

after their wars. That opened up the great West. If it had not been for the Haitian country depleting funds from the French Government, the progress of moving west would not have happened so soon. So we are tied together.

As a matter of fact, Simon Bolivar lived in Haiti; and he went to liberate South America. So Haiti has had a tremendous importance in the growth and development of not only this country but the entire Western Hemisphere, and I appreciate the gentleman yielding to me.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time once again, I want to thank both the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) and my colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTSCH), for joining in; and we would ask other Members to join us in this resolution.

Yesterday, May 18, marking the 200th year of Haitian history, Haitian Americans and the country of Haiti celebrated their Flag Day. They celebrated in the country of Haiti with great fanfare on the grounds of the Haiti's capitol. In the United States Haitian Americans celebrated Flag Day with cultural events, including ceremonies, concerts, and prayer vigils. Haitian Americans in my district celebrated countywide and particularly in an area that is fondly known as "Little Haiti" to commemorate their Flag Day.

America is founded on basic democratic beliefs and cultural values of people from every country in this world. There are over 1.2 million Haitians living in the United States today, with over 700,000 in Florida. I honor Haitian Americans for continuing to believe in the guiding phrase that is included below the country arms in Haiti's flag, "In Union There Is Strength."

That unity has been seen throughout American History since the 1700s. During the American Revolution at Savannah, Haitians and Americans fought side by side prevailing against Britain and creating the independence of the 13 colonies.

Haitians Americans are woven into the fabric of American culture, economy, and politics. They are owners of newspapers, and radio stations, and have television programming and varied commercial businesses nationwide.

In the month of May, in addition to Flag Day, Haitian Americans also celebrate Labor Day on May 1 and Haiti's Mother's Day is the last Sunday in May.

It is my request that my colleagues offer their support for the legislation I introduce today expressing the sense of this body that there should be established a "Haitian-American Heritage Month." I deem it only befitting that the month of May be designated as an official month of ceremonies and celebrations, as it holds such historical significance to Haitian Americans in our great Nation.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN WEAVER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KENNEDY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to speak in honor of a great Minnesotan, a man I am honored to call friend,

John Weaver. John is a lifetime resident of Anoka, Minnesota, the Halloween Capital of the World; and a city I am honored to represent.

John has had an extraordinary life over the last 75 years, and the way he has lived that life is truly an example to others. Graduating as the valedictorian of Anoka High School in 1946, he then attended the University of Minnesota, where he pursued a degree in civil engineering. While in college, John still managed to serve his country admirably aboard the USS *Iowa* and the USS *Boxer* in the Pacific Ocean while in the Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps.

After graduating and building a thriving business, he never lost sight of what was truly important.

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His highest priority was and remains his family, his wife Jill and their three children, Jeff, Sara and Martha. Even with his commitment, or frankly because of his commitment to his family, he was drawn to service in the community.

Starting with his service on the Anoka-Hennepin school board in 1971, he made it clear that he wanted to give something back to the community, and the people he served recognized this, returning him to the school board for two additional terms before they made it clear that they wanted him to use his abilities to help all Minnesotans. As a reward for his tireless dedication to improving the community, John's peers elected him to the Minnesota House of Representatives in 1978. He distinguished himself by his service there.

Even after John left the State Capitol, he did not leave public service. Serving on the Anoka City Council beginning in 1983 and right up to the present day, John's energy has been put to good use for the community and the State of Minnesota. Despite his lengthy record of service and achievements in elected office, John has always looked for more opportunities for involvement. He was appointed and reappointed to the Mississippi River Coordination Commission by President George Herbert Walker Bush and President Clinton. He also served on the Minnesota Metropolitan Council of Transportation Board and was involved in countless community activities, including helping with the Anoka County History Museum. His service has had an impact on the lives of people across the States and the country.

But I think his greatest impact is not just on what he has done for us today but the impact he will have in the future. He has been very involved with the Boy Scouts of America since he himself achieved Eagle rank more than half a century ago. His years of involvement with the Scouts, the number of young men that he has helped to guide their lives to good character and good citizenship are countless.

Mr. Speaker, Minnesota is called The Star of the North. With people like John Weaver, that star burns brightly.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to echo the praise of the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KENNEDY) for a great Minnesotan, a great American, and a man I am proud to call a friend. John Weaver is an exemplary citizen both of his community and of his Nation.

As a father of three, grandfather of six and loving husband, his dedication to his family is evident. But despite his family-first philosophy, he has continued to find time to serve his community. That makes his involvement all the more meaningful. A life-long resident of Anoka, John Weaver has served the Anoka City Council since 1983. In a true demonstration of what it means to serve, John Weaver saw a need and met it head on.

When asked why he decided to run, Weaver said, "Anoka is potentially at a crossroads. We have some interesting challenges, not the least of which is the financial picture."

Standing up for his community, John has fought tirelessly to ensure his small town is not overlooked by the State of Minnesota. John Weaver believes that it is important that the people of Anoka see a return on their taxes in the form of outstanding government services. He has gone far beyond advocating this message, personally setting an example to other community leaders.

He has a long resume of public service that the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KENNEDY) has already enumerated. Let me say his dedication to his community is clear, and it is an honor to recognize this fellow Minnesotan and a great American.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to be heard out of order for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

TEXAS DEMOCRATS TAKE A STAND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mrs. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I stand here to praise the actions last week of 50-plus Texas House Democrats, including the representatives from my county, Representative Roberto Alonzo, Yvonne Davis, Terri Hodge, Jesse Jones, Steve Wollens, and from the adjoining county of Tarrant, Lon Burnan, and my classmates of the class of 1972, Senfronia Thompson and Pete Laney.

