

THE CENTER FOR CIVIC
EDUCATION

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 1, 2003

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, the Center for Civic Education of Los Angeles, California, is a leader in promoting civic education in the United States, and promoting democracy throughout the world. They regularly contribute to civic understanding in the United States through a presence in each Congressional District.

Their excellence in teaching citizens to appreciate and participate in their government took an international approach seven years ago through annual "Leaders Seminars" in the Center's Civitas Exchange Program. I am proud that the 2003 Civitas Exchange Program Leaders Seminar was co-hosted by the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) of our friend and neighbor, Mexico.

IFE is an autonomous agency of the Mexican federal government responsible for organizing federal elections and promoting civic education. From September 25–30, 2003 the Center held the seventh annual Leaders Seminar of its Civitas Exchange Program in Mexico City, Mexico, providing an international forum on civic responsibility in maintaining democratic principals in government.

IFE and the Center for Civic Education have forged a partnership to adapt Project Citizen, a civic education program for middle school students, for use throughout the Mexican school system. At the Leaders Seminar, Mexican students who have studied democratic practices and principles (through the work of IFE and the Center) analyzed national and community problems for more than 150 delegates from some 34 countries and 30 states of the United States.

A remarkable number of entities cooperate to make the Civitas Exchange Program a leading cooperative project of civic education organizations in the United States and emerging and established democracies throughout the world. The Civitas Exchange Program is administered by the Center for Civic Education and funded by the U.S. Department of Education under the Education for Democracy Act approved by the United States Congress. International assistance comes from the U.S. Department of State and the Agency for International Development (AID).

The Center for Civic Education centers their mission on Thomas Jefferson's philosophy on the safekeeping of democracy: "I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves."

For all the work the Center for Civic Education does—domestically and internationally—to better prepare our children to participate in the democratic life of our nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending this organization for their work to make this country—and the world in which we live—a better place for the generations that will follow us.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
HAPPY COUPLES

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 1, 2003

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the first day in which residents of Cook County, Illinois will have the opportunity to register their domestic partnerships with the Bureau of Vital Records. This is an important first step towards full equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people and I am proud to stand in solidarity with them on this historic day.

This day does not just represent a political victory for the LGBT community or a day in which, finally, same sex partners will be able to obtain proof of their relationships in an effort to get health and other benefits. It is also a day when friends and family will come together to celebrate two people's love and commitment to each other. It is a day on which a couple who committed themselves to one another years ago can finally make it official.

I would like to recognize and congratulate a few of my friends and constituents who will be registering: Gary Cozette and Joe Lada, Brandon Neese and David Wick, Mary Morten and Willa Taylor, Jackie Kaplan and Ann Perkins, Kelly Cassidy and Alex Silets, Gail Morse and Lauren Verdich, Phil Burgess and Jim Nutter, Mark Ishaug and Micah Krohn, and Michael Bauer and Roger Simon.

It is my hope, however, that our progress will not stop here. It is my hope that one day all couples in all states and counties will have the opportunity to register their partnerships and receive all the legal benefits currently enjoyed by heterosexual married couples. No one should ever have to spend time convincing a doctor to be allowed to see her partner in her hospital bed. No one should ever again have to go without health insurance if his partner's employer provides it. No one should be separated from a life partner because immigration laws don't recognize the relationship.

So, congratulations to all the couples celebrating today. This is a major victory in the fight for equality and justice.

THE BEATIFICATION OF MOTHER
TERESA

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 1, 2003

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I believe that if God finds a person more useless than me, He will do even greater things through her because this work is His—Mother Teresa.

Pope John Paul II will beatify Mother Teresa of Calcutta on October 19, 2003. The ceremony will take place in Rome after the shortest beatification process in modern history, a testament to the remarkable life and spirit of Mother Teresa.

Born in Macedonia, Mother Teresa became a Roman Catholic nun in 1928, which brought her to India where she taught school while living in a convent in Calcutta. Surrounded by

human suffering of staggering proportions, Mother Teresa was moved to extend her commitment beyond the classroom and convent and began her lifelong ministrations to the destitute, sick and dying. She selflessly dedicated her life to alleviating the pain and suffering of the poorest of the poor. Embracing the destitute in the spirit of love and sacrifice, she came to be known as the "Saint of the Gutters." Her good works inspired people throughout the world and from all walks of life to join her in caring for the poor and suffering, and inspired many young women to follow her in establishing a religious order, The Missionaries of Charity. Prior to Mother Teresa's death in 1997, The Missionaries of Charity had grown remarkably to 517 missions in more than 100 countries with 5,000 sisters in her order. The Missionaries of Charity have also produced the Fruit of Contemplative Brothers and Fathers: the lay missionaries and coworkers of Mother Teresa.

