

In the realm of healthcare, the disparities are startling. Minority Americans are at least twice as likely as white Americans to be uninsured. More than 30 percent of Latinos and 20 percent of African Americans do not have health insurance.

Minorities remain disenfranchised from the political process. The precious right to vote was repeatedly violated in the much contested Presidential election of 2000. In the state of Florida and at polling booths across the country, a disproportionate number of people of color were excluded from the political process.

In addition to the modern day disparities that serve to undermine the Act, several Supreme Court decisions have whittled away at some of its key protections. In *Alexander v. Sandoval*, 532 U.S. 275 (2001), the Supreme Court held that there is no private right of action to enforce Title VI regulations forbidding practices that have an unjustified discriminatory effect on the basis of race, national origin, or color. Also, a dangerous precedent may have been set in *Barnes v. Gorman*, 536 U.S. 181 (2002), a case in which the Supreme Court held that punitive damages are unavailable for intentional violations of laws protecting those with disabilities. We must ensure that such punitive damages that are awarded for intentional discrimination under Title VI and Title VII are protected. We must also ensure that the true intent of the Act is adhered to.

THE FUTURE OF THE 1964 ACT

Congresswoman NORTON's resolution encourages all Americans to recognize and celebrate the important historical milestone of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. However, rather than engaging in mere self congratulation, we should recommit ourselves to continuing and building on the progress created by the 1964 Act. We must pledge to acknowledge and address the modern day disparities that prevent the country from fully realizing the potential embodied in the Civil Rights Act. I look forward to working with every Member of Congress in doing just that in the months and years ahead.

HELPING HANDS FOR HOMEOWNERSHIP ACT OF 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 21, 2004

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for H.R. 4363, the Helping Hands for Homeownership Act of 2004. This bill will be considered under the suspension of the rules. This legislation passed the House Financial Services Committee, by a unanimous bipartisan voice vote on June 3, 2004.

This legislation was introduced by the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN). This bill will simply make a technical correction to the "Housing Opportunity Program Extension Act of 1996" to permit families who receive homes from groups such as Habitat for Humanity (Habitat) to fulfill the "sweat equity" requirement for receiving Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP) funds by helping to build other Habitat homes in the community, in addition to their own.

In 1996, Congress created the SHOP, which provides competitive grants for groups such as

Habitat to help with land and infrastructure expenses. In order to receive SHOP funds, the recipients of a home from groups such as Habitat must contribute a certain amount of physical labor to the home-building process, also known as "sweat equity." In FY 2004, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the first time interpreted the law to preclude the families who receive these homes from fulfilling their "sweat equity" requirements by working on program homes other than their own.

This new interpretation could cause problems for Habitat affiliates all over the country. Habitat allows its home recipients to obtain its "sweat equity" requirement by working on Habitat homes for others in the community, as well as their own home. H.R. 4363 makes the needed technical change to make sure that Habitat and similar programs can continue to promote homeownership.

Furthermore, H.R. 4363 also contains a provision which names the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Section 502 single-family loan guarantee program after my friend and colleague, the distinguished gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER). This program, like Habitat, promotes the goal of homeownership among those who might otherwise find it out of reach. Those are precisely the people that Mr. BEREUTER has spent his career serving, and this provision represents a small thank-you for those efforts.

As many of you know, the distinguished gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) is leaving the House at the end of August to become the President of the Asia Foundation. He was elected to the House in 1978 to represent the constituents of the First District of Nebraska. Mr. BEREUTER has served on the House Financial Services Committee and its predecessor, the House Banking Committee, since 1981. During his service on these committees, he has authored a number of significant bipartisan bills which were enacted into law.

One of his most successful legislative accomplishments is the USDA Section 502 single-family loan guarantee program. This initiative was enacted into law as part of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act in 1990 and authorizes the Department of Agriculture to guarantee a single-family loan made by a commercial lender to moderate-income families in small towns and rural areas where conventional mortgage financing may not always be available.

Since the program's creation in 1991, 316,625 single-family loans have been guaranteed by the USDA. The State of Ohio has been a major beneficiary with 629 single-family loans valued at over \$58 million having been guaranteed in Ohio under this program so far this year. This program, like Mr. BEREUTER's legislative career, has been a huge success.

