

At the same time, their forceful advocacy for adhering to the tenets of equal treatment under the law not only in the halls of academia, but also in every segment of our State government agencies has become legendary. In fact, countless others have been touched by their genuine commitment to public service, especially to minorities who could least fend for themselves.

The legislators forming the Miami Regional Issues Conference Committee truly exemplify a unique and responsive leadership whose courageous vision and wisdom appeal to the critical issues impacting our community and the entire State of Florida.

I would like to extend my personal invitation to all those interested in our State government to enable them to seize the opportunity to renew and enhance their commitment to our common well-being as we prepare to meet the many challenges of our times. I honor these distinguished colleagues and fellow public servants of mine.

REMEMBERING THE MAYOR OF
PONCE, PR, RAFAEL
"CHURUMBA" CORDERO
SANTIAGO

HON. ANÍBAL ACEVEDO-VILÁ

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 2004

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend the people of Puerto Rico have lost a great man. Rafael Cordero Santiago, mayor of the Municipality of Ponce for the last 16 years, unexpectedly passed away Saturday morning at the age of 61. "Churumba," as he was fondly known to everyone back home, was a pillar of strength in the Popular Democratic Party. He was an accomplished politician, a hardworking administrator, and a true and honest patriot. His unwavering commitment and dedication to his country, his party, and his beloved city of Ponce are testaments to his extraordinary character.

Born in Ponce in 1942, Cordero Santiago dedicated the majority of his life to public service. After obtaining a bachelor's degree in political science, economics, and social science from the Catholic University of Puerto Rico in Ponce, he began his public career in the Department of Commerce of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in 1964. From there, he moved on to serve as a special assistant to then-president of the Puerto Rican senate, Rafael Hernandez Colon, followed by terms as auxiliary Secretary of Domestic Commerce in the Department of Commerce of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and as administrator of the Right to Employment Administration. In 1988 he was elected mayor of Ponce, a position that he proudly occupied until his death.

His work in Ponce spanned almost 2 decades and is marked by great improvement and progress in the region, as evidenced by the city's economic and social growth. His most recent achievement was the approval of the Plan de Ordenación Territorial de Ponce, which gives the city ample funding for infrastructure projects, including the Port of the Americas. I worked closely with the mayor in support of Port of the Americas, which will bring a state-of-the-art transshipment facility to Ponce that will provide for lasting job growth

and economic development. Upon completion, the Port of the Americas will become the leading port in the Caribbean.

He is survived by his wife, Madeleine Velasco, and his twin daughters, Solange Marie and Mara Bianca. His years of hard work and dedication to his family, his country, and his city will live on in his unforgettable legacy. Please join me in honoring this exemplary Puerto Rican's life and supporting his family in their time of sorrow.

HONORING JEAN SCHULZ

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 2004

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Jean Schulz, who is stepping down as the National Board President of Canine Companions for Independence after 15 years of dedicated service.

Jean Schulz has been committed to developing and enhancing the services that CCI provides, and with her leadership, CCI places twice as many dogs with people with disabilities as they did when she took over as president. The Jean and Charles Schulz Campus, which serves as the National Headquarters and Northwest Regional Center of Canine Companions for Independence, was built due to the efforts of Ms. Schulz and her late husband, Charles M. Schulz, creator of the Peanuts comic strip.

In 1997, Jean and Charles M. Schulz were instrumental in creating the Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center designed to preserve and educate people about Charles M. Schulz, the Peanuts comic strip and its characters. Ms. Schulz remains an active member on the board of directors of the museum.

Dedicated to various environmental, educational and human service organizations over the years, the Schulzes donated \$5 million to Sonoma State University to build the Jean and Charles Schulz Information Center that houses a state-of-the-art library, computer labs and an art gallery. This facility has become a hub of student activity.

Ms. Schulz's combination of leadership and commitment to her community has earned her many awards and honors. She received a Key to the City from the Santa Rosa City Council, was the recipient of a Leadership Award from the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce and received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the Sonoma State University.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Jean Schulz for her many contributions to Canine Companions for Independence and the entire community.