Mother Teresa saw the spirit of God in each human being, which led to her tireless efforts around the world, as her fame grew, on behalf of all human life. "Among the works that flowed from Mother Teresa's heart, one of the most important is the adoption movement" (the words of Pope John Paul II). She not only administered to the dying, she saved thousands of young lives. Later in her life, the spirit of human life moved her to minister to those afflicted with HIV/AIDS.

Though Roman Catholic, Mother Teresa's work embraced all persons regardless of religion, race or nationality. In turn, her work achieved international acceptance and appreciation, transcending religious and political boundaries. At her death, in recognition of her life's work serving its poor, its sick, and its dying, predominantly Hindu India accorded her state honors. Mother Teresa was an honorary American citizen, a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 and the Medal of Freedom in 1985. But above all, Mother Teresa was a loving, pious servant to the poor throughout the world.

Mother Teresa's life's work of relieving the suffering of the poor is carried on today by The Missionaries of Charity and by her example of a worldly life illuminated by divine grace. Her greatest contribution, however, may be her spiritual enrichment of us all.

SPACE SHUTTLE INDEPENDENT
OVERSIGHT ACT OF 2003

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 1, 2003

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the "Space Shuttle Independent Oversight Act of 2003", legislation that will help the Space Shuttle fly more safely once it resumes its operations.

As the Congress reviews the implications of the Columbia Shuttle accident for NASA's Space Shuttle program, we acknowledge the excellent report of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board (CAIB), chaired by Admiral Hal Gehman. Released six weeks ago, the CAIB report clearly laid out what NASA needs to do before the Space Shuttle can be safely returned to flight, probably within the next year. Equally importantly, the report contains

many recommendations and observations on what NASA should do to keep the Shuttle flying safely over the remainder of its operational lifetime, which may extend another decade or more.

NASA has already put in place an external task force, co-chaired by Tom Stafford and Dick Covey, to oversee its implementation of the CAIB's "return-to-flight" recommendations—those recommendations that must be met before the next Shuttle launch. Over the coming months, the Congress will be monitoring the task force's assessment of NASA's plans closely to assure ourselves and the American public that the next flight is as safe as is humanly possible.

However, a long-term oversight problem remains. The Stafford-Covey task force will conclude its activities when the Shuttle resumes flying, or even earlier. Admiral Gehman has repeatedly registered his concern that once the Shuttle is flying again, there may be no effective oversight mechanism to ensure that NASA follows through on the long-term CAIB recommendations—those designed to keep the Shuttle flying safely over the next decade. I share his concern.

My bill will establish an external, independent, and technically competent committee to monitor NASA's implementation of the CAIB's recommendations. The committee will be selected and run by the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering and will provide its timely assessments to both the Congress and NASA. Following the 1986 loss of the Space Shuttle *Challenger*, the National Academies provided a similar function in overseeing the re-design of the Shuttle's solid rocket motors (SRM), as well as reviewing other post-*Challenger* Shuttle modifications. History shows that the National Academies served a vital role in providing high-quality, independent advice and assessments to NASA during that difficult time. They were tough—rejecting several re-designs and test plans before approving the final design—but they were fair, and there have been no problems with the SRMs since *Challenger*.

Why can't the Congressionally established Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel (ASAP) monitor the long-term CAIB recommendations? Because a week ago—on September 22—all nine ASAP members tendered their resignation, a distress signal that we in Congress should be taking very seriously. In interviews with the press, ASAP members have noted both their lack of independence from NASA and the discouraging fact that NASA has regularly dismissed the ASAP's safety recommendations. The oversight Committees, including the Science Committee, on which I serve as Ranking Member, need to get to the bottom of the ASAP situation. Perhaps the ASAP will need to be re-constituted legislatively to provide it with greater independence and resources.

