

Louise also served as chairman of the Southern Agents Conference, an annual conference of agents from several States, including Maryland.

In addition to her position on the IIABA Executive Committee, Louise also serves as a member of the Association's Large Agents & Brokers Roundtable.

Her other industry volunteer work includes service as a member of the D.C. Society of Chartered Property Casualty Underwriters' Board of Directors and the Standard & Poor's Agent Advisory Council, and chair of the CNA Branch PACER Agent Panel and the Southern Agents Conference.

A highlight in Louise's community involvement is her service as a member of Howard University's Scholarship Committee.

I applaud Louise for her tireless leadership of the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America and for the numerous accomplishments achieved for all independent insurance agents and brokers during this past year.

INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 2004

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the unanimously agreed upon Concluding Document of the Interparliamentary Conference on Human Rights and Religious Freedom, which occurred in Brussels, Belgium in early August of this year. Over 30 different countries from Asia, the Middle East, Europe, Africa and Latin America sent parliamentarians to participate in the conference to discuss issues of ethnicity, religion and citizenship, responses to anti-Semitism, terrorism and religious freedom, religious registration laws, trafficking in persons, and women's rights. In addition, a number of nongovernmental and religious organizations attended and participated. These kinds of gatherings are vital in building relationships and understanding, and ultimately cooperation and partnership, between peoples of all nations.

CONCLUDING STATEMENT OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE INTERPARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, AUGUST 7, 2004, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

The Second Session of the Interparliamentary Conference on Human Rights and Religious Freedom encourages the genuine expression of opinions from representatives of the peoples of the world. There is no greater legitimacy than that expressed by peoples in their choice of representatives.

The great variety of cultures, the different paths to God, the diverse ethnic backgrounds, and the disparity of historic goals often lead to conflict and bloodshed between peoples, but should instead be sources of inspiration in our quest for valid solutions.

Religious freedom is the first human right and should not be confined to the private sphere only.

We live in an era characterized by aspirations towards diversity and tolerance but clouded by tragic failures of mutual respect. True religious freedom is more than mere tolerance. It constitutes an embracing of

universal human dignity as a consequence of one's religious convictions. Every individual has inherent dignity and worth, and the state is constituted to serve society, not vice versa.

The forceful attempts to build homogenous societies in the last century led to horrendous human sufferings, to the carnage of world wars and to genocide.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has become the framework for a global compact with great moral authority and the promise of a more just international order.

Lifestyles and social structures rooted in different religions should be preserved in order to maintain peace and harmony on all levels, from the local community to the world order.

Prejudice and repression based on ethnic, religious and cultural background persist. In some cases these insults to human dignity enjoy the authority of law and the state.

Ethnic and religious intolerance are unacceptable and should not be used as a basis for restricting citizenship. A civic covenant and the rule of law constitute the only rational basis for creating a just society.

Any cultural and spiritual invocation of undetermined historic or divine authority as justification for hatred and rejection of others directly and actively violates universally proclaimed human rights.

The Interparliamentary Conference on Human Rights and Religious Freedom solemnly reaffirms the right to freedom of religion and belief for each person, and rejects any attempt to restrict fundamental rights on the basis of religious, ethnic or cultural identity including restrictions or forcing any religious dress.

Anti-Semitism is a global concern and never a function of Jewish conduct. Reducing the magnitude of Jewish suffering throughout history to politics alienates and distorts our own humanity.

The alarming signs of recurrence of Anti-Semitism, especially in some advanced societies of Western Europe, indicate a deep-rooted prejudice.

The Interparliamentary Conference on Human Rights and Religious Freedom condemns hatred on the basis of religious, ethnic or cultural identity, including restricting or forcing religious dress.

Security has become a global problem. No nation is able to protect its citizens and territorial integrity without international solidarity.

The very concept of great power changes its contour in an environment where fringe groups are able to disrupt and damage the very structure of a society.

Where freedom of religion and belief is protected by governments and valued by citizens, religion-based terrorism will not take root. It may take advantage of a free society, but sustained support will not emerge.

Freedom of religion is an antidote to terrorism—especially religion-based terrorism. It encourages a theological and political awareness of the need to accept pluralism.

Discriminating on the basis of religious beliefs or discrediting religious practices are contrary to respect for fundamental human dignity. They destabilize society by creating a climate of tension, intolerance, opposition and suspicion.

