

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 511, I was in my congressional district on official business. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

IN RECOGNITION OF MONCRE
TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE**HON. MIKE ROGERS**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 50th anniversary of the MonCre Telephone Cooperative in Ramer, Al.

MonCre began operations in 1954 to bring phone service to the unserved rural areas of Montgomery, Crenshaw and eventually Bulloch and Pike counties, and was the vision of the late founder and Montgomery Advertiser columnist Mildred Smith of Ramer.

Today, MonCre employs 24 highly trained technicians and staff, and serves approximately 3,500 households. Services offered 50 years later are far different from those of 1954 and now include a wide range of telephone, internet and DSL services.

It's not often we have the opportunity to recognize the achievements and contributions of a community institution like MonCre, and I appreciate the House's attention to the matter at this important occasion.

RECOGNIZING OCTOBER AS NA-
TIONAL SPINA BIFIDA AWARE-
NESS MONTH**HON. HAROLD E. FORD, JR.**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the more than 70,000 Americans and their many family members who are currently affected by Spina Bifida. October is National Spina Bifida Awareness Month and I hope our colleagues will join this effort to raise awareness about this disease and recognize those Americans, including many of my constituents.

Spina Bifida is the Nation's most common, permanently disabling birth defect occurring when a neural tube defect prevents the central nervous system from closing properly during the early stages of pregnancy. Each year more than 4,000 pregnancies are affected, and of these, 1,500 babies are born with the disease.

I was honored to be a part of the 16th Annual Roast for Spina Bifida on September 26th. During that dinner, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, Redskins owner Dan Snyder, and I roasted former CNN Anchor Bernard Shaw. I am pleased to report that even under fire, a now retired Shaw was as cool, calm, and collected as he had been during his time on CNN. He was truly a fantastic sport.

The Spina Bifida Association of America (SBAA), an organization that has helped people with Spina Bifida and their families for over 30 years, work tirelessly to prevent and reduce suffering from this devastating birth defect. There are approximately 60 chapters serving over 125 communities nationwide and I would like to acknowledge and thank SBAA and the Spina Bifida Association of Tennessee for all that they have done for the families in my state affected by this birth defect. I would especially like to thank Scott Price of Nashville, a Spina Bifida Association Foundation Board member for his great work.

In closing, I would like to thank the Spina Bifida Association of America for allowing me to be a part of their roast and wish them the best of luck in their endeavors throughout the year. I urge my colleagues here in the House to support the important efforts of the SBAA and to remember those affected by Spina Bifida, particularly during this month.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DORA
VALDEZ**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dora Valdez, a dedicated employee of Delta County, CO who was recently honored for 25 years of impeccable service with the County. Dora is a responsible employee who engenders the trust of everyone she encounters, and it is an honor to recognize her many years of service to her community before this body of Congress and this Nation.

Dora was born and raised in Delta and has been an active member of her community her entire life. She has worked with four county clerks and managed all areas within that domain including motor vehicles, recording, election, cashier, and birth and marriage license departments. Dora is bilingual and aides many members of the Spanish community by translating for other offices. Dora enjoys her work, and has helped to many citizens in times of need.

Mr. Speaker, Dora Valdez has spent 25 years serving her local government in Delta County. Her dedication to her community is highly commendable and I am honored to recognize her many years of service before this body of Congress and this Nation. Thank you for all your hard work, Dora, and I wish you, and your family all the best in your future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING AND SUPPORTING
EFFORTS TO PROMOTE GREATER
CIVIC AWARENESS AMONG PEOP-
LE OF THE UNITED STATES

SPEECH OF

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the majority leader, Mr. DELAY, and Chairman BOB NEY for bringing this timely resolution, H. Res.

796, to the floor today. I also want to thank the cosponsors for their interest in this bipartisan bill.

H. Res. 796 recognizes and supports efforts to promote greater civic awareness among the people of the United States. The resolution recognizes those organizations and groups that actively promote voter registration and participation, as well as those communities and schools that have instituted civic awareness programs.

The resolution also encourages local communities and elected officials at all levels of government to promote greater civic awareness among the electorate and greater participation in the upcoming elections.