In conclusion, I want to urge your support for H.R. 4363. This bipartisan bill contains important provisions to promote homeownership.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MATTHEW STEPANEK

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 25, 2004

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, this June 22nd, a courageous young man was taken from our midst. Thirteen-year-old Matthew Stepanek was full of life, happiness, and brilliance.

Mattie, as he liked to be called, had a lifelong struggle with muscular dystrophy, but never let the disease curb his enthusiasm, nor hinder his creativity. In 2001, Mattie courageously stated, "My life mission is to spread peace to the world." Despite losing his battle with muscular dystrophy at such a young age, Mattie managed to spread happiness to the world through his poems.

Mattie began writing poetry at age three to cope with the death of a brother. In his short life, this tireless young man wrote five volumes of poetry that sold millions of copies. Three of the volumes reached the New York Times' best-seller list.

Mattie is survived by his loving mother Jeni, who first recognized Mattie's talent and wrote down his poems for him. Unfortunately, Jeni also suffers from the adult-onset form of the disease. The disease also took the lives of his two brothers and sister.

Mr. Speaker, today, I ask this House to celebrate and remember the life of Mattie Stepanek. He was a brave young man whose genius impacted everyone who encountered him. His selflessness, courage, and talent are something we can all honor and admire.

HONORING CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLYMAN MERVYN DYMALLY

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 25, 2004

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the historic achievements of California Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally, on the occasion of the thirty-year anniversary of his election as the first African American Lieutenant Governor in California and the United States.

Assemblyman Dymally's distinguished political career began in 1962 when he was elected to the California State Assembly. After serving for four years, in 1966 he became the first African American to be elected to the California State Senate. Following his service as a State Legislator, Dymally again made history by becoming the first elected African American Lieutenant Governor in 1974.

In 1980 Dymally ran for Congress representing South Los Angeles County, and became the first foreign-born black to serve in the United States Congress. While serving in the 97th through 101st Congresses, he was Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus and of the Subcommittee on Africa within the Committee of Foreign Affairs. After retiring from Congress in 1992, he has served in numerous academic positions and remained an active participant in international affairs. In 2002 Assemblyman Dymally returned to the California State legislature, where he currently represents the fifty-second district.

On June 24th, the Oakland Black Caucus honored the anniversary of Assemblyman Dymally's historic election to the California Lieutenant Governorship. I would like to mark this occasion by commending the exceptional political achievements of Assemblyman Dymally, and by recognizing the broader social and historic implications of his extraordinary career.

By remaining committed to public service and education throughout his life, Assemblyman Dymally has contributed enormously not only to the State of California, but also to the global community. I want to express my deep appreciation and respect for Assemblyman Dymally and his relentless pursuit of equality and social justice for African Americans and all people.

IN HONOR OF U.S. MARINE CORPS
LANCE CORPORAL RUSSELL
WHITE

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 25, 2004

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of a brave young Marine who was accidentally killed while performing guard duty at Camp Bulldog, Bagram Air Base on Sunday, June 20, 2004. United States Marine Corps Lance Corporal Russell White was assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, based in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina and was part of a brave unit sent to Afghanistan to track down Osama bin Laden.

Lance Corporal White was a Sussex County native, attended Indian River High School in Frankford, Delaware, where he played football, and enjoyed hunting, skiing and the outdoors. He hoped one day to run his father's home building business and make Sussex County his permanent home. His family and friends describe him as loyal, determined, ambitious and fiercely passionate about defending the security of our nation. When terrorists struck our great nation on that fateful day in 2001, Russell White was only in high school, yet felt determined to help. He eventually joined the Marine Corps where the values he held true were exemplified in his brave service in Operation Enduring Freedom.

Lance Corporal White chose the daily rigors of military service because he valued the well-being of others. And he felt that by working to track down the terrorists who were responsible for killing so many Americans, he would be able to contribute to our nation. That is an extremely brave attitude for a young man of only 19 years of age. His friend Matthew Mitchell remarked, "He was proud of himself and we were proud of him. He's braver than any of us." What a true statement that is. Lance Corporal White will be missed tremendously by his family and friends, who will remember a courageous, young man who willingly took on the role of a U.S. soldier during a time of war.

Mr. Speaker, it is my sincere privilege to honor the life of a proud Marine and heroic representative of the State of Delaware. Lance Corporal White deserves our gratitude and respect.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 25, 2004

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, as a result of my participation in CODEL Hoekstra to Iraq, I regret that I was not able to vote on the following bills on June 21, 2004 in the House of Representatives, due to official business. If I had been present to vote, I would have voted in the following manner:

H. Res. 591.—Expressing the gratitude of the House of Representatives for the contributions made by America's community banks to the Nation's economic well-being and prosperity and the sense of the House of Representatives that a month should be designated as "Community Banking Month"—yes.

