

served for thirty-two years as a school teacher, including four years on the Board of Education. At the same time, he found time to coach both football and track. Upon retirement, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the Jefferson County School District.

Using his extensive command of the issues, Bob participated in and offered advice to almost every steering committee throughout his twelve years serving as County Commissioner. Building upon this, he also testified here at the nation's Capital in support of legislation to preserve and maintain public lands in Clear Creek County which are important for wildlife and the quality of life in Colorado. During this time, I was able to personally work at length with Bob in mutual support of the environment, an issue that remains high on the agenda of all Coloradans. Thanks to his leadership, more than 6,000 acres of land were properly distributed to public and private land owners, ensuring that the Front Range population will continue to enjoy this cherished and pristine land for many years.

Along these same lines, Bob has worked tirelessly on local issues in the state. As a member of the Board of Directors for the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), Bob spearheaded many regional policies. Working on transportation issues has proved to be one of his strong suits, as he has emphasized the creation of a new bus service to connect adjacent Clear Creek and Jefferson Counties. Another of Bob's transportation successes occurred when he helped gain approval of the Guanella Pass Road Project from the Federal Highway Administration's federal lands program. The result will be to improve this important and scenic roadway affecting numerous jurisdictions including Park County, the Town of Georgetown, and the U.S. Forest Service.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing our gratitude to Robert Poirot for his many years of public service and his contributions to the people of Colorado. Robert has displayed exceptional moral fiber throughout his life, and for that I believe we should acknowledge and celebrate his work and accomplishments. Bob's tireless dedication to his community and country stands as a model for what can be accomplished when citizens participate in our democracy. Although he is leaving his service as a county commissioner, I am sure that he will remain active and involved in the community. I wish him and his family good health and happiness for many years to come.

HONORING BILLY "TINY" RUTTER
FOR HIS SERVICE AS A COUNTY
COMMISSIONER OF SUMTER
COUNTY

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 2004

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Billy "Tiny" Rutter for his service as a County Commissioner for Sumter County.

On behalf of the residents of Sumter County, I applaud Mr. Rutter for his years of dedication as a public servant. Since 1992, he has

worked tirelessly to provide the residents of Sumter County with excellent leadership and vision. Tiny, as he is affectionately known, can without a doubt say he has raised the level of expectation for future County Commissioners. He not only made Sumter County his home; he made it better. His longtime presence on the board will be greatly missed.

Tiny Rutter is my friend, advisor and mentor. Even when we were from different political parties, he helped me to make inroads with the Sumter County residents. He was such a passionate "Lobbyist" for the needs of Sumter County that no one could decline his ever expanding list of funding requests for the County.

Tiny's devotion to the residents of Sumter County demonstrates the intensity of virtue and selflessness that a public official should aspire to attain. Sumter County is truly saddened by Mr. Rutter's departure; nevertheless, we are immensely grateful for all his years of commitment and hard work.

I wish Mr. Rutter the best in the future and hope he fully enjoys the pleasures of retirement.

90TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. SAVA
SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN
MERRILLVILLE, INDIANA

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 2004

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor and enthusiasm that I congratulate the members of St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church in Merrillville, Indiana as they celebrate their 90th anniversary. The festivities will begin on Sunday, November 14, 2004 with a special service, followed by a banquet to celebrate this momentous occasion.

Beckoning visitors who are traveling on Interstate 65, the golden domes of St. Sava offer an amazing spectacle. However, it is the interior of the church that the parishioners hold sacred. Built from Indiana limestone in a five-year construction project, the present sanctuary located at 9191 Mississippi Street in Merrillville replaced the original St. Sava Church, built in 1914 in Gary, Indiana, after that church was destroyed by fire. The dedicated members of the church came together to worship at the St. Sava "small hall" in Hobart, Indiana while plans were made for their new sanctuary. Undeterred by the loss of their church building, the congregation demonstrated their commitment to each other and to their faith by carrying on with their services at the "small hall" for 13 years.

Mr. Speaker, St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church is led in its faith by the Very Reverend Jovan Todorovich. He has been the priest at the church for 35 of its 90 years, and the proud parishioners are thankful for the spiritual and emotional leadership he has provided during that time. Church President Michael Gallich has attended St. Sava since 1946 and is proud that the church has been able to maintain the Serbian traditions and customs that make their church unique. Father Todorovich believes the anniversary can be used to connect the new generation of the church with its past. Because the congregation has been blessed with tremendous leadership

and good fortune throughout its history, it is appropriate that the celebration of the church's anniversary will be held near the Thanksgiving holiday.