While I have not named the other courageous Democrats, I thank them all for their commitment to justice and integrity. No game playing, no playing both sides, the Texans took a stand. They stood against an unnecessary and unprecedented procedure which was an insult to Texas voters. They stood against the destruction of our current process which protects the voting rights of Texas citizens, and they stood against a special interest legislative agenda which placed politics before issues that are critical to Texas families such as school finance and the State budget and insurance crisis.

As I reflect upon the actions of the Texas House Democrats, I am disturbed by the reaction of their Republican counterparts in securing involvement in the Department of Homeland Security and its resources in this political matter.

The mission of the Department of Homeland Security is to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States, reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism, and minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur.

Further, the Department's mandate is to mobilize and focus the resources of the Federal Government to accomplish this mission. For 2003, the Homeland Security budget is \$33.5 billion and the administration's fiscal year 2004 request is \$36.2 billion at a 7.4 percent increase.

The budgetary line items for the agency include improving information analyses and infrastructure protection, preparing for and responding to national emergencies, securing the Nation's borders and transportation systems, improving immigration services, and advancing science and technology. There is no budgetary line item slated for tracking down State legislators who are not terrorists and not a threat to homeland security.

Consequently, the Texas Republicans and this administration must answer the following question: Were the citizens of this Nation served well in the use of resources by the Department of Homeland Security in a Texas political matter? I submit that the answer is no.

Again, I salute the Texas House Democrats for their courageous and principled action and urge the administration to guarantee that the Department of Homeland Security follows its mandate: namely, securing our homeland from terrorism, not State legislators.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CHARLES TANGORA AND JACK KELLEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, last week my district lost two beloved members of our community so, with sadness, I pay them posthumous tribute today.

Local attorney, civic activist, and despite the fact I was the worst law clerk he ever hired, my friend, Charles "Chuck" Tangora will truly be mourned and missed. While practicing law in Livonia for over 35 years, he raised a fine family and still found time to help improve the quality of life in our community, including being instrumental in ensuring the city of Livonia elected its first female City Council President, a quiet, mild-mannered schoolteacher named Georgia Joan McCotter.

Of course, Chuck's natural leadership abilities were recognized by all involved. He was the president of the Italian American Club, past president of Livonia Rotary and of the American Diabetes Association. And, most importantly, he was known as the one person who could always bring opposing sides to a consensus in the community's best interests. Most recently, Chuck was instrumental in raising the sizable reward which helped police solve the Marco Pesce family murder case.

And for all his benevolent works, Chuck, true to his fine, kind character never asked for anything in return but the smiles of those whose lives he touched. And once the immediate pain of his passing wanes in the winds of wistful recollection, as he, himself, would earnestly wish, there will again be smiles upon the faces of all who remember his life's legacy.

Mr. Speaker, the second pillar of our community to fall was the Honorable Jack Kelley, who gave 19 years of distinguished public service to the city he loved as a member of the Detroit City Council. If one word were used to sum up the man, no, it would not be one of the colorful words he often used, it would be the word "honest." And if two words were used, they would be "brutally honest."

It was his innate, intense honesty which led him to be a fast friend and fair foe, a colorful Celt who understood the brevity and the levity of our frail, flawed existence and felt compelled to help his fellow human beings in the short, sweet time God allowed.

And he did. After graduating from St. Francis DeSales High School, he joined the Navy and served his country for 30 months in the Pacific arena during World War II. Upon his return home, he commenced a career of public service by being appointed deputy director of the Building and Safety Engineering Department by then-Mayor Cavanagh, a post he held for 30 years. Then he was elected to his council seat in 1974, and even now his legacy continues as his son, Kevin, the Redford Township supervisor, followed in his Democratic footsteps and continued the father's noble tradition of public service.

Yes, a staunch Democrat, proud union man, and devout Irish Catholic, Jack Kelley's greatness was, to me, best expressed by another staunch Democrat, proud union member, devout Irish Catholic, and boyhood friend

of Jack Kelley's, my late father who said, "Jack Kelley was the only person I ever voted for who tried to break my nose. He is good people." Truly, we will never see the likes of Jack Kelley again, and truly we are all the lesser for his loss.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL SERIOUSLY FLAWED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the House is about to consider the defense authorization bill that, sadly, is seriously flawed. It would exempt not only the military but all Federal agencies from certain aspects of the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Instead of addressing real threats to readiness, the administration and Congress is taking on an easier target, the dolphins. Using defense as cover, the Republicans propose to make changes to environmental laws in ways which have nothing to do with defense readiness, suggesting that was not their goal in the first place.

The bill would take out one of the key provisions of the ESA by requiring that only critical habitat that is deemed necessary shall be designated. Without a definition of necessary, this invites abuse and applies to all Federal lands, not just the Department of Defense.

The bill also includes the Department of Defense proposal eliminating critical habitat designation altogether on lands owned or controlled by the military.

The bill contains a rider to exempt the Department of Defense at Fort Huachuca in Arizona from any responsibility for off-base groundwater pumping that threatens the existence of the San Pedro River. This rider was not requested by the Department of Defense, nor does it address military training or preparedness, and it has created a firestorm in the State of Arizona.

The authorization bill weakens the Marine Mammal Protection Act, weakening the current definition of harassment of marine mammals. It applies to all ocean users, not just the Department of Defense.

Finally, it allows the Department to exempt itself from the Marine Mammal Protection Act for anything necessary for national defense. It excludes any meaningful involvement of the wildlife agencies, the States, Congress and the public in review of these exemptions.

Our military activities are the largest source of pollution in the country. We are the wealthiest and most powerful and most polluting country in the world. We ought to be able to figure out how to better address this problem without compromising the environmental survival of what we are fighting to protect. Given the right direction and adequate resources, our military can achieve tremendous results.