At the same time, however, we need to establish a dedicated group that can effectively oversee NASA's implementation of the CAIB's longterm recommendations. I recognize that there may be many ways to reach this goal, and I call on the leaders of the relevant oversight Committees to convene hearings promptly to examine the various options. The strengths of my legislation are that it gives the Shuttle oversight group complete independence and it follows a model that has been

proven to work effectively in the past. It also ties the oversight body to standing institutions—the National Academies—that can provide it with the support and stability it needs for the long run.

I offer this legislation with the goal of helping the NASA Administrator to promote safety in the human space flight program. I urge my colleagues to support the legislation and to speed its enactment into law.

TRIBUTE TO MARJORIE SELLERS
DAY UPON HER RETIREMENT
FROM ALABAMA COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION SYSTEM

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 1, 2003

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the long and distinguished career of Marjorie S. Day who blessed the First Congressional District of Alabama with 31 years of service and devotion. Marjorie committed her life to the betterment of young children through the many years she dedicated to 4-H youth programs in the State of Alabama. She blessed the 4-H program with her exceptional gift of warmth and sincerity.

Marjorie Day graduated from Auburn University in 1970 where she obtained a Bachelor's degree in Secondary Education. She continuously worked to further her education by participating in various courses and training programs. In 1985, she graduated from the University of Alabama with a Master's of Science in Home Economics, Food & Nutrition.

Before her involvement in 4-H programs, Marjorie's career began in the Conecuh County public school system in Evergreen, Alabama, as a vocational home economics teacher. Driven by a tireless passion for serving children, she began her 31 year journey with 4-H programs in 1972 in Heflin, Alabama. Here, Marjorie worked with 600 adoring young people from fifteen different 4-H clubs. In 1977, she moved to Mobile, Alabama, where she spent the next 25 years of her career working as a county agent for Alabama Cooperative Extension System of Mobile County. Here, her youth groups continued to expand until she eventually assumed responsibility for the entire 4-H program with the assistance of other agents.

Marjorie was recognized for her exceptional talent as the recipient of various awards and honors including a 25 Years of Service Award in 1998 and a 30 Years of Service in the Government of the United States of America Award in 2002. Marjorie's undying passion to help others is an irreplaceable gift that goes above and beyond any other. There is no doubt she holds a special gift of compassion that will truly be missed.

Marjorie will surely enjoy the well deserved time she now has to spend with family and loved ones. On behalf of a grateful community, I wish her the best of luck with all future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING OF THE 43RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 1, 2003

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker. I rise before you today in recognition of the 43rd anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Cyprus. On October 1, 1960, Cyprus broke free from 80 years of British colonial rule to become its own independent Republic. Despite the hardships that the people of Cyprus have had to endure over the past four decades, they now have one of the most vibrant economies in all of Europe, and remain committed to the core principles enshrined in the Cyprus Constitution that guarantee basic rights and freedoms to both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.

Over the past year, the people of Cyprus have had much to celebrate. The Republic was formally admitted into the European Union, the so-called Green Line that separates the southern, government-controlled portion of the island from the northern occupied territory was partially opened so that Greek and Turkish Cypriots could explore the entirety of their homeland for the first time in nearly thirty years, and the Greek-Cypriots created and implemented a package of measures designed to assist their compatriots from the north in the areas of education, employment, healthcare, and trade.

However, despite each of these positive advancements in the divided Republic, reunification of the island has yet to occur. Due to the obdurate stance of the Turkish-Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktash, negotiations have stalled and the United Nations has ceased its efforts to bring the two sides to an agreement. At this crucial juncture, it is absolutely imperative that the United States government continues to show support for reunification of Cyprus. Fueled by international support, the Greek and Turkish Cypriots will continue their calls for reunification, and the Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot leadership may be persuaded to reconsider their positions.

In an effort to advance the peace process in Cyprus, I have introduced a bill, H. Res. 320, which calls for the removal of Turkish troops from the island. Reunification negotiations would be greatly facilitated by demilitarization of the area, as this current threat of violence is certainly not conducive to a peaceful process. I strongly urge each of my colleagues to cosponsor this important resolution. In addition, I ask that my colleagues join me in calling upon the Foreign Operations Appropriations subcommittee to work in conference to ensure that Cyprus receives funding at the \$15 million level as it has in past fiscal years. US funding for Cyprus is used primarily for bicommunal programs that aim to encourage cooperation between the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus. The continuation of these worthwhile programs is absolutely essential to the reunification process, and, because of this, US funding is needed now more than ever.

As the citizens of the Republic of Cyprus celebrate the 43rd anniversary of their nation's