The Constitution of the United States establishes a representative form of government, and throughout our Nation's history, many groups of people have fought, protested, rallied, and died for the right to vote. The 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th amendments to the Constitution represent some of those hard-won voting privileges.

The percentage of Americans registered to vote unfortunately has declined in the last 10 years. There is no better time to make citizens more aware of the importance of exercising their right—and their responsibility—to vote. Voting is fundamental to our representative form of government—and as Members of Congress we must support and promote civic awareness and participation.

Our democracy is a government of all the people, by all the people, and for all the people. All those eligible to vote have an equal voice in determining the future of our great Nation. H. Res. 796 promotes greater awareness of one of the greatest privileges we have as American citizens—the right to vote—and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join in supporting this timely measure.

HONORING J.D. ROGERS

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to pay tribute to Mr. J.D. Rogers, III, who on September 18, 2004 was honored during the UAW Local 599 Walter Reuther award ceremony in Flint, Michigan for his contributions as the longest-serving production committeeman in the history of the Local.

J.D. Rogers began his leadership career within UAW Local 599 in 1976 when he was elected as Alternative Committeeman. One month after assuming his post he was elected to fulfill the position of the recently resigned Committeeman. His superior leadership skills and support of the union membership granted him several unopposed elections to this post.

J.D. is committed to fulfilling Walter Reuther's mission of helping people, and ensuring human dignity and social justice for all. His hard work and dedication to the duties of his elected position is commendable. His deeds are self evident in the faith the members of 599 have bestowed upon him in allowing him to be re-elected. His service to the UAW extends many years and is highly regarded.

Mr. Speaker, many people have greatly benefited from the leadership and service of

Mr. J.D. Rogers. His commitment to the UAW membership is unwavering. I ask my colleagues in the 108th Congress to please join me in congratulating him on obtaining his mark in history and in wishing him the very best in future endeavors.

COMMENDING THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you as a citizen of a state that has been devastated by four major hurricanes in the past several weeks. For the first time in a century, four hurricanes, Charley, Ivan, Frances and Jeanne, hit Florida, within one month. My district, in particular has been forced to deal with the most horrendous effects of these vicious natural disasters. As the devastation from these Hurricanes struck my state, district, and constituents, the service and resolve of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) proved to be outstanding. On behalf of all my constituents, I would like to commend the dedicated service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and its employees.

The citizens of Florida would not have been able to withstand the disastrous effects of these hurricanes if it were not for the fortitude and service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). They've never hesitated to fly into the eye of a hurricane to gather information about possible landfall, and NOAA was one of the primary agencies that my office dealt with in seeking information and expert advice to combat the dangerous situation my constituents were placed in because of these storms. When people needed to be warned of these storms, NOAA was there to respond. NOAA and its employees are a tremendous service to my office and constituents.

In this time of crisis, NOAA's National Hurricane Center provided 496 live television interviews and 567 telephone briefings to the media. The information contained in these briefings was relayed to millions of Floridians, allowing for the safe evacuation of more than 4 million Florida residents during Hurricane Frances alone. All together, more than 1,000 hurricane watches, warnings, and advisories were issued during Hurricanes Charley, Ivan, Frances and Jeanne. NOAA provided updated satellite images of all four Hurricanes every five minutes over the days leading to their landfall.

For more than 30 years, NOAA, has been working for America every day. Their knowledge, data gathering, and service have saved the lives of so many. From providing timely and precise weather, water and climate forecasts to monitoring the environment and making our nation more competitive through safe navigation and examining changes in the oceans, NOAA is on the front lines in the service of our great country.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the service of such a valued Federal institution such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

SALUTING EDWARD KUSSMAN

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Mr. Edward Kussman, a civil rights activist and a good friend, who is being honored on October 15, 2004, by the Fair Housing Council of the San Fernando Valley. Mr. Kussman, who moved to Pacoima in 1956, is a remarkable man with many accomplishments and I have been greatly honored to work with him over the last 20 years on many important community issues.