Respect for freedom of religion and belief is an effective means of promoting national and international security and stability.

The gravest danger in the world today comes from fanaticism and extremism that exploits ideals of spiritual and religious movements.

Manipulation of religion and spiritual beliefs for violent and terrorist purposes, including murder and destruction of properties, is unacceptable.

The global pandemic of HIV/AIDs constitutes a terrible assault on human rights and demands effective action and enforcement of international commitments for education, prevention, care and treatment.

Trafficking in persons, in particular women and children, is recognized as a form of enslavement which violates fundamental human rights.

Steps need to be taken to ensure that the offense of trafficking in persons is recognized globally as criminal, and to prevent further trafficking in persons.

It is imperative to strengthen international institutions and to create new instruments that will address and protect the rights of religious and ethnic minorities.

The Interparliamentary Conference on Human Rights and Religious Freedom appreciates the work of the Secretariat and recommends to it that it consult the maximum number of countries in the elaboration of its future programs.

The Interparliamentary Conference on Human Rights and Religious Freedom encourages parliaments and governments to nurture environments of free expression and respect for human dignity.

In this spirit the Interparliamentary Conference on Human Rights and Religious Freedom is grateful to His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco for his generous appreciation of our work:

"It is therefore appropriate that this sort of initiative becomes the foundational undertaking of an international civilization, where complementarity between people is substituted for confrontation and where faith in the paramount necessity of cooperation overcomes the illusion of self-reliance and autarchy."

The Interparliamentary Conference on Human Rights and Religious Freedom accepts the proposal of the delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco to host the Third Session in 2005.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, September 13, I was in Kentucky tending to official business and was not present for rollcall votes Nos. 441, 442 and 443. The votes were on House Concurrent Resolutions 363, and House Resolutions 667 and 760. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on all measures.

IN HONOR OF JAMES SPRIGGS'S RETIREMENT AS PRESIDENT OF THE GREATER IRVING-LAS COLINAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 2004

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. James A. Spriggs on the occasion of his retirement as President of the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Spriggs became President of the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce in April of 1995, and the organization

has seen massive growth under his experienced leadership and dedication. The Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce now has a budget in excess of \$1.2 million and plays a vital role in assisting the promotion of business in the 32nd Congressional District of Texas.

Mr. Spriggs's involvement in the community is not limited to his role with the Greater Irving-Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce; however, he is an active volunteer for a number of societal organizations. Among his commitments include: the United Cerebral Palsy of Arkansas, Irving Hospital Foundation, Dallas Easter Seal Society for Children, Former President of the Irving Symphony Orchestra, Member of the Board of Councilors for the University of Dallas in Irving along with many more contributions that are too many to mention. His active presence will be greatly missed, but he has the thanks of the greater Irving community for his many years of dedication and volunteer service.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Mr. Spriggs, his wife Carolyn, and the rest of the Spriggs family all the best on this occasion.

IN HONOR OF JOHN C. HEDLUND'S
CONTRIBUTIONS AND DEDICATION
TO THE GLENDALE COMMUNITY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 2004

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate John Hedlund for his outstanding leadership and service to the Glendale community.

John Hedlund has been a major source of positive influence for the Greater Glendale area for many years. He has served as President of the Glendale News-Press and the Burbank Daily Review, as well as President and Chief Executive Officer of California Offset Printers. He is a past President of the Glendale Community College Board of Education, the Glendale Unified School District, and Chairman of the ABC Committee to prioritize the spending of \$184 million for GUSD. Mr. Hedlund has served as a member and Elder of Glendale Presbyterian Church. He was also Chairman and Board Member of the Glendale Salvation Army Advisory Board, the President of the Glendale Rotary Club, and member of the Downtown Strategic Plan Committee since its inception. Mr. Hedlund was also Chairman of the Town Center Committee, President of the Glendale Development Council and of Glendale Partners, President and Board Member of the Alex Theater, President of the Glendale Symphony Orchestra Association, Board Member of the YMCA, and Board Member of both the Verdugo Club and Oakmont Country Club.