H.R. 4363.—Helping Hands for Homeownership Act of 2004 (Technical correction to the Housing Opportunity Extension Act relating to the Habitat for Humanity Program)—yes.

H. Res. 660.—Congratulating Randy Johnson of the Arizona Diamondbacks on pitching a perfect game on May 18, 2004—yes.

A TRIBUTE TO CHRISTINA
SUNDSTROM ON THE OCCASION
OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. CALVIN M. DOOLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 25, 2004

Mr. DOOLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Christina Sundstrom at the conclusion of a remarkable career in public service in California's San Joaquin Valley. After many years dedicated to improving the Valley's rural communities, Ms. Sundstrom is retiring from her position as Director of Empowerment Programs for the USDA Rural Development office in Visalia, California, the capstone of a distinguished career.

Ms. Sundstrom began her career in public service working for the Army National Training Center at Fort Irwin in Barstow, California. After several years spent raising a family in Los Angeles, Ms. Sundstrom devoted a significant portion of her career to helping retirees and disabled citizens in the Social Security Administration office in Visalia. In this role she became intimately familiar with the needs of our vibrant, yet economically challenged region.

Christina Sundstrom's tireless dedication to serving the Central Valley's families and her efforts to improve the Valley's communities earned her the respect of her peers in state and federal agencies and made her a key community leader in the region. I was fortunate to have her join my Congressional staff after my election in 1990 as my District Director. Over the next seven years, Ms. Sundstrom excelled as my representative in the district and as a skilled liaison between state and federal agencies, community groups, and constituencies. As my District Director, Ms. Sundstrom played a significant role in providing relief to many Valley agricultural communities following a crop freeze in the early 1990's. She played a key role in addressing this region's compelling needs by helping to

secure key economic development grants and coordinating visits by Cabinet officials and by the President of the United States in the mid-1990's.

As an extension of her proven commitment to the Central Valley's economic development, Ms. Sundstrom later accepted a position as Programs Coordinator with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Office in Visalia. In this capacity, she assisted many struggling Valley communities in their efforts to obtain grant funding, tax incentives, and other forms of assistance necessary to combat the Valley's persistent double-digit unemployment. Many local leaders have praised Ms. Sundstrom as an effective and invaluable resource to the region.

Christina Sundstrom's retirement this week from the Department of Agriculture marks a significant loss for the San Joaquin Valley, which has come to rely on her as one of its best and brightest advocates for positive change. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the distinguished career of Christina Sundstrom and her notable record of service to our community on this special occasion.

HONORING MERLE KILGORE

HON. JIM McCRERY

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 25, 2004

Mr. McCRERY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to honor a living legend in the world of country music, who also happens to be a fellow citizen of the great state of Louisiana. From singer to songwriter and manager to actor, Merle Kilgore has been involved in every conceivable facet of modern show business. Throughout his entertainment career, he has been unique for the breadth of his entertainment experience and unsurpassed in his talent. It is the lifelong achievements of such a great man that I wish to honor here tonight.

Merle Kilgore was born Wyatt Merle Kilgore on August 9, 1934 in Chickasha, Oklahoma. His family moved to Shreveport, Louisiana before he began school. He attended Byrd High School in Shreveport and later attended college at Louisiana Tech in Ruston.

He first became involved with music at the young age of 14, carrying the guitar of another famous country musician, Hank Williams, Sr., at the famous Louisiana Hayride. Just two years later, in 1950, he began his show business career, performing at the Louisiana Hayride at just 16.

His first job was as a Disc Jockey at a radio station in Ruston, Louisiana and in 1953, he even hosted his own television and radio show as "The Tall Texan".

Merle made his songwriting debut when he wrote his first number one hit, "More and More," in 1953; he was just 18 years old. The song was recorded by Webb Pierce and became a million-seller in 1954. His success as a songwriter seemed to be assured by the popularity of his first song, but he was far from finished.

Surpassing his own songwriting accomplishments seemed to be another of Merle's talents. Not long after writing "More and More", Merle wrote the 10 million-seller "Wolverton Mountain", which was recorded by Claude