For more than seven decades, Ed has unwaveringly fought to end racial and other forms of discrimination and to improve opportunities in education, housing and employment. He is a founding member of the Fair Housing Council of the San Fernando Valley and has been an active member for the past 45 years. He has also served seven consecutive terms as President of the San Fernando Valley Chapter of the NAACP, was President of the Pacoima Chamber of Commerce, served for 25 years as a board member of the San Fernando Valley Neighborhood Legal Services, was the Past President of Northeast Valley Health Corporation, and is currently the Commissioner of the Los Angeles County Commission on Aging. His civic involvement is as impressive as it is extensive.

Ed began his fight against racial inequality in a time when African Americans were excluded from accessing many forms of employment and denied entry into public places. His fight for equal rights was instrumental in the state of California's passing the historic Rumford Act prohibiting discrimination in housing. His influence is far reaching and continues to play an essential role in the lives of community members. He is an influential member of my Senior Advisory Council and has been a trusted counselor to me on many important issues.

Born in New Orleans, Ed attended Straight University, Louisiana Frank Wiggins Trade Tech, and UCLA. He has taken an active part in his community and has earned many awards including Man of the Year Award from Beta Pi Sigma Zeta Chapter, the NAACP Freedom Award and Los Angeles's Urban League Award.

Edward Kussman is married and has four daughters.

Mr. Speaker and distinguished colleagues, I ask you to join me in saluting Edward Kussman for his impressive career, dedication to the people of California and his many years of making a difference.

SAFE DRINKING WATER FOR HEALTH COMMUNITIES ACT OF 2004

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Safe Drinking Water for Healthy Communities Act of 2004. This legislation will

require the EPA to establish a national primary standard for drinking water for perchlorate—otherwise known as rocket fuel.

Perchlorate is a component of rocket fuel—used heavily by the military and its defense contractors. Perchlorate contamination in California is primarily the result of releases from 12 military and defense contractor sites. It disrupts the functioning of the thyroid, resulting in behavior changes and delayed development in children and thyroid tumors in adults. It removes valuable water supplies from service.

Today, communities across the country are finding perchlorate in their drinking water, groundwater, irrigation water, and soil. In mid 1997, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California discovered perchlorate in the lower Colorado River. It was traced to a Kerr McGee plant in Henderson Nevada. Releases to Lake Mead and the Lower Colorado River have impacted the drinking water supply of 15 to 20 million people in Arizona, southern California, southern Nevada, Tribal nations and Mexico. Today more than 120 wells in Los Angeles County have been found to be contaminated with varying levels of perchlorate.

In the district I represent the water providers are struggling to handle the plumes of perchlorate, the legacy of Aerojet. The City of Baldwin Park hosts the nation's first perchlorate treatment facility—a necessity in order to maintain the reliability and availability of safe drinking water. My community faces costs over the next 15 years of at least \$200 million as the result of perchlorate contamination. Yet there exists no enforceable public health standard to ensure our drinking water is safe.

This bill requires the EPA to establish a national primary drinking water standard. Without this, there is no requirement for water to have safe levels of perchlorate and water providers will continue to struggle with guaranteeing long term reliability of safe water sources. Inaction poses an unreasonable risk to both our valuable water supply and our health.

HONORING STEVE AND NANCY BUTCHER

HON. PATRICK J. TIBERI

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 8, 2004

Mr. TIBERI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Steve and Nancy Butcher who have been honored by the National Restaurant Association as 2004 Restaurant Neighbor Award Finalists. Mr. and Mrs. Butcher own the Nutcracker Family Restaurant in Pataskala, Ohio.

Mr. and Mrs. Butcher led the community of Pataskala in commemorating Flag Day in 2004 and honoring U.S. troops abroad. They organized local businesses and citizens to sponsor flags and display them all over the town of Pataskala and it's main streets. They hosted a community dinner, two sold-out golf scrambles and a lunch for more than 120 participants to raise money for their organization, Flags Over Pataskala. The money they raised went to the Licking County Family YMCA and the Pataskala Parks and Recreation Department. Their efforts reinvigorated the patriotic holiday by selling 168 new flags and displaying 500 smaller flags throughout town.