

TRIBUTE TO THE CHALDEAN
FEDERATION OF AMERICA

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 21st Anniversary Celebration and 10th Annual Awards Banquet of the Chaldean Federation of America. On Friday, October 18, 2002 the Chaldean Federation will mark more than two decades of service to the Chaldean community in Metro-Detroit and one decade of recognizing outstanding citizens in their midst.

Over these many years, I have been privileged to witness the establishment and blossoming of this exceptional organization. The Federation serves the growing Chaldean community of Metro-Detroit, which now numbers over 160,000. Their service to the community has been extensive, from employment and social services, to language and translation support, to computer training and immigration services.

For new immigrants, the Federation has served to bridge the cultural gap between their native land and that of their adopted home. For first, second, and third generation Americans of Chaldean descent, the Federation has been a place of education and celebration, keeping alive the traditions of the Chaldean homeland.

In addition to serving the Chaldean community, the Federation has been an invaluable resource to our community as a whole. By providing cross-cultural education and sensitivity training to schools and other groups they have helped to promote tolerance and understanding in an increasingly complex world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to salute the Chaldean Federation of America, its key activists and countless volunteers, many of whom I have known personally for years. We have been enriched by the Chaldean culture and are deeply appreciative of the role that the Chaldean Federation of America continues to play in our community.

HONORING AN OUTSTANDING EMPLOYER—DOUGLASS DISTRIBUTING

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Bill and Joan Davis, owners of Douglass Distributing an "Outstanding Employer of Older Workers for 2002". Douglass Distributing has established a long-term commitment to the region of North Texas and Southern Oklahoma, proven by their community partnerships and contributions to local service organizations. For this reason, they have been selected as one of Prime Time's Outstanding Employers of Older Workers award winners.

Since 1981, the Douglass family has shown a strong belief in the value of older workers and has supported that belief by maintaining an age-balanced group of employees. They have been a family owned and operated petroleum products distributor in Sherman,

Texas who view older workers as "productive, reliable, and versatile with a strong work ethic." Their winning combination of younger workers and their older counterparts create a work environment where age and experience can assist in training, advice, and counseling.

Owners Bill and Joan Douglass have created an outstanding company that is a role model for a nation and state whose workforce is rapidly aging and whose businesses are facing a shortage of skilled, reliable workers. Douglass Distributing has led the way by putting their faith and trust in older workers who bring valuable experience, skills and work habits to the job. The company has no mandatory retirement age and provides flexibility in scheduling of employees' hours. They also believe that expertise and a positive attitude are the most important qualities in an employee, regardless of his or her age.

Douglass Distributing has shown a new path and winning blueprint for success. Mr. Speaker, as we adjourn today, let us acknowledge the contributions and the achievements of Douglass Distributing and Bill and Joan Douglass, as they have shown the business world a new model of distribution worthy of replication and appreciation.

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING MEMBERS
OF THE TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, last evening in the main hearing room of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, we held a reception honoring eight Members who are retiring from the House at the end of this Congress. In the spirit of bipartisanship that so truly characterizes our committee, Chairman DON YOUNG and I joined voices in tribute to these eight men—three Republicans and five Democrats—who are moving on to new challenges: BRIAN KERNS of Indiana, JOHN THUNE of South Dakota, STEVE HORN of California, JOHN BALDACCIO of Maine, FRANK MASCARA of Pennsylvania, JIM BARCIA of Michigan, BOB CLEMENT of Tennessee, and BOB BORSKI of Pennsylvania.

Before I go any further, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to recognize the leadership of Chairman YOUNG and call attention to some of the accomplishments of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee during the 107th Congress: The Railroad Retirement Act, the Kennedy Center Act, and the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, represent what our Committee does best—moving bipartisan bills to the President's desk. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in the 108th Congress on TEA 21 reauthorization, AIR 21 reauthorization, RIDE 21, and water and other critical infrastructure investment legislation, regardless of whether Republicans or Democrats are in the majority.

Mr. Speaker, on the Republic side, the Committee is losing three of our colleagues, Cong. BRIAN KERNS, Cong. JOHN THUNE, and Cong. STEVE HORN. Cong. KERNS (Indiana) joined the Committee last year with a fresh perspective on our Committee's issues that

will be missed. Cong. KERNS and I share a common background: we both served as Administrative Assistant to the Member we replaced. Of course, Cong. KERNS was also a TV reporter, so our work histories diverge there.

Cong. THUNE represents the state of South Dakota and he has been a consistent advocate for rural America and the Great Plains. I have had the opportunity to share an occasional workout with Cong. THUNE in the Members' Gym. Let me tell you, when Cong. THUNE approaches the weight machines, the machine start to shudder.

