

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise before this body of Congress and this Nation to pay tribute to the inspiring life of Charles Richard Butler. He was a beloved family man who made a tremendous impact in the field of geology. The Durango community, and the State of Colorado will truly miss Charles, and my thoughts go out to his family during this difficult time of bereavement.

THE NECESSITY OF AN ENERGY BILL

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member commends to his colleagues the following editorial from February 6, 2004, Omaha World-Herald.

While the energy bill conference report is obviously not perfect—it contains excesses and too much parochial pork-barrel—the legislation would provide many important improvements over the current situation. Among its beneficial provisions, the measure is designed to improve the nation's electricity transmission capacity and reliability. It also supports alternative power sources and promotes a cleaner environment. As the editorial indicates, the conference report can be improved in certain ways while retaining its beneficial provisions.

It is imperative for Congress to pass a sensible long-term energy policy which will help assure Americans of development of diverse, reliable, affordable energy sources with an emphasis on energy conservation. After years of inaction, this Member believes that it is absolutely essential to enact comprehensive energy legislation. It is overdue.

[From the Omaha World-Herald, Feb. 6, 2004]

THAWING ENERGY POLICY

Signs of movement are appearing in Congress' deadlock over a comprehensive energy bill.

The \$31 billion bill passed the House but fell two votes shy of breaking a filibuster in the Senate last November. The bill was a mixed bag, containing needed electrical-grid improvements and tax breaks and incentives for alternative energy sources, including a doubling of the nation's ethanol production. But it also would have rolled back some air and water pollution standards and was bloated with more than \$11 billion in tax breaks and favors to gain votes.

Among the objectionable provisions was liability protection for makers of the gasoline additive MTBE. That would shift to state and local governments the estimated \$29 billion cost of cleaning groundwater contaminated by MTBE.

Pete Domenici, chairman of the Senate Energy Committee, said he'll drop that provision. Good. It's an outrageous provision, but killing it will need the agreement of the House, where it still has strong backing from Majority Leader Tom DeLay.

Also likely to be cut in negotiations is the bill's exorbitant cost—more than half of which was targeted to existing oil, gas, coal and nuclear power production.

The electric-grid and ethanol proposals, fortunately, appear likely to emerge in either a slimmed-down energy bill or as separate proposals.

But the energy bill had many other provisions aimed at making a start (a small one, but a start nonetheless) on setting a new

course for the nation's energy policies: tax breaks for alternative-fuel vehicles; tax credits for consumer-level energy-efficiency measures; tax credits for power plant investments in clean coal technology.

These are the important provisions for Congress to safeguard as compromises are sought to pass this vital legislation. (The fact that compromises are finally being openly discussed, after a Republican-only conference committee cooked up the current bill behind closed doors, is a victory all its own for political debate.)

The chance to plot such a course change for the nation's energy policy is an opportunity not to be missed. We're glad to see it's now open to reasonable compromise.

RECOGNIZING DAVID RYAN CLOUSE

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize David Ryan Clouse of Hopkinsville, KY, for his selection as a student delegate to represent Kentucky at the 42nd Annual United States Senate Youth Program. Ryan was one of two students chosen to participate from the State of Kentucky for this prestigious honor. Selection as a delegate is an honor few receive. Students are required to be involved in student organizations, community activities and achieve academically.

Ryan has excelled in academics. He has served as an officer and member in the various organizations in his school. He participated in the Governor's Cup Program. He has been a valuable member of his schools soccer team, basketball team and tennis team. Ryan has been involved in his church and community.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent David Ryan Clouse in my District. I extend my congratulations to him for his achievements, and I am proud to bring his accomplishments to the attention of this House.

TRIBUTE TO TOM O'KEEFE FOR 30 YEARS OF PROTECTING CALIFORNIANS FROM WILDFIRES

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute today to a dedicated public servant who for the past 30 years has devoted his life to protecting southern Californians from the danger of wildfires. I can say sincerely that many of my constituents owe their lives and homes to the hard work and leadership of Thomas O'Keefe, who is retiring as chief of the San Bernardino Unit of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Tom O'Keefe began his career in public service in 1968 as a member of the United States Coast Guard, where he served aboard the ice breaker Storis in Alaska.