His Grace Bishop Longin, along with the Very Reverend Todorovich, will serve the Holy Hierarchical Liturgy the morning of November 14, which will be followed by a memorial service to be conducted by representatives of a local American Legion at the adjacent Memorial Park to commemorate the fallen soldiers of all wars. The celebration banquet will conclude the festivities, which will feature St. Sava's folklore group and choir, as well as tamburitza orchestras and kolo bands.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating the congregation of St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church as they celebrate the 90th anniversary of their parish. Blessed with outstanding leadership and unwavering faith, the congregation of St. Sava has enriched Northwest Indiana by bringing the proud and historic Serbian traditions to our community. May God continue to bless the parishioners and the church leaders for many years to come.

RECOGNIZING MR. PAUL SALAZ

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 2004

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of El Sereno's finest citizens, Mr. Paul Salaz. Even in the last years of his life Mr. Salaz continued to work on behalf of the people in his beloved home of El Sereno. However, on Friday, November 5, 2004 the community lost a great asset when Mr. Salaz passed away.

Mr. Salaz was originally from Santa Paula, California. He married his wife Julia in 1934 and the couple celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary just this year.

It was after his retirement as an upholstery salesman that Mr. Salaz dedicated his life to community service and helping the people of El Sereno. After 40 years in sales he became an active leader in Los Angeles City Council District 14, most importantly as a member of the Citizens Unit for Participation in Housing and Community Development.

I was fortunate to get to know Mr. Salaz while I was a member of the California State Senate. Mr. Salaz's ability to work with all members of the community was remarkable. He was able to work with the El Sereno Coordinating Council and elected officials of the city of Los Angeles in order to advocate an improved quality of life for all residents.

He also worked with local elected officials on numerous community improvement projects. Some of his accomplishments included the installation of new stop signs at dangerous intersections and the opening of the new Public Library in El Sereno.

Though he was involved with the community all year long, Mr. Salaz always did a little extra for special occasions. During the holiday season Mr. Salaz made sure that impoverished families received food, and gifts for children. He also personally ensured a U.S. flag would be present at the Dr. Donald Newman Memorial every year. And in addition, he encouraged neighbors and schools to participate in

the annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony on Huntington Drive.

And while he did so much for others, never once did he seek any personal reward. Fortunately, Mr. Salaz's efforts did not go unnoticed. As a result of his extensive community involvement, he won the title of Honorary Mayor of El Sereno from 1998–2002.

I can truly say that Mr. Salaz was a wonderful example of community activism, and he found a true reward in helping others. Though he is no longer with us, his memory will live on through his wife, Julia, their 5 children, 13 grandchildren, and 30 great grandchildren.

RECOGNIZING THE EFFORTS OF
PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN THE
RESCUE OF DA'JOUR McMILLIAN
OF FRISCO CITY, ALABAMA

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 2004

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, the family of Da'Jour McMillian and the residents of the small town of Frisco City, Alabama, have reason to be exceedingly grateful this holiday season. Through the combined efforts of emergency rescue personnel, physicians, and industrial workers from Monroe and Mobile Counties, 22-month-old Da'Jour was saved from a situation that is certainly one of the greatest nightmares that could be experienced by any parent.

On Monday, November 1, 2004, Da'Jour was playing with his brother and sister off Central Street in Frisco City when he fell into an abandoned well measuring 14 feet deep. Almost immediately, the community went to work trying to recover him, an operation that took 13 hours and required the assistance of dozens of personnel. Because of the location of the well in relation to hidden power lines and potential unmarked water lines, the recovery operation was extremely dangerous and required a great deal of careful work and planning.

Through the entire ordeal, Da'Jour demonstrated a calm not usually found in a child of such a young age. In fact, he reassured the rescue workers with waves and smiles and by often telling those at the mouth of the well, "I love you." Of the many reasons this story had a happy ending, none was more important than the positive attitude and playful nature of this little boy.