CONGRATULATING KATHY
CLONINGER, NEW CHIEF EXECU-
TIVE OFFICER FOR THE GIRL
SCOUTS OF AMERICA

HON. JIM COOPER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 2004

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege today of honoring Kathy Cloninger, the

new Chief Executive Officer for the Girl Scouts of America.

Ms. Cloninger is a native of Nashville, Tennessee in my district. She has been a long-time advocate for the Girl Scouts and has an accomplished history in not-for-profit leadership. Before her recent appointment to the post of CEO, Ms. Cloninger served as the head of the Girl Scout Council of Cumberland Valley in Nashville. During her tenure there, Girl Scout membership in our region rose to more than 25,000 girls—an increase of nearly 40 percent. She was also responsible for creating an outreach program that tripled the number of African American Girl Scouts, increased the participation of Hispanic girls, and brought more than 1,000 girls in public housing into the program.

In Nashville, Ms. Cloninger also helped to found the Association of Non-Profit Executives and has served on the boards of numerous organizations, including the Center for Non-Profit Management, Leadership Nashville, and the United Way of Metropolitan Nashville. She has also held top-level positions at the Kellogg Foundation and the YWCA.

With more than 3.7 million current members, the Girl Scouts have been a cherished American institution for the past 90 years. The qualities of leadership, values and social conscience that the Girl Scouts instill in their members have served as guideposts for many generations of girls and young women, including in my own family. I am proud to say that my wife, Martha, and my daughter, Mary, have been Girl Scouts members and continue to be supporters of this fine organization.

I have every confidence that Ms. Cloninger will continue her excellent leadership of the Girl Scouts on the national level. In our present times, it is now more important than ever to maintain organizations and programs that provide positive leadership and encouragement for our nation's young people. In light of her proven record and her devotion to the ideals of the Girl Scouts, I have no doubt that Kathy Cloninger will prove to be an excellent role model and leader to guide our young girls into the 21st century.

On behalf of the people of the fifth district of Tennessee and your hometown, Nashville, I am proud to extend to Ms. Cloninger my warmest wishes and congratulations.

INDIA'S REPUBLIC DAY, JANUARY
26, 2004

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 27, 2004

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to one of the most important dates on the calendar for the people of India, as well as for the people of Indian descent who have settled in the United States and around the world. January 26th is Republic Day, an occasion that inspires pride and patriotism for the people of India.

On January 26, 1950, India became a Republic, devoted to the principles of democracy and secularism. At that time, Dr. Rajendra Prasad was elected as the nation's first president. Since then, despite the challenges of sustaining economic development and promoting tolerance and cooperation amongst its

many ethnic, religious and linguistic communities, India has stuck to the path of free and fair elections, a multi-party political system and the orderly transfer of power from one government to its successor.

On that special day in 1950, India adopted its Constitution. It should be noted that India derived key aspects of her Constitution, particularly its statement of Fundamental Rights, from our own Bill Of Rights. On the eve of Republic Day several years ago, India's President K.R. Narayanan stated in his address to the nation: "Let us remember, it is under the flexible and spacious provisions of our Constitution, that democracy has flourished during the last fifty years and that India has achieved an unprecedented unity and cohesion as a nation and made remarkable progress in the social and economic fields."

India and the United States both proclaimed their independence from British colonial rule. The Indian independence movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi had strong moral support from American intellectuals, political leaders and journalists. Just last week-end, we paid tribute to one of our greatest American leaders, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King derived many of his ideas of non-violent resistance to injustice from the teachings and the actions of Mahatma Gandhi.

As the world's two largest democracies, the United States and India have a natural relationship, based on their shared values of diversity, democracy and prosperity. These two countries have steadily grown closer for the past ten years, and most recently, the United States' campaign to fight global terrorism has brought the two countries even closer.

Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001 India was one of the first countries to come forward to the United States with an offer of full assistance and cooperation in this new global fight against terrorism. India has sadly been afflicted with terrorism from Pakistani-based terrorist groups throughout the last 15 years, and since September 11th, there have been terrorist attacks against India on a near daily basis. It is only natural that these two countries are united in the global fight against terrorism, as well as on many other fronts.

Lastly, I want to note that throughout the South Asian region, India stands alone as a pillar of democracy, stability and growth. I join both Indians in India and over 1.8 million Indians living here in the United States in celebrating India's Republic Day.