

The Civil Air Patrol has been involved in air-borne and ground-based search and rescue for over half a century. Founded on December 1, 1941, to counter the threat of enemy submarines operating off the east coast, the Civil Air Patrol has evolved into a highly trained emergency response team of volunteer members, responding to needs of emergency preparedness agencies throughout the nation.

With more than 53,000 members, CAP manages the world's largest fleet of light, single-engine aircraft—totaling 530—which fly more than 85 percent of inland search and rescue missions.

The Civil Air Patrol also aggressively and heroically performs its other two missions mandated by the Congress: Aerospace Education and Cadet Programs. In fulfilling these missions, the CAP serves as an important liaison between today's planners of our Nation's air strength and tomorrow's pilots and air navigators.

Not only does the CAP fulfill all these missions, it also provides disaster relief services, and assists in humanitarian services and counterdrug efforts; CAP also performs many other missions in direct support of the U.S. Air Force. Many CAP members serve as aerospace education instructors, ground team members, and observers during search and rescue missions. They also serve as radio operators, mission coordinators, public affairs officers, and cadet mentors. To prepare volunteers to serve their communities, CAP provides training in 20 different specialty tracks, including technical instruction in flight operations, emergency services, and communications. In addition, members can participate in management and executive leadership training that complements Air Force professional development.

The Civil Air Patrol is structured around the core values of Integrity, Volunteer Service, Excellence, and Respect. The core values reflected in all CAP members exemplify the highest standards of personal and professional conduct.

I am proud to represent a number of squadrons, which make up the Civil Air Patrol Wing of Georgia, including: the Georgia State Legislative and the Georgia Wing Headquarters Composite Squadron which flies out of Dobbs Air Reserve Base; the Bartow-Etowah Composite Squadron; the Rome Composite Squadron; the Cobb County Composite Squadron; the West Georgia Composite Squadron; and the Gwinnett County Composite Squadron. I am proud to recognize all of them for their efforts, and I commend them for their generosity and concern for others. They reflect the commitment to voluntary community service essential in solving our nation's most pressing problems. By reaching out to those in need, they set an outstanding example to all Americans; especially our young people.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT OF COLOMBIA AND ITS EFFORTS TO COUNTER THREATS FROM U.S.-DESIGNATED FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

SPEECH OF

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 6, 2002

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 358. We are all deeply troubled by the ongoing civil war in Colombia. Efforts to attain a peace agreement have not been successful so far, but the recent setbacks to the peace process do not change the fundamental nature of the conflict and should not result in a rush to radically revise U.S. policy.

This conflict did not arise from drug trafficking. It is a forty-year-old conflict stemming from fundamental economic, political and social tensions in Colombia. All parties have been implicated in drug trafficking. And all parties have been responsible for serious and repeated human rights abuses. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (known by their Spanish acronym FARC), the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), and the National Liberation Army (ELN) have all contributed to the murder, kidnapping and extortion now endemic in Colombia. This Congress is clearly on record condemning these actions.

While Congress and the United States have condemned the revolutionaries, the paramilitaries and the Colombian government for human rights abuses, we have been very careful to avoid becoming entangled in the Colombian civil war. As a very large and geographically diverse country, military action in Colombia is quite difficult and could easily drag our nation into a quagmire like Vietnam. We have wisely recognized this risk and have limited military assistance to anti-narcotic activities.

In addition to limiting the use of U.S. military assistance to anti-drug efforts, Congress has taken numerous steps to try to break the links between the Colombian military and the paramilitary forces of the AUC. U.S. and Colombian non-governmental organizations have clearly and definitively documented significant and ongoing collaboration between the paramilitaries and the Colombian military. Paramilitary violence has increased even as the record of the Colombian military has improved. Most estimates indicated the paramilitaries commit more than 75% of the non-combatant killings.