After his 4 years in the Coast Guard, chief O'Keefe began his work for CDF on October 1, 1974 as a Fire Control Assistant in the Orange Ranger Unit. In 3 years, he was pro-

moted to a Fire Apparatus Engineer and was assigned to the El Cerrito Forest Fire Station (FFS) in the Riverside Ranger Unit. He moved up to Fire Captain in August of 1981 and was assigned to Indian Wells and later to a Training Fire Captain position in the Riverside Ranger Unit Headquarters.

In April of 1986, Tom O'Keefe became Battalion Chief in the Riverside Training Section and three years later was made a field Battalion Chief in San Jacinto. Moving up quickly in the ranks, he was named a Division Chief in 1989, in charge of the Staff Services Division and later headed the Emergency Services Division for Riverside County. In October 1996, he was promoted to Deputy Chief of the Riverside Ranger Unit and was finally named Chief of the San Bernardino Ranger Unit in July 1999.

Mr. Speaker, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection is our statewide firefighting agency, and Chief O'Keefe has played an active role in many historic events, ranging from the Los Angeles riots to the Northridge earthquake. The agency is also charged with forestry management and fire prevention, and I am most grateful for Chief O'Keefe's efforts to deal with the terrible tree dieoff in the San Bernardino mountains.

On October 21, 2003 wildfires erupted throughout southern California. These fires were some of the most costly and devastating wildfires in the State's history. Two of these fires were located in San Bernardino County, and the Old Fire in my district destroyed more than 1,000 homes. Chief O'Keefe led the CDF in playing a central role as firefighters evacuated tens of thousands of residents, saved thousands of structures and protected and held the fire back from destroying the entire forest. Chief O'Keefe had already been selected to receive the Director's Leadership Award, but the recognition was especially deserved in light of his leadership and professionalism in the fires of 2003.

Thanks greatly to the efforts of Chief O'Keefe and the CDF, most of our mountain residents were able to return home after the fires. They have expressed their gratitude in many ways, and I thank him personally as we wish him well on his retirement.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in saluting this public servant, and sending him and his wife Nancy our best wishes.

RECOGNIZING DEREK SCOTT KING FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Derek Scott King, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 167, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Derek has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the years Derek has been involved with scouting, he has earned 33 merit badges and is a Firebuilder in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say. Derek

has also attended the National Scout Jam-boree at Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia and the Junior Leader Training Conference at the Pony Express Council.

For his Eagle Scout project, Derek built a new sign for the Alta Vista Baptist Church.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Derek Scott King for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO FRUITA MONUMENT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise before you today to pay tribute to the students of Fruita Monument High School who recently devoted their time and efforts toward improving the lives of others. Last year, 25 students joined the Committee for a Merry Christmas For All to construct, collect and distribute Christmas toys to needy children in Colorado. Their actions serve as a valuable model of community service, and I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing their tremendous contributions to the State of Colorado before this body of Congress and this nation.

The Committee for a Merry Christmas For All was established 17 years ago. Since the committee's beginning, the Grand Junction Free Press reports that "Students have designed and constructed nearly 5,000 toys . . . and they've collected another nearly 6,000." This past year, under the tutelage of their teachers Ed Reid and Mel Crider, the students constructed and distributed a variety of toys. On the Saturday preceding Christmas, the students and their teachers met at Fruita Monument High School and distributed the collection of toys to children in need throughout the Grand Junction community. This is an amazing group of young citizens, and I am proud to highlight their amazing actions here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, it is a high honor to rise before this body of Congress to pay tribute to each member of the Committee for a Merry Christmas For All. I would also like to thank their teachers Ed and Mel, who have dedicated their time and efforts to make this service possible. These efforts have brightened the lives of thousands of needy children in Colorado, and the State will forever remain grateful. It is my honor to offer my deepest gratitude and appreciation to the Committee and School, and I thank them for their service.

HONORING JAMES HUFF

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, this month James Huff retires—again. A mentor, a confidant, a family friend, and a counselor since before I ran for Congress, Jim represents the best Mississippi has to offer and will be irreplaceable on my staff.