John is the recipient of countless honors. He was named "Man of the Year" by the Glendale Chamber of Commerce as well as the Glendale Board of Realtors. He also received the Glendale Bar Association Liberty Bell award and the Congressional Award for Community Service. John is a nationally recognized leader in the Graphic Arts Industry, serving in key leadership roles in several graphic arts organizations and receiving many

of the top regional and national honors in the field.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in congratulating Mr. John Hedlund for his lifetime of exemplary public service, and for his immense commitment to the City of Glendale and its residents.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO SUSAN
BARTHOLOMEW-WILLIAMS

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 2004

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece have concluded but will not be forgotten. The Games have yielded some of the most incredible competition in the history of sports. The athletes have rigorously trained and endured formidable obstacles in their quest for the distinction of the world's elite.

Susan Bartholomew-Williams, one of my constituents, made us all proud. At the recent Olympics, she achieved legendary status by placing third in the Olympic Triathlon at Athens and bringing home a bronze medal.

Since beginning her career a decade ago Susan has had numerous top-ten finishes and has risen to the uppermost echelons of her sport. Susan did not compete in the 2000 Sydney Games due to the birth of her daughter and was out of competition in 1999 as a result of a debilitating side effect of her treatment for a pulmonary embolism. But she came back stronger than ever and brought home the bronze medal for the United States in the triathlon.

Mr. Speaker, I am in awe of the rigor and perseverance displayed by Ms. Bartholomew-Williams in the 2004 Olympic Triathlon, and all of the athletes who represented the U.S. in Athens. I wish her further success in all her future endeavors.

IN RECOGNITION OF MARK
GAGLIARDI, ACTIVIST OF THE
YEAR

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 2004

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute Mark Gagliardi, who on September 17, 2004 will be named the Activist of the Year for Contra Costa County, California at the AFL-CIO's Labor-2-Labor dinner in my congressional district. Mr. Gagliardi gained this honor after the delegates representing over 80,000 union men and women in Contra Costa County voted to recognize the work he does for his fellow union members.

Mark is a steward with OPEIU Local 277 at American Income Life. American Income Life is the only 100 percent union insurance company in California. Mark maintains a food bank for striking union members at American Income Life and has made food deliveries throughout Northern California. He has been on dozens of picket lines throughout the State and his unique style with a bullhorn is seldom forgotten.

Mark established with American Income Life the "Shoot for a Cure" Charity Sporting Clays Shoot to raise money for the Leukemia/Lymphoma Fund and has raised tens of thousands of dollars to fight that disease.

When union men and women speak about a revitalized union movement in our Nation, it is people like Mark Gagliardi that represent that new spirit. I encourage my colleagues to join me in saluting Mark for being named Activist of the Year.

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF UNITED
AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT OF
SONOMA COUNTY

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 2004

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor United Against Sexual Assault (UASA) of Sonoma County on the occasion of its 30th anniversary. Founded in 1974 as Women Against Rape, the agency consisted of a phone number to call for emotional support. Today that crisis line operates 24 hours a day, and the organization has 12 board members, 14 paid staff, and more than 40 volunteers who address the problems related to all forms of sexual assault.

Over the past 30 years, UASA has greatly expanded the services offered to the people of Sonoma County. It provides extensive training on helping victims, including not only women and girls, but also men, children, and the families of victims. Staff and volunteers also accompany victims and their families for police reporting, court appearances, medical exams, or other personal situations.

Prevention programs include outreach to elementary through high school youths, reaching approximately 6,000 young people every year, as well as parents and school personnel. Other efforts include bilingual outreach to Hispanic teens, teen peer education training, anti-racism curriculum which deals with violence against the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender community, and a unique men's program featuring men educating men. All services are offered at no cost.

UASA also plays a key role in the county's pioneering SART (sexual assault response team) which unites law enforcement, mental health, legal, and advocacy programs to support victims and families. This collaborative project makes services easily accessible and minimizes the stress felt by victims. The agency is also working with the District Attorney's office to establish a county-wide Family Justice Center by 2005.

In May 2004, Executive Director Gloria Young was named "Outstanding Director of the Year" by the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault for shepherding the agency through many of these transitions.

Mr. Speaker, UASA's long-term mission is to eliminate all forms of sexual assault. I know that with its inspired leadership, dedicated staff, and committed volunteers United Against Sexual Assault of Sonoma County has brought our community a long way toward achieving this goal and will not be satisfied until they have reached it. I salute UASA on their 30th anniversary and look forward to the day when their services are no longer needed.