The resolution under consideration by the House states that the "Colombian Government has made progress in its efforts to combat and capture members of illegal paramilitary organizations and taken positive steps to break links between individual members of the security forces and such organizations." Well, saying it does not make it so. This simply isn't the reality. A report last month from Human Rights Watch (HRW), Amnesty International (AI) and the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) concluded exactly the opposite. Their report noted that President Pastrana has "failed to take effective action to establish control over the security forces and break the per-

sistent ties to paramilitary groups." The report further noted that high-ranking officers "failed to take steps necessary to prevent killings by suspending security force members suspected of abuses, ensuring that their cases were handed over to civilian judicial authorities for investigation and prosecution, and pursuing and arresting paramilitary leaders." Despite our efforts, we have not seen any significant progress.

As part of the FY02 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, signed by the President on January 10, 2002 (Public Law 107-115), the Secretary of State must certify that Colombia has met certain human rights conditions in order for aid to be released (Section 567). According to the HRW, AI and WOLA report, the conditions required for certification have not been met. I am very concerned that approval of this resolution by the House will be a signal to the Colombian Government and the U.S. Secretary of State that we believe these conditions have been met. I do not believe that they have been and certification should not take place at this time.

Rushing this resolution to the floor is unnecessary and a mistake. As my colleague from Massachusetts, Mr. Delahunt, has said, we need to have comprehensive hearings on Colombia. Using the war on terrorism to justify leaping into a forty-year-old civil war with little debate or consideration is the wrong thing to do. We must step back and evaluate our policy toward Colombia. The United States has become embroiled in civil wars in the past, and we've come to regret those actions. Let's not let that happen with Colombia.

TRIBUTE TO E. L. "BERT" POOSER

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 7, 2002

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to E. L. "Bert" Pooser, of South Carolina, a renowned man and respected leader of hotel development and management throughout the southeastern United States.

Mr. Pooser grew up in Orangeburg, SC, during the 1940s where he learned the value and need of hard work at an early age. He invested in his first hotel at the age of 28. Since then, his hotel empire has expanded to 33 hotels throughout six southeastern States. Many in the industry consider him a hotel giant.

Currently, Mr. Pooser is president and CEO of Interstate Management and Investment Corporation (IMIC) hotels. Mr. Pooser's company includes 1,500 employees that handle all aspects of the business from sales and marketing, to a design and property management team. IMIC assets include Sheraton Hotels, Hampton Inns, Comfort Inns, and Quality Suites. Throughout IMIC's 20 years of existence, they have purchased or built nearly 40 hotels. This past year, Mr. Pooser's firm opened two more hotels in Myrtle Beach, SC.

Mr. Pooser has received numerous awards during his building career. The University of South Carolina's School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management has honored him as the Hospitality Leader of the Year. Today, at 63, Mr. Pooser has no plans for retirement anytime soon.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me today in honoring Mr. E. L. "Bert"

Pooser for his achievements and commitments to the hotel industry in the southeastern States. I sincerely thank Mr. Pooser for his outstanding contributions, and congratulate him on becoming a recipient of the 2002 South Carolina Hospitality Leader of the Year Award, and wish him well in all of his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE AMERICAN CENTURY THEATER

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 7, 2002

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the American Century Theater, which is located in northern Virginia. Since 1995, this Arlington-based theater has been overwhelmingly successful in bringing different genres of theater to the stage, and in turn has greatly enhanced the quality of life for northern Virginians.

When the American Century Theater realized the lack of visibility American playwrights have in the Washington DC area, it strove to encourage Americans to rediscover the extraordinary vision and wisdom of our past American playwrights. Regardless of the countless masterpieces created by our country's great writers, only a handful of classics could be found in local theaters. The American Century theater recognized the lack of family-orientated shows available, and subsequently set the theater's mission to become an experience for the whole family to enjoy.

The American Century Theater focuses on plays that are at least 25 years old, under produced, and contain a variety of form and content. The plays do not contain offensive language or graphic sexual behavior, and they frequently deal with current social issues—making them suitable for the entire family. The Theater has also shown itself to be non-partisan and apolitical.