Jim and Marilyn Huff reared two children and proudly claim 5 grandchildren. For 32 years he worked at the Masonite Corporation in Laurel. As operations manager at Masonite, he was one of the leading businessmen in Jones County, where I grew up and first appreciated his wisdom, wit, and integrity.

President George H. W. Bush put Jim's knowledge and expertise to work, appointing him Mississippi's state director of the Farmers Home Administration. Excelling as administrator and leader, Jim was next asked by President Bush to come to Washington DC and serve as the national administrator of the Rural Electrification Administration.

Years later, Jim's political knowledge of Mississippi and Washington DC benefited my work both in my first campaign for Congress and then as I worked to serve the constituents of Mississippi's Third District. Few freshman Congressmen could boast of such unique experience on staff. His guidance was exceptional; his advice, outstanding.

Jim continues to be a servant in his community. He is a leader at the Hebron Baptist Church where his abilities as a Sunday school teacher and work as a deacon are well known and appreciated. Active in the Kiwanis Club, people in Jones County know they can come to Jim for advice and assistance during life's struggles.

The pages of Mississippi record a lifetime of public service and private engagement from Jim Huff. He will never fully retire. He may have more time now to work his cattle farm and relax at his favorite fishing hole, and more time to spend with his loving family.

When I think of Jim Huff, I think of honesty, service, humor, and experience. I thank him for his service to this office and to Mississippi. I join the rest of my staff in saying we will miss him, but I know I will see him often because he is more than a colleague and assistant. He is family and will remain near in my heart, constant in my thoughts, and always in my prayers.

HONORING RAHEEN TYSON HEIGHTER

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues an address that I delivered at the memorial service of Raheen Tyson Heighter, a fallen soldier from my district on November 11, 2003.

Raheen Tyson Heighter went to the Middle East willingly, sacrificed selflessly, and served proudly.

In the two and a quarter centuries of our nation's history, our country has faced seemingly insurmountable obstacles. But in generation after generation, Americans have risen to the occasion and met every challenge.

In the 18th century, our forefathers were able to beat back the greatest military superpower in the world to secure our independence. In the 19th century, Americans defeated the greatest injustice in the world—slavery. And in the 20th century, millions of patriots, in what has come to be known as America's greatest generation, defeated the greatest evil the world has ever known—the Nazis.

Raheen is part of a generation that faces a newer, but no less dangerous tyranny.

He is a child of Long Island. He went to this high school. In many ways, he is very much like the hundreds of thousands of other children in our community—with one remarkable exception.

Raheen was willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to secure the blessings of liberty for his countrymen, for our children, and for America's future.

By sacrificing himself for our way of life, Raheen, in the words of his mother, "died an American hero."

By fighting for a better world, Raheen, as the poet John Gillespie Magee, Jr. wrote, "slipped the surly bonds of earth" to "touch the face of God."

May his name be remembered throughout history, and may he serve as a source of strength and pride to American generations yet unborn.

HONORING PFC ARMANDO SORIANO

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my deepest sympathies to the family and friends of PFC Armando Soriano.

PFC Soriano was a constituent of the 29th District of Texas, and a true hero, who died on February 1, 2004, while serving his country in Haditha, Iraq.

Armando Soriano joined the Army 2 months after graduating from South Houston High School in 2002. Soriano was assigned to the howitzer battery, 3rd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, in Fort Carson, Colorado. His unit in Iraq was attached to the 82nd Airborne Division of Fort Bragg, North Carolina. His vehicle, traveling with another one on a supply route, slid off a road and rolled over during bad weather.

Armando Soriano leaves behind his two parents, Clotilde and Enrique, and 4 younger siblings.

I know his parents, family and friends are devastated by this loss, but they should be proud of the great man Armando Soriano had become and that he died a hero while serving his country.

His loss will be felt by all of South Houston, and I ask that you remember the Soriano family in your thoughts and prayers.

TRIBUTE TO DR. LAWRENCE T. GERATY PRESIDENT OF LA SI- ERRA UNIVERSITY

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Riverside, California are exceptional. Riverside has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Dr. Larry Geraty is one of these individuals. On Wednesday, February 25, 2004,