Mr. Speaker, in the difficult circumstances facing our world today, both here at home and abroad, it is important that Americans should be able to depend on their friends and neighbors in their hour of need. As the rescue of little Da'Jour McMillian clearly demonstrates, there is no obstacle that cannot be overcome without a strong sense of community and cooperation. I ask my colleagues to join with me in saluting not only Da'Jour and his family for their courage, but for the following individuals and organizations who played such an important role in his rescue: Chuck Murph, Rita Smith, Rennie Raines, and J. T. Johnson with the Monroe County Emergency Management Agency; Pastor Freddie Lindsey of the Monroeville Church of the Nazarene; Tom Lindsey of Simmons Ambulance Service; Frisco City Mayor Jim Cave; the Frisco City Volunteer

Fire Department; Chief James Maples and the Frisco City Police Department; Dr. David Stallworth of Monroe County Hospital; Allen Nall of Roto-Rooter; Sam Covert of Alabama Power Company; William Snyder of Monroeville Water Works; Chief Eddie Everette and the Monroeville Fire Department; David Coggins with the Alabama Emergency Management Agency; Chief Mike Dean and the personnel of both the City of Mobile Fire Department and USAR Task Force 1; and Ronnie Wright, Bo Bosarge, and Michael Gates with Smith Industrial Services of Mobile.

Because of their efforts, this little boy and his family will indeed have a very bright holiday season.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS
SUPPORT FOR "VETERANS"
BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT ACT
OF 2004"

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 2004

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to request that a letter from Al Mansell, the President of the National Association of Realtors, regarding his organization's strong support for the immediate passage of the "Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2004," be placed in the RECORD.

As Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, and as someone who has spearheaded the effort in Congress to raise the VA's home loan guaranty level so that veterans in high cost areas like New Jersey can purchase houses, I am very pleased to have the support of the National Association of Realtors for this important piece of legislation. In fact, I have enjoyed working closely with the National Association of Realtors to improve the VA's home loan guaranty limit.

Mr. Mansell's letter demonstrates his organization's strong commitment to ensuring that the men and women who have honorably served our nation in the military can obtain affordable housing. It has often been said by historians and economists—and accurately, I believe—that the development of America's modern middle class was largely facilitated by two post World War II programs: The G.I. education bill, and the VA's home loan program. A college education, combined with opportunities for home ownership, gave tens of millions of Americans a real stake in our society, and transformed it in positive ways for generations to come.

I am very grateful for the National Association of Realtors' support and hope the House moves expeditiously to pass a final version of the "Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2004," when it is scheduled for floor consideration tomorrow.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®,
Washington, DC, November 15, 2004.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER SMITH,
Chairman, House Veterans' Affairs Committee,
House of Representatives, Cannon House
Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: On behalf of the one million members of the National Association of Realtors®, I am writing to urge the immediate passage of S. 2486, the "Veterans' Benefits Improvements Act of 2004." This legislation passed the Senate under

unanimous consent in October, and similar legislation passed the House in June. S. 2486 includes language to increase the veterans' maximum guaranty from \$60,000 to \$83,425; effectively permitting veterans to purchase homes up to \$333,700. The legislation would also index the loan guarantee limit to 25% of the conforming loan limit. These changes are sorely needed to maintain the VA Home Loan Guarantee program as a vital homeownership tool that provides veterans with a centralized, affordable, and accessible method of purchasing homes in return for their service to our nation.

Under current law, the Department of Veterans Affairs will guarantee loans up to \$60,000 for a total home purchase price up to \$240,000. Because of this limitation the VA loan guarantee is not fully useful in a growing number of areas—especially in high-cost states. In states such as California, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts, the median price of housing in certain areas of these states far exceeds this limit. Due to the high price appreciation being experienced in many states, combined with a relatively slow pace of income growth, many veterans residing in high-cost housing markets have found homeownership unattainable. S. 2486 would address this anomaly and make this important entitlement available to many more qualified veterans regardless of where they chose to live.

The National Association of Realtors® thanks you, Chairman Smith, for your leadership in this area. With your help our veterans will receive the gratitude and assistance they well deserve. We strongly support S. 2486, and urge its quick passage.

Sincerely,

AL MANSELL,
2005 President.

HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE NORMANDY
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 2004

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 150th year of existence of the Normandy United Methodist Church of Normandy, Tennessee. The congregation will celebrate the church's 150th anniversary on Sunday, November 7, 2004, with a special homecoming and luncheon.

Changing its name from the Methodist Episcopal Church South to Normandy United Methodist Church in 1968 is only one way the church has changed in order to positively serve its members and its surrounding community. My parents, Robert and Margaret Gordon, were married at this church in 1947, and the church has fostered ongoing relationships with several others within the community and its congregation since its beginning.

Normandy United Methodist Church has served the community and its congregation for well over a century and a half. Just as the church has renovated and expanded its physical structure, so have they also renovated people's lives by expanding their ministry throughout the neighborhood and around the world.

Normandy is a better place because of the work of Normandy United Methodist Church and its congregation. I am sure the church will continue to make a positive difference in the