Cong. STEVE HORN has not only effectively advocated the interests of the Long Beach and Los Angeles ports, but he has also spent the last decade in Congress working to improve the accountability and management of the Federal government and its agencies. His thoughtful, academic approach to these issues will be greatly missed by our Committee and this institution, as will his historical perspective on the legislative process, reading back to his service on the staff of California's highly respected Senator Tom Kuchel.

On the Democratic side, we are losing five colleagues, each of whom has contributed enormously to the work of our Committee.

Cong. JOHN BALDACCIO—Cong. BALDACCIO was elected in 1994—a real accomplishment for a Democrat in a year when the Republicans were sweeping to control of the House and Senate—and joined our Committee in 1998. He has served as an active Member of our highway and aviation subcommittees. Cong. BALDACCIO has been an aggressive advocate on behalf of Maine. Whether it's ensuring that the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act includes funding for the Essential Air Service program or clarifying that the Committee's airline antitrust immunity bill does not adversely affect small communities, Cong. BALDACCIO has actively worked to help Maine keep its air service.

Cong. FRANK MASCARA—Cong. MASCARA is another one of the rare Democrats elected in 1994 and joined our committee at the beginning of his tenure. Prior to being elected to the House of Representatives, Cong. MASCARA served as Chairman of the Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission. As this Committee developed TEA 21, we called upon FRANK MASCARA's planning expertise and seasonal understanding of highway issues to help ensure that our Federal highway, transit, and highway safety policy would achieve the intended objectives.

Cong. JIM BARCIA—Cong. BARCIA joined our committee in 1993. As a Member from Northern Michigan, whose district runs along the shores of Lake Huron, JIM has played an active role in water resources issues throughout his service. He spent the last several years aggressively working on a program to improve our Nation's wastewater infrastructure and authorize grants to states and cities for combined sewer overflow and sanitary sewer overflow projects. In the 106th Congress, his efforts paid off and we included his bill (H.R. 828) in the omnibus Labor-HHS appropriations act at the end of the Congress. The Wet Weather Quality Act authorizes \$1.5 billion to control overflows from combined and sanitary sewers and \$45 million in EPA assistance for an urban wet weather watershed pilot program.

Cong. BOB CLEMENT—Cong. CLEMENT, elected in 1988 and currently Ranking Member of the Railroads Subcommittee, has worked on a bipartisan basis with his counterpart, Subcommittee Chairman JACK QUINN, to rebuild our Nation's railroad infrastructure. They have worked together to move the Shortline Railroad Infrastructure bill, the Amtrak Reauthorization bill, and RIDE 21. Although movement on those bills has stalled, BOB CLEMENT hasn't given up and continues to work to improve our Nation's rail infrastructure. In addition, Cong. CLEMENT and Chairman QUINN have had numerous meetings with the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Transportation regarding the Administration's failure to approve any rail loans or loan guarantees under the Railroad Rehabilitation and Infrastructure Financing (RRIF) program.

Cong. CLEMENT has also aggressively worked on behalf of the Tennessee Valley Authority and commuter rail. His bill (TRAIN 21) would help resolve a growing problem in Nashville and throughout the Nation—the ability of commuter railroads to get access to freight railroad rights-of-way.

He leaves us to seek a seat in the Other Body, and I pass onto him the advice I received many years ago when I myself heard the Sirens' call to that body: There are more bleached bones scattered along the path between the House and Senate Office Buildings than there are on the Old Chisholm Trail.

Cong. BOB BORSKI—BOB BORSKI has spent two decades serving this Committee. From 1995 to 2001, Cong. BORSKI served as Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment. BOB BORSKI was raised in the great bipartisan tradition of this Committee and he brought that willingness to work together to the Clean Water, Brownfields, and Superfund issues of the Subcommittee—the issues that are often the most difficult for our Committee to bridge the partisan divide. He spent countless hours working with then-Subcommittee Chairman BOEHLERT, then-Chairman SHUSTER, EPA Administrator Browner, and me to bridge the divide on the Superfund bill. In the end, this Committee passed a Superfund bill (H.R. 1300) that reauthorized the program; provided for the redevelopment of brownfields; provided exemptions and limitations on Superfund liability for small businesses, innocent landowners, and recyclers; and called for funding the program with a reauthorization of the Superfund Trust Fund taxes. Our committee approved the bill on a vote of 69 to 2—a tribute to Cong. BORSKI's perseverance, patience, and willingness to find common ground.

