterfly shaped shadow on the ground. As we pulled away from each other and then back towards each other the shadow was an image of a butterfly flapping its wings. I told her that she might not be able to fly like the butterfly but she could do lots of great things in her life. She thought about the butterfly and what I had said and then she looked at me with these big blue eyes and said you can be the wings. I know that she didn't mean it as deeply as I took it. She was probably only referring to the shadow that we were making on the ground. But to me it meant something more.

Today our country is at war and once again many brave people have gone off to fight in defense of freedom. They are truly the wings of the butterfly. Just as I picked up Bailey and placed her safely on my lap the troops fighting now, and the troops that have fought for us in the past picked up America, and started to fly. In order to start us swinging I had to push hard off the rocky ground. The American soldiers don't have an easy task ahead of them. We are just now, just kicking off of the rocky ground. But I have no doubt that we will fly. A butterfly has two wings. Each equally important. The soldiers will no doubt put 110% into flying our country to the freedom of the open skies. But we the American people must put equally as much effort into flying the country higher. All of us as a team must reach out to America's future. Without knowing us people have laid down their lives so that we would be able to enjoy the freedoms that are now being threatened. America too has a dream stone. Only it comes in a different form. It is tri-colored in red, white, and blue. Red for the blood shed yesterday, White for the pure freedoms we enjoy today and Blue for the endless clear skies of tomorrow.

Our flag is our dream stone holding inside of it the very hopes and dreams of our Nation. We held tightly to it as it was proudly carried through World War One, World War Two, Desert Storm, Vietnam and Korea. While we were enjoying a time of great prosperity we tucked our stone away in our pocket. On September 11th we pulled it out of our pockets when firefighters proudly raised it high at ground zero, athletes displayed it on their jerseys, and average Americans flew it from their cars and homes. My generation knows how to dream. Will the generation after us be able to say the same? We must reach out and place the knowledge of the past into the hands of the future. When we empower the future generations with knowledge our country is sure to thrive. It is estimated that over one million men and women have died in service to our great country. Let us, America's present, take pride in our history and reach out to the future by passing along our knowledge and our great American dream stone. Because without a doubt America's future is whatever America dreams it to be.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB RILEY

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 15, 2002

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained for Rollcall No. 295, on H.R. 4687, the National Construction Safety Team Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

THE UNINSURED

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 15, 2002

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, last week, on July 11, 2002, several of my colleagues, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. LEE, Mr. McDERMOTT, and Ms. CARSON, declared that it was time for this Congress to place universal health care at the top of the nation's political agenda. This declaration, I believe, was a defining moment for the universal health care movement in Amer-

ica. Not since 1994 have we seen such a visible and strong nationwide movement for universal health care.

Two years ago, in an attempt to create momentum and a unified strategy to achieve universal health care in Congress, I founded, along with Members of the Congressional Black Caucus, the Progressive Caucus, the Hispanic Caucus, and the Asian Pacific American Caucus, the "Congressional Universal Health Care Task Force," which now has 44 Members. For over two years we have sponsored briefings on Capitol Hill, attended town meetings on universal health care in cities across the country, and learned from health care experts about different ways to achieve universal health care.

Mr. Speaker, I introduced House Concurrent Resolution 99 with several of my colleagues from the "Congressional Universal Health Care Task Force," in order to build the momentum for passage of universal health care legislation by 2004.

We currently have 86 co-sponsors for this bill. There are over 325 national, state, and local organizations who support it as well. House Concurrent Resolution 99 does not specify how to pay for universal health care, nor does it spell out how a health care for all system would be administered. Instead, the resolution explicitly states what universal health care should be—affordable, comprehensive, and accessible for all Americans.

America is on the road to universal health care. How can we as members of Congress justify the fact that we have one of the best health insurance plans available, yet we allow 40 million Americans to have no health insurance coverage at all? Mr. Speaker, we cannot defend something that is clearly indefensible.

In the world's wealthiest country, my colleagues somehow can sleep at night knowing that right now in America, there are millions of patients, many of the children and families, that are having serious heart problems, lung problems, headaches, dental problems, mental illness, or other maladies, but are delaying treatment, not because they do not care about their health, but because the system does not care about them.

We now know empirically, based on the recent Institute of Medicine's 2002 report on the uninsured, that 18,000 Americans die each year because they were uninsured. If we truly care about the health and well being of working families, and those with serious illnesses who are too sick to work, we would ensure that all Americans would have peace of mind, as they do in Europe and Canada, to accessible, affordable, high quality, and comprehensive health care for all guaranteed by law.

In Michigan, thousands of uninsured HIV/AIDS patients can not afford the necessary cocktail of life sustaining drugs due to budget cut backs of government subsidized HIV/AIDS prescription drug programs. Can we continue to allow the uninsured chronically ill, those who have serious physical or mental health problems to go without needed health care for long periods of time, jeopardizing their lives, and needlessly suffering due to having untreated illnesses? For Congress to ignore these health care injustices and continue to "wish our health crisis away" is both immoral and cold hearted.

Plain and simple, if you do not have health insurance, you will receive "second class medicine," as Consumer Reports magazine

highlighted in an in depth story published last year. This is particularly true if you are African American or Hispanic. Might I remind you that the first question a nurse or hospital intake administrator asks the patient is not, "May I help you," but rather, "Do you have health insurance?" Health care in America for the most part is a business, and therefore, health care providers and physicians that are making money do not have an incentive to provide charity care.

The Kaiser Family Foundation recently reported that the majority of the uninsured do not receive comprehensive charity care in hospital emergency rooms or community clinics. Because there is no such thing as "universal charity care" in this country, we need universal health care and we need it now. Most uninsured patients with serious illnesses need long term health care treatment, prescription drugs, or medical equipment. Currently, millions of uninsured chronically ill patients must suffer the indignities of spending days and weeks searching for charity care. They often borrow money from relatives or friends just to purchase prescription drugs or to see a doctor. This is wrong and we all know it.

For the past two years, the "Congressional Universal Health Care Task Force" has sponsored several briefings with my colleagues from the Congressional Black Caucus, Progressive Caucus, Hispanic Caucuses, and the Asian Pacific American Caucus on the uninsured crisis in America. We have heard story after story of untold suffering by uninsured or under-insured Americans. We have also heard from numerous physicians who saw patients after their illness were full blown, many of them who died, because they delayed treatment only because they were uninsured. I urge Members of Congress to read "As Sick As it Gets," by Rudolph Mueller, M.D., a ground breaking book about the shocking reality of America's healthcare system. The book documents case after case of Dr. Mueller's patients who tragically became chronically ill, or died, as a result of delaying health care only because they were uninsured.

The Task Force has heard from numerous Americans whose credit was ruined for life, and went into bankruptcy due to thousands of dollars of unpaid medical bills. There are approximately 200,000 bankruptcies in America each year due to unpaid medical bills. Individuals and families should not have to experience the pain and humiliation of declaring bankruptcy just because they got sick. I heard testimony last year from two Washington D.C. residents, a husband and wife with cancer, both high school teachers, who declared bankruptcy due to the high costs of chemotherapy. They were both insured at the time, but had to rely on their credit cards to cover the costs of treatment, due to inadequate private health insurance coverage. Their daughter, who has Hepatitis C, called dozens of doctors but was denied access because she was uninsured. She is having a difficult time returning to work, because she needs long term therapy and treatment in order to be productive again. This is a national disgrace.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe, unlike many of my colleagues, that universal health care means the federal government provides vouchers so Americans can purchase costly and inferior or private health insurance, that in most cases, will not adequately cover one's health care needs, especially if an individual