

Today, the economics of tourism is just as important to Grand Ledge as it was over 125 years ago. An estimated \$1 million is generated annually for the community from events held at the Island Park, such as the Color Cruise & Island Festival, the Island Art Fair, and the Mudge's Follies variety show.

The Island Restoration Project began in earnest when the city received a Clean Michigan Initiative grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in 2001. Of the \$666,000 needed for the project, the state provided \$455,000 and Grand Ledge contributed \$211,000, including \$90,000 from community donations. The vast restoration, erosion control, and landscaping was done during the spring, summer, and fall of 2003. The work included adding pathways, new grass, new trees, decorative iron benches and lampposts, electrical and water conduits, gazebo restoration, and a viewing area with benches. The completed project is a culmination of five years of meticulous community planning, fantastic grant writing, creative fund raising, and extensive cooperation.

Grand Ledge Island Restoration Project Steering Committee members included Graydon Briggs, Karla Chamberlain, Rich Cissel, Steve Graszler, Susan Sasse, Tim Sattler, Kalmin Smith, Mike Stevens, Pete Stoughton, Mary Suurmeyer, Warren Wells, Cathy Wilhm, Don Willems, and Kay Wyszynski. These are extremely civic-minded individuals who also serve as members of the City Council, the Planning Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Development Authority, and the Historical Society. City Administrator Jon Bayless and Parks and Recreation Commission Chairman Marv Hummel handled the day-to-day details and kept the project on track.

On behalf of the United States Congress, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to extend our highest praise and congratulations to the community of Grand Ledge, Michigan for restoring the Island Park for all to enjoy.

TRIBUTE TO DEPUTY MARSHAL DEVANIE AND DEPUTY SHERIFF SMITH

HON. RODNEY ALEXANDER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, last week this Congress recognized the contributions and sacrifices made by law enforcement officers and we honored the fallen heroes during National Police Week. I rise today to remember two law enforcement officers from my district in Louisiana whose lives were lost in the line of duty in 2003.

The men and women of our police forces are the defenders of our families, our homes and our communities, and swear an oath to protect and serve so that we may live in peace and safety. Last week, law enforcement officers gathered with the families of officers killed in the line of duty to honor the commitment of our nation's police forces and to remember those they have lost.

Deputy Marshal Glen Devanie was responding to a call for backup from the Alexandria City Marshal's Office and was killed in an automobile accident. Deputy Sheriff Randy Smith was shot and killed while trying to apprehend a parish jail escapee in Mamou, Louisiana. The names of Deputy Marshal Devanie and Deputy Sheriff Smith were unveiled to their families and colleagues at the Candlelight Vigil at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. We will never adequately express our gratitude, and our sympathies, to the sacrifice of these two officers.

I wish to extend to the families of Deputy Marshal Devanie and Deputy Sheriff Smith my sympathies for their loss and the recognition of these two men as true heroes. I express to the men and women in law enforcement our profound gratitude, for their exhibitions of bravery and the sacrifices they are called to make. As these noble men and women sacrifice for a pledge to protect and to serve, it is our duty to honor them, past, present and future, to the highest degree.

HONORING THE LIFE OF PAULINE GONZALEZ

HON. RUBÉN HINOJOSA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor to stand before you to pay tribute to Pauline Gonzalez, a dedicated public servant, a loving wife and mother, and a role model for all. Pauline Gonzalez of Edinburg passed away on Monday, April 26, after a long illness. She will be remembered for her dedication to her family, her commitment to public service, and her passion for politics. She will be deeply missed by her family, friends, and colleagues.

Mrs. Gonzalez was born in Edinburg, Texas on March 16, 1927, to Francisco and Paula Garza. She was orphaned at a young age and was reared by her maternal grandmother, Gregoria Perez, her aunt, Segunda Perez, and her eldest sister, Hermencia. Her experiences as a young girl instilled the importance of family in her, and her commitment to those she loved never faltered.

In 1948, Mrs. Gonzalez married Jose Noe Gonzalez Sr. and together they had three children: Jose Noe Jr., Lucy, and Martha. Along with her dedication to family, Mrs. Gonzalez was a firm believer in the value of a good education. She attended Edinburg public schools, graduated from Edinburg High School, and despite the odds against her, pursued higher education at Edinburg Junior College. She instilled in her children the importance of education and it paid off. Her three children followed her example. Martha Salazar is Hidalgo County's purchasing agent, Lucy Canales is an Edinburg-based attorney, and Noe Gonzalez Jr. is a successful businessman.

Pauline began her career in 1945 as a deputy clerk for the Hidalgo County District Clerk's office. In 1960, after fifteen years of service, she left her position to devote more time to her family. She was very active with her church and many civic organizations, including

the Hospital Auxiliary, the Hidalgo County Historical Museum and the Freddy Gonzalez American Legion Post 408 Auxiliary.

In 1982, once her children were enrolled in college, she returned to the world of work and politics. Mrs. Gonzalez ran for and was elected District Clerk of Hidalgo County. Her victory made her one of the first women elected to office in the county. She broke through the barrier of a male dominated political world, but in her own special way. Her trademark high heels and lipstick were the perfect symbol for a woman whose elegance was not overshadowed by her ability to get things done. Her willingness to listen, her honesty and sincerity, and her commitment to her constituents to instill a confidence in their public officials, and she was solidly elected year after year. Mrs. Gonzalez's work ethic earned her the respect of her colleagues and the admiration of the people she dutifully served. She epitomized what every public servant should strive to be—accessible and willing to go the extra mile.

Above everything, it was Pauline's near perfect balance of determination and graciousness that made her a beloved member of her community. She was a dear friend, a lovely lady, and a devoted public servant who will be greatly missed by all. May she rest in peace.

COMPETITIVENESS AGENDA

HON. RICK RENZI

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mr. RENZI. Mr. Speaker, last week Republicans kicked off an eight-week Competitiveness Agenda by bringing legislation to the floor that addressed staggering health care costs faced by American businesses. This week, we voted to streamline the government compliance process and increase competitiveