

CAMBRIA COUNTY'S 200TH
BIRTHDAY

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Cambria County, Pennsylvania, as it celebrates its 200th Birthday. Having adopted the ancient name for Wales, Cambria is a county rich with culture, beauty, and natural resources. This picturesque region was designated on March 26, 1804, as Cambria County, when parts of Huntingdon, Somerset and Bedford counties merged together.

In the last 200 years industrialization has dictated the progression of this land. The vast opportunities for employment in coal mining, iron production, and railroad construction throughout the nineteenth century attracted an eclectic group of workers. With origins primarily in Wales, Ireland, and Germany, the newly settled immigrants bore the cuts, bruises, fatigue and pain necessary to plant the seeds for a prosperous new county.

In 1825, coal mining became the largest industry in the region, not only illuminating countless homes, but contributing greatly to the bustling Pennsylvania steel industry. From the production of steel and iron came the construction of the Allegheny Portage Railroad, and only 20 years later, the invaluable Pennsylvania Railroad. Despite having to endure several natural catastrophes, including severe flooding and multiple mine disasters, the region continued to flourish and provide the necessary resources for this young nation so that it was able to grow.

For 200 years the citizens of Cambria County have remained loyal and committed to industry—the very roots upon which this community was founded. The rich history that has been told through the sweat and tears of Cambria's past inhabitants parallels the history of our Nation. As you immerse yourselves in this celebration of Cambria County's 200th Birthday, you are learning about the people and the events that formed the very foundation of the United States of America.

Today, the people of Cambria County have every reason to be proud of the progress that has been made. Your efforts have and will continue to benefit your children, the very heart of this celebration, who will guide this county and this nation into a successful future.

Happy Birthday Cambria County!

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, this Thursday, March 25th, the people of Greece will mark the 183rd anniversary of their independence from the Ottoman Empire.

The modern state of Greece was born from a protracted, bloody war against the Ottoman Empire between the years 1821 and 1832. The significance of the Greek War of Independence transcends the bounds of Greece and its history. It was the first major war of liberation after our own revolution, and it marked

the end of four centuries of often brutal rule by Istanbul. The struggle for Greek independence drew in Europe's great powers and inspired thousands of non-Greeks to join the cause, including Goethe, Schiller, Victor Hugo, Mary Shelley, Alfred de Musset and Lord Byron.

Today, more than one million of our fellow citizens trace their origins to this ruggedly beautiful land that gave birth to western civilization, and I am honored to join them in this celebration of Greek independence. As the brilliant Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote in the preface to *Hellas* in 1821, "We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts, have their root in Greece."

Twenty-four centuries after the construction of the Parthenon, the buildings that house all three branches of our government draw heavily on the architecture of ancient Greece. This is more than mere homage to the graceful beauty of ancient Greek buildings; it is an acknowledgment that our democracy, the core of American nationhood, is a gift to us from Greece. In 332 B.C. Aristotle said, "If liberty and equality, as is thought by some are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost." More than two thousands years later his words still inspire us to struggle to perfect our democracy here at home, as we work to foster it around the globe. We are deeply grateful for the support of Greece in the Global War on Terrorism and Greece's participation is enhanced by its status as the cradle of democracy.

Even while we fight together to end the scourge of international terrorism in a world that seems far more unpredictable and dangerous than it did 4 years ago, people around the world look forward to the celebration of another of Greece's gifts to humanity, the Olympic Games. At a time of some uncertainty for the Olympic Movement, I welcome the return of the Olympics to Athens for the first time since the inaugural games of the modern era in 1896. I am looking forward to a spectacular Games that will reconnect the modern Olympics with its roots in antiquity and recapture the world's imagination. As an honor to the Games and its hosts, I urge the British Government to commit, before the start of the Olympics, to return the Parthenon Marbles to the people of Greece. Returning the marbles would be a noble act, in keeping with the spirit of the *ekecheiria*, the Olympic Truce.

Greeks and Greek-Americans have another reason to celebrate this year. After three decades of division, Cyprus is poised on the brink of reunification, its accession to the European Union now only weeks away. Cypriots on both sides of the Green Line hope that the island's reunification can be finalized before Cyprus joins the EU on May 1. I recently joined 45 of my colleagues in asking Secretary of State Powell and U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan to make some modifications to the Annan plan for reunification. As drafted, there are some provisions of the Annan plan that could render it unworkable. The changes we proposed would improve the chances for Cypriot unity and peace, and I hope that they are incorporated in the final phases of the negotiations.

If a solution to Cyprus can be finalized it would reshape the eastern Mediterranean and could lead to an improvement in relations between Greece and Turkey. I am saddened by the tense relations between these two neigh-

bors, both of which are strong friends of the United States and vital members of NATO. To quote Aesop: "A crust eaten in peace is better than a banquet partaken in anxiety."

