

He has helped raise funds for local youth programs, establish drug education and prevention programs, and raise scholarship funds for underprivileged students. He has also developed youth leadership training seminars and established a youth education program assisting children with their reading skills. He contributes to various local and state policy boards regarding important issues such as education, immigration and redistricting.

Mr. Fimbres' standing as a community leader is evident by the respect and recognition he receives and for his countless hours of work on behalf of his community. Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join me in recognizing this outstanding citizen and role model whom I am also proud to call my friend.

A TRIBUTE TO ALICIA CONTRERAS
OF SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Alicia Contreras of San Francisco, California for receiving the Paul G. Hearne American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) Leadership Award for 2001. Alicia, herself disabled, is an inspiration to thousands of disabled individuals, and has been providing them valuable assistance through various organizations since 1994. The American Association of People with Disabilities, an outstanding organization founded by cross-disability leaders in 1995, has made an excellent choice in selecting Alicia Contreras as one the recipients of the Paul G. Hearne award.

Mr. Speaker, Alicia Contreras' work for the disabled has touched the lives of many individuals by demonstrating that being disabled does not have to get in the way of enjoying life. Alicia, herself confined to a wheelchair, learned how to improve her life as she began to work for the disabled in 1994 at a one-month leadership training program sponsored by Mobility International USA. Through this experience she learned that even with a wheelchair she could play sports, dance, and live an independent life. Through this experience, she learned, in effect, how to overcome her disability.

Mr. Speaker, after realizing that she had the power to take control of her life, Alicia Contreras founded the Independent Living Center for Women with Disabilities in San Luis Potosi, Mexico, so she could help other disabled women realize what she had learned. Alicia showed women, wheelchair bound like her, that being in a wheelchair does not mean one has to live in seclusion in one's own home, and that one could live a more independent life outside the home.

After her efforts through the Independent Living Center, Alicia took on a newly created government position, Program Coordinator for People with Disabilities in San Luis Potosi, Mexico. While there, Alicia created the first-ever accessible taxi-van service in the state, awarded more than 700 scholarships to disabled people, and provided more than 1,000 hearing aids and 300 wheelchairs to the disability community.

Through this work, Alicia became familiar with Whirlwind Women, an international orga-

nization that teaches women with disabilities how to build appropriate wheelchairs for themselves and others. In November of 2000, Alicia was hired as the Whirlwind Women Program Director and continues to serve in that capacity.

Mr. Speaker, Alicia Contreras has made a valuable contribution to the disabled community; the American Association of People with Disabilities has made an intelligent choice in selecting her as one of the recipients of this award.

Like Alicia, the AAPD is committed to improving the lives of people with disabilities. Founded by disabled individuals, AAPD is committed to promoting the economic and political empowerment of all people with disabilities, educating businesses and the general public about disability issues, and seeing through the full implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act so that all disabled individuals may have an equal opportunity to fully participate in society.

Mr. Speaker, with these goals in mind, it is no surprise that AAPD selected Alicia. She exemplifies the dedication and determination necessary to give disabled people a fair chance in life, and most importantly, she gives them hope. I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Alicia Contreras for receiving the Paul G. Hearne/AAPD Leadership Award.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO NOEL
CUNNINGHAM

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to pay tribute to a man whose life-long pursuit of improving and enriching the lives of others is an inspiration to us all. Noel Cunningham has dedicated his life to improving the lives of his fellow man. In recognition of this, the Ancient Order of the Hibernians is honoring Noel as Humanitarian of the Year. Although Noel bases his philanthropy in Denver his kindness and generosity have extended far beyond Denver to touch the lives of people around the state, the nation and indeed the world.

It would take hours to describe all that Noel has done for the Denver Community, however, certain projects of his stand out. Noel was one of the founders of Taste of the Nation, an incredibly successful program that raises money to help address hunger and poverty. Last year the event was held in 500 cities across the nation and raised \$300,000 in Denver alone. The millions of dollars that were raised will be distributed to states and countries dealing with the issue of hunger. For ten years, Noel has also run an event called "I Remember Mama" in which every Mother's Day he opens the doors of his restaurant to women from the poorest districts of Denver who participate in the Meals on Wheels programs. All of these women, who are without family in the Denver area, are treated to an incredible brunch, roses, gifts and music. Every Christmas, for the past decade, Noel has also hosted 300 foster children for a holiday party complete with food, gifts and a Santa who arrives in a helicopter.

Not only do Noel's efforts benefit individuals, they also have a tremendous impact on the community at large. Last year, Noel helped to raise a half-million dollars to build a brand new playground for the children of Garden Place Academy in Globeville, one of Denver's poorest districts. The playground was built with help from the surrounding community and by the students themselves. As a result, less than one year later, the discipline problem at the school has been nearly cut in half. Noel hopes to share his passion for helping others with the next generation through his Quarters for Kids program, where school children save a quarter so that someone else can have a meal. Thousands of children participate every year learning the joy of giving to others.

Mr. Speaker, I can think of no one more deserving of this award than Noel Cunningham. He is a man of unparalleled dedication and commitment to both his professional and philanthropic endeavors. It is his unrelenting passion for each and every thing he does, as well as his spirit of honesty and integrity with which he has always conducted himself that I wish to bring before this body of Congress. Noel Cunningham is a remarkable man, who has achieved extraordinary things in his career and in his community. It is my distinct pleasure to pay tribute to Noel Cunningham today, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

HONORING JOHN L. HUERTA AS AN
OUTSTANDING MEMBER OF THE
TUCSON AND SOUTH ARIZONA
COMMUNITY

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an outstanding member of the Tucson and Southern Arizona community. Mr. John L. Huerta. John has always served his community and his country with distinction, and although he has traveled extensively and held important positions at the national and state level, he has remained El Tucsonese at heart. On March 22, 2002, the University of Arizona Hispanic Alumni Association and the Concerned Media Professionals will gather to applaud and honor John for his many contributions to the cultural and educational vitality of the greater Tucson area. Today I join his family, friends and colleagues in expressing my sincere admiration for his many accomplishments.

John was born in Tucson, Arizona, and graduated from Tucson High and the University of Arizona. While at the U of A, John co-founded the Los Universitarios, a social club for the university Hispanic community, which fostered many of today's innovative leaders in Tucson. After college, John worked as a Juvenile Probation officer and then joined a task force that was successful in bringing the "War on Poverty" programs to Tucson. John's effective leadership in these programs brought him to the attention of national leaders who encouraged him to relocate to Washington, DC, where he joined the staff of the Postmaster General as a Special Assistant.

John's career in Washington, DC, moved upward through several positions in the Department of Health Education, and Welfare, including Assistant Director of the Office for

Community Planning (Model Cities Program), Director of the Office for Community Development, and Director for the Office for Rural Development. In 1975, John decided to move closer to home. He relocated to Phoenix and became the Director of Arizona's largest agency, the Department of Economic Security, which had a yearly budget of half a billion dollars. Throughout his government service, John was an adept and respected leader.

In 1978, John returned to Tucson and became involved in the private sector as a successful businessman. His skills with money soon lead to a position with the University of Arizona Development Office where he founded the Office of Minority Programs. This office, almost unique among all colleges and universities, raises funds to benefit Hispanic, African-American, and Asian American scholarship endowments as well as special emphasis programs. Under his guidance, the Hispanic Alumni endowment enjoys a market value of \$1.7 million, the largest fund of its kind among all public universities, and the Black Alumni endowment is \$500,000.

Throughout his career, John has brought success to many community activities and is especially proud of his work with the Hispanic Alumni Board, Omega Delta Phi (the first Hispanic fraternity at the UofA) as a founder of the Tucson International Mariachi Conference, the Hispanic Professional Action Committee, the UA Hispanic Alumni, the Tucson Chapter of the America Israel Friendship League, and El Centro Cultural de las Americas.

In addition to his many career and community activities, John has enjoyed a rich and rewarding family life. He and his wife Nancy, high school sweethearts who recently celebrated 50 wonderful years together, raised 6 accomplished children. Now he enjoys being tata to his talented grandchildren. I am proud to enter John L. Huerta's name into the official records of our nation. He represents an American life well-lived for his family, for his community and for his country.

FUEL PRICE STABILITY ACT

HON. F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, JR.

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to provide the States of Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana with added flexibility in meeting federal reformulated gasoline (RFG) requirements. The Fuel Price Stability Act will simply allow the Governors of each of the states in the Milwaukee-Chicago market to permit the sale of gasoline from other markets if the price of RFG in our area sees a significant rise or if supplies of RFG in our region are especially tight. Presently, only the EPA has the authority to grant any type of waiver from "boutique" fuel requirements. The Fuel Price Stability Act would change this by allowing our Governors to make needed short-term adjustments.

Granting this new flexibility to local Governors has the potential to keep gas prices down in our area. In the past two years, when RFG prices in the Milwaukee-Chicago market skyrocketed, prices remained comparatively low in surrounding markets, including some of those on the same pipeline that supplies gaso-

line to our market. Should such an occurrence happen again, our Governors should have the authority to permit other gasoline types to be sold in the Milwaukee-Chicago region, thereby increasing potential supplies to our area.