In this Congress, Cong. BORSKI has served as Ranking Member of the Highways and Transit Subcommittee. He and Subcommittee Chairman PETRI have held more than a dozen hearings on TEA 21 reauthorization and Cong. BORSKI has aggressively worked to ensure that we have a balanced transportation system. Earlier this week, Cong. BORSKI attended the American Public Transportation Association's annual conference where he received its distinguished person of the year award. How often does an association, with a major reauthorization bill just around the corner, honor a retiring Member of Congress? It is a tribute to Cong. BORSKI that APTA rightly recognized the role that he has played in ensuring that our communities have transportation choices,

like transit rail systems, pedestrian walkways, Amtrak, and bike paths.

I will miss him, not only for his policy expertise but also for his friendship. I have always considered BOB a close friend and a kindred spirit. I know his heart and home are in Philadelphia but I hope he will often come back to see us here.

And that sentiment is true for each of our departing colleagues. On behalf of all Democrats on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I thank them for their distinguished public service and wish them well in their new careers.

RECENT RAIDS ON SINN FEIN OFFICES IN STORMONT

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join in spirit with several of my constituents and hundreds of other Irish Americans in the New York Metropolitan area, as they stage a protest outside the New York City consulate of Great Britain. I wish I could be there in person to join in their fight.

Mr. Speaker, last Friday the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the PSNI, formerly the RUC, raided the government offices of Sinn Fein in the Northern Ireland Assembly at Stormont. This unprofessional and haphazard raid appears to be politically motivated—with those involved hoping to unravel the power-sharing government established under the Good Friday Agreements.

The raid of these offices and several homes of Sinn Fein party workers once again show that the PSNI/RUC remains nothing more than a political tool of unionists hoping to undermine a just and lasting peace in Northern Ireland. These raids were obviously done to publicly embarrass Sinn Fein, with the hope that this will be the final straw that will force the demise of the Good Friday Accords.

Soon after these raids, both Ian Paisley of the DUP and David Trimble of the UUP called for Sinn Fein to be excluded from the power sharing government. Also, Mr. Paisley, withdrew his party's support from the government. These actions show the unionists true feelings—they hope that by excluding Sinn Fein the Accords will collapse and force the Crown to retake complete control of the North.

It is quite obvious to me that the only way a lasting peace can occur in Northern Ireland is by protecting the power sharing institutions and fully implementing the Patten Commission's recommendations. The actions of the PSNI last Friday shows that the police as a whole are still quite loyal to the crown and quite often use their influence and authority for political purposes. Northern Ireland is in dire need of a police service that is more representative of the community and is responsive to the needs of all the citizen of Northern Ireland.

These raids are just another example of how the PSNI has not moved away from the tactics of the RUC in the '60s, '70s and '80s. The PSNI is anti-Catholic, anti-Sinn Fein and anti-Good Friday Agreement. PSNI must be forced to stop its sectarian efforts and truly protect all parties.

I hope that Mr. Trimble, Prime Minister Blair and all the other parties involved continue their commitment to peace in Northern Ireland by standing by the original Good Friday Accords and most importantly fully implementing the Patten Commission's recommendations. Patten and the Accords are our only true hope that peace can survive in Northern Ireland.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ACT OF 2002

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 10, 2002

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Environmental Justice Act of 2002. I am proud that my colleague Congresswoman HILDA SOLIS is joining me as an original cosponsor of this bill.

Representative SOLIS and I long have been concerned about the fact that past federal actions have had disproportionately adverse effects on the health, environment and quality of life of Americans in minority and lower-income communities. Too often these communities—because of their low income or lack of political visibility—are exposed to greater risks from toxins and dangerous substances. It's a regrettable commentary on our society that too often it has been possible and convenient to locate waste dumps, industrial facilities, and chemical storage warehouses in these communities with less care than would be taken in other locations.

Too often these communities are thought of as expendable—without full appreciation that human beings, who deserve to be treated with respect and dignity are living, working, and raising families there. Instead, by providing clean, healthy and quality environments within and around these communities, we provide hope for the future and enhance the opportunities that these citizens have to improve their condition.

Our bill would help do just that. The bill essentially codifies an Executive Order that was issued by President Clinton in 1994. That order required all federal agencies to incorporate environmental justice considerations in their missions, develop strategies to address disproportionate impacts to minority and low-income people from their activities, and coordinate the development of data and research on these topics.

Although federal agencies have been working to implement this order and have developed strategies, there is clearly much more to do. We simply cannot solve these issues overnight or even over a couple of years. We need to "institutionalize" the consideration of these issues in a more long-term fashion—which this bill would do.

In addition, as this issue was addressed through an administrative order, that federal policy could be swept away with a stroke of a pen by new administrations. Thus, we need to make these considerations more permanent—which is also what this bill would do.

It would do this by requiring all federal agencies to: make addressing environmental justice concerns part of their missions; develop environmental justice strategies; evaluate the effects of proposed actions on the health and environment of minority, low-income, and Native American communities;