Since the Greek War of Independence, when Congress sent money and supplies to the Greeks in their struggle for freedom, common values, shared goals, and mutual respect have been the foundation of the friendship between Greece and the United States. Those ties endure to this day, and they have enriched both peoples.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great joy and admiration that I wish the people of Greece a happy Independence Day and continued freedom and prosperity.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CENTRAL SPRINGFIELD LITTLE LEAGUE

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Central Springfield Little League.

In 1954, a small group of fathers headed by Harry Wood, Vic Aldridge, Bill Abrams, Jim Owens, Kent Browning, Ray Ramsey, and Frank Ralston first introduced little league baseball to the boys of Springfield, Virginia. These fathers organized and equipped 60 boys to play in a nearby league in Annandale, Virginia.

The following year, franchised Little League granted Springfield its own league which gained tremendous popularity throughout what now is considered Springfield proper. As program popularity and area population rapidly increased, the program was divided into several leagues first in 1962, then in 1971, and again in 1972, creating the North Springfield Little League, the West Springfield Little League, and the Central Springfield Little League (CSLL).

Since 1972, the CSLL has made every effort to maximize baseball development, participation, and enjoyment in Central Springfield. CSLL improvements include measures such as offering baseball clinics, using pitching machines, and creating a T-Ball program to introduce baseball to five and six year old children. The CSLL has also successfully implemented an "Adopt-A-Field" program that allows them to perform all necessary maintenance and repairs on the fields provided to the CSLL by the Fairfax County Park Authority and Franconia Park.

Since 1975, with the lifting of the "boys only" policy by Little League, Baseball, Inc. girls have become an integral part of CSLL at all levels. Later in 1993 in conjunction with the West Springfield Little League, the CSLL first fielded a Challenger Team for children with physical and mental challenges, which since has grown to the largest in the world.

For the past 50 years, CSLL has provided an invaluable service to the Springfield community. Thanks to the support of countless individuals and businesses in the greater Springfield community, the CSLL has grown into a thriving baseball league, one of the best youth baseball programs in the area.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to congratulate the CSLL on 50 years of success. I

call upon my colleagues to join me in applauding the league's efforts on behalf of Springfield and in wishing the CSLL the best of luck in the many years to come.

TRIBUTE TO SANDRÉ R. SWANSON

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man who has set the bar for public service, working for over thirty years for the Congress of the United States, Sandré Swanson. On March 1, 2004, Sandré retired from congressional service. The 9th Congressional District salutes and thanks him for his three decades of tireless and spirited service.

Sandr  R. Swanson met Congressman Ronald V. Dellums, my predecessor, over thirty-three years ago. Ron, at that time, was a candidate for Congress, and Sandr  was the Student Body President at Laney College in Oakland, California. Their first meeting was at an Oakland peace march protesting the May 4, 1970 shooting of four Kent State University students. This shooting ignited a national student strike that was unprecedented in the history of our country. Ron and other Civil Rights leaders were leading the march while Sandr  was leading the Laney Student Body protest. Sandr , who was not acquainted with Ron at the time, was part of a group carrying a mock casket for the fallen students. He was so impressed by Ron's speech that day that he organized scores of students for the Dellums campaign.

In 1971, Sandr  was elected, via neighborhood balloting, as the East Oakland representative for the Oakland Anti-Poverty Board. He became one of the Board's most vocal Vice-Chairmen.

In 1972, Wilson Riles Jr., who was the Northern California Coordinator for the historic presidential campaign for Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, recruited Sandr  to run the campaign's Advance Team. That was when I first met Sandr . I also recommended to Congressman Dellums that he hire Sandr  as part of his congressional staff.

On May 1, 1973, when Sandr  was 24, Congressman Dellums asked Sandr  to join the district office staff. During his tenure for the Dellums office, Sandr  served as Aide, Staff Assistant, Press Secretary, and District Director.

In the fall of 1976, judge Lionel Wilson, another significant mentor, asked Congressman Dellums to borrow Sandr  to manage his campaign for mayor. With the assistance of Sandr  as his Campaign Manager, Judge Wilson became Oakland's first African-American Mayor on May 17, 1977.

On October 25, 1977, Mayor Wilson appointed Sandr  to the Oakland Civil Service Commission, where he served with distinction as Chairman and Commissioner for two terms. The Commission's employee and union appeals caseload doubled under Chairman Swanson's leadership.