I strongly support other reforms in this area, including efforts to reduce the number of "boutique" fuels used across the country, but, lacking the implementation of a broader plan, this legislation represents a solid step toward greater flexibility in fuel use. I am hopeful my colleagues will support this legislation and the House will act on this proposal expeditiously.

POLAR BEAR PROTECTION ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, in a civilized society we oppose the mistreatment of animals. When that cruelty takes place in a public forum, as the worst example of "entertainment," we should be outraged. This is exactly what's happening in Puerto Rico.

That is why I introduced the Polar Bear Protection Act. This bill would simply make it illegal to have a polar bear in a traveling circus.

This bill will end the suffering of seven polar bears in the Suarez Brothers' circus in Puerto Rico, where the bears are tortured every day by being dragged from one tropical city to another. They are consistently exposed to high temperatures, lack of sufficient water, as well as whipping and other abuses.

Polar bears' natural habitat in Northern Alaska averages below 11 degrees Fahrenheit. They are Arctic marine mammals that spend a significant amount of time in the water. However, there are loopholes in federal animal protection laws that allowed the Suarez Brothers' circus to enter Puerto Rico with seven polar bears. The circus has exposed these bears to temperatures as high as 113 degrees Fahrenheit and denied them sufficient access to water. This is an outrage, Mr. Speaker.

The circus has been under investigation by authorities in Washington, DC and Puerto Rico. Just last week the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service confiscated one of the polar bears and placed it safely in the Baltimore zoo. But we need to make sure that the other six bears are not forgotten and that polar bears will not suffer like this in the future.

Polar bears are beautiful, dignified animals that belong in their natural arctic environment or in accredited zoos that can guarantee cool containment areas and access to water. The bottom line is that the circus is just not an appropriate place for a polar bear. We in Congress have the power to stop this outrage and end the cruelty. I urge my colleagues to join with me to prohibit the use of polar bears in circuses.

TRIBUTE TO MAXINE ADLER

HON. ROBERT L. EHRLICH, JR.

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Mr. EHRLICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the recent retirement of an out-

standing leader in Maryland's public affairs, Maxine Adler.

I first met Maxine as a freshman delegate during the 1987 legislative session in Annapolis. I learned soon thereafter that her diminutive stature belied a tough, persuasive manner and character which loomed large on the Maryland legislative landscape for many years.

Few Marylanders may be aware of Maxine's long and distinguished career. She began her career in Annapolis as a legislative aide to the Baltimore County Delegation to the Maryland House of Delegates. After graduating cum laude from the University of Baltimore Law School, Maxine worked as a law clerk to the Honorable Richard Gilbert, Chief Judge of the Maryland Court of Special Appeals, and as a law clerk to the Department of Economic and Community Development under the Attorney General. For two decades, Maxine served as a successful lawyer and lobbyist as a member of the Baltimore-based law firm of Semmes, Bowen, & Semmes.

In addition, Maxine has been a valuable and active participant in the greater Baltimore community. Over the years, she has been a member of the University of Baltimore School of Law Advisory Committee, the Governor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Self-Insurance, and a Commissioner on the Baltimore County Commission for Women.

Maxine has also been a member of the Women's Housing Coalition's Board of Directors, which provides transitional and permanent housing for homeless, low-income, or at-risk women. Finally, she and her husband, my good friend Robert L. McKinney, were named one of "Baltimore's Power Couples" in the June, 2000 edition of Baltimore Magazine.

Mr. Speaker, Maxine will be sorely missed by lawmakers on both sides of the aisle in Annapolis. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Maxine and her husband Bob all the best in their future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO FALLEN CENTRAL NEW YORK FIREFIGHTERS JOHN E. GINOCCHETTI AND TIMOTHY J. LYNCH

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 2002

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I have often risen and submitted comments recognizing the heroics of first responders across the country. Today I rise with a heavy heart to recognize two firefighters from my own congressional district who made the ultimate sacrifice just last week. On Thursday evening, March 7, during a three-alarm house fire in the town of Pompey, two central New York firefighters—John E. Ginocchetti and Timothy J. Lynch—were killed in the line of duty.

While acting on what appeared to be a routine house fire, Firefighters Ginocchetti and Lynch, both responding in a mutual aid capacity on behalf of the Manlius Fire Department, proceeded to mount an aggressive interior attack after successfully "venting" the roof. As Ginocchetti and Lynch made their way into the kitchen and laundry room from the home's attached garage, the floor suddenly gave way, and the men were consumed in a horrific "fireball," falling into the structure's basement