In addition to providing northern Virginia with extraordinary plays, the Theater also maintains a strong dedication to serving our community in many other ways. StageThought is a special educational program for high school students and other youth groups that provide study guides, pre- and post-show discussions, and drastically reduced group rates that enable these students to attend plays that might otherwise be outside their means.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to congratulate the American Century Theater for its continued efforts to preserve American Culture. The American Century Theater is a local treasure and should be recognized for its integrity and laudable mission. I hope all my colleagues will join me in applauding them for their hard work in bringing American heritage to the theater.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 7, 2002

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, since the first celebration of International Women's

Day on March 19, 1911, women have come to realize opportunities about which they then could only dream. And they have taken advantage of those opportunities, excelling in every field and task put before them. As the world has become more aware of the abilities and talents of women throughout the globe, we also have become more aware of the very real issue of violence against women and its devastating effects.

While our consciousness of violence against women has risen, the problem has not evaporated. There is still much work to do. Cases of violence against women continue to persist in our own nation and throughout the world. These vicious crimes often happen within the home and have devastating consequences for the victims personally, as well as for their families and for society as a whole.

We must continue to work together to empower women from an early age by teaching them that any form of abuse is unacceptable and encouraging them to speak out. We must also ensure that those who commit these heinous acts are appropriately punished for the crimes they commit.

I serve on the Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations where I am proud to support many foreign assistance programs that benefit women, including the microcredit program for the very poor. These program empower women by giving them the capacity to provide for themselves and become self-reliant. Economically empowering women not only reduces poverty, it also creates a sense of self-worth and importance with which women can address the many challenges they face.

Mr. Speaker, we must continue to build upon the achievements that have been made in reducing violence against women and I look forward to working with my colleagues to accomplish this goal.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 7, 2002

Mr. JEFF MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained earlier today while attending a closed hearing for Schism v. the United States in the U.S. Court of Appeals, here in Washington, DC. Being a closed hearing, I was unable to leave when this afternoon's vote was called and further, had the understanding that the vote would not occur until a time certain. I respectfully request the RECORD to reflect that, had I been here, I would have voted "yea" on S.J. Res. 32.

GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES BY FORGIVING EDUCATIONAL DEBT FOR SERVICE (GOFEDS)

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 7, 2002

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, listening to the inspiring thoughts of Darin Johnson, I can't help but reflect on the words uttered over 40 years ago by President John F. Kennedy:

"In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility—I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country, and all who serve it—and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."

There was perhaps no more eloquent a call to government service than this speech by President Kennedy. Even though our enemies may be different than they were in 1961, we are still charged with "defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger."

In the aftermath of 9-11, many Americans, like Darin Johnson, are looking for ways to serve and "make a difference" for their country. In fact, according to data collected by the Partnership for Public Service, in the three months after September 11th, the number of applications for federal jobs received by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's service centers increased by 14 percent. We need to seize this opportunity to hire a diverse group of the best and brightest women and men this country has to offer. However, we can't do this using outdated recruitment methods and incentives that penalize those who choose Federal service.

That's why we are here today. With college tuition costs spiraling, many college graduates are left with huge loans to repay following graduation. Even those who are attracted to government employment, out of necessity, gravitate toward the higher salaries of the private sector in order to repay their personal debt.

Although we are standing here on Capitol Hill, this is not just an "inside the Beltway issue." The reach of our Federal government is evident across our great nation. In Cook County, Illinois, for example, my home state, there are over 20,000 Federal employees. I am, therefore, pleased to be a cosponsor of Generating Opportunities by Forgiving Educational Debt for service (GOFEDS). Currently, when Federal agencies repay student loans for employees, these payments are taxable to the employees. However, many educational institutions have instituted similar loan repayment benefits to encourage graduates to go into government service or to work for non-profit organizations—and these payments are not taxable. This bill will erase this disparity.

However, let us not see this bill as an ending, but rather, a beginning—one in a series of initiatives we need to take to ensure that our Federal government is a model employer—we own the American people no less.

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY 2002 DEMONSTRATES REAL PROGRESS IN NORTH OF IRELAND

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 7, 2002

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, yet another glorious Saint Patrick's Day will soon be upon us, and all of the good, warm Irish people here,