In 1990, Congressman Dellums invited Nelson Mandela to Oakland, California following his release from a South African prison after twenty-seven years. A coalition of labor, community and church groups asked Congress-

man Dellums to grant Sandr  leave so that he could serve as the Northern California Coordinator for the Nelson Mandela Freedom Tour. Working with the legendary Bill Graham and hundreds of community organizations, Sandr  brought 60,000 people to the Oakland Coliseum in support of this celebration. To complete this historic event, he organized a fundraising dinner in Oakland for 3,000 people. The committee gave the Free South Africa movement the largest contribution of the tour.

In 1993, as a result of military base closures, Congressman Dellums asked Sandr  to spearhead the congressional district's military base conversion effort. Sandr  was the architect of the cross jurisdictional memberships on local reuse authorities in charge of military base conversion in Alameda County. He served as Vice-Chair of the Alameda Reuse and Redevelopment Authority and Commissioner on the Oakland Base Authority for five years.

In 1998, when I took office, I hired Sandr  as my District Director. On May 1, 1999, twenty-six years after I recommended that Congressman Dellums hire him, I appointed Sandr  as my own Chief of Staff. As my most trusted advisor, he managed my Washington and Oakland offices.

Sandr  has served on countless boards and commissions. He has been the Chair and is currently a trustee for the Alameda County Employees' Retirement Association (ACERA). ACERA manages benefits for its retirees and makes the investment decisions for a 3.5 billion dollar pension fund. Sandr  is also the Vice-Chair of the Alameda Golf Commission.

After such distinguished and prestigious service to his community, Sandr  retired from congressional service on March 1, 2004. I wish him continued success long into the future, and I also thank him for his outstanding contributions to this congressional district. I take great pride in joining Sandr 's wife, Anita, and his children, friends and colleagues to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments and contributions of Sandr  R. Swanson.

ORGAN DONATION AND RECOVERY IMPROVEMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 23, 2004

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3926, the Organ Donation and Recovery Improvement Act. I recently introduced this legislation, which reflects a bipartisan, bicameral agreement that was reached with the Senate late last year. I am urging all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this timely legislation.

Most of us are well aware of the great need for donated organs and tissue. According to the United Network for Organ Sharing, there are 84,138 people currently waiting for a transplant. Only 23,387 individuals had received a transplant between January and November of 2003. Additionally, 12,133 individuals had donated their organs within that same timeframe. Tragically, 6,187 individuals died in 2002 while on the waiting list.

It is our duty to do everything in our power to prevent these oftentimes needless deaths

from occurring. That's why H.R. 3926 is so important. This legislation targets federal dollars into areas that we feel will have a substantial impact in increasing organ donation rates in this country. For example, living donors represented over half of all donors in the first nine months of 2003. That is why H.R. 3926 authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants for the purpose of covering travel and subsistence expenses incurred by living organ donors. While the decision to become a living organ donor is an intensely personal one, I feel that it is our responsibility to remove any financial barriers that might prevent someone from making the "gift of life."

H.R. 3926 also provides the Secretary with \$15 million in new grant authority to assist state governments and public and nonprofit private entities in developing innovative initiatives designed to increase organ donation rates, including living donation. I am hopeful we will learn some valuable lessons from these demonstration projects that we will be able to apply on a national scale.

I also want to point out for my colleagues that this bill contains important evaluation mechanisms, so we can ensure that our targeted federal assistance makes a demonstrable impact on increasing organ and tissue donation rates. I think these provisions are critically important and will help us monitor the effectiveness of these new programs.

I would like to take a moment to note that section 4 of this legislation is modeled after the Floyd D. Spence Organ Coordination Improvement Act, which Congressman JOE WILSON introduced in the 107th Congress. I know he's worked very hard with Congressman JAY INSLEE in this area, and I'm pleased we were able to include this important provision in our broader bill.

H.R. 3926 is widely supported by the transplant community and takes a positive step forward in our effort to ensure that every American has access to a donated organ or tissue when they need it.

TRIBUTE TO MR. HARRY THOMAS

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 24, 2004

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say that one person can make a difference. One person in Seattle who made a big difference is—Mr. Harry Thomas—an unsung hero who has bettered the lives of thousands of people by advocating for safe and affordable housing.

Mr. Thomas is about to retire from the Seattle Housing Authority, and his career of distinguished public service is worthy of special note by the Congress.

Mr. Thomas served as executive director of the Seattle Housing Authority for 14 of the last 17 years. Under Thomas' leadership, the Authority won \$136 million in federal grants which leveraged a total investment of \$750 million to transform three World-War II era public housing developments—New Holly, Rainier Vista, and High Point—into vibrant new mixed-income communities.

Prior to his work with the Seattle Housing Authority, Harry served as Deputy County Executive for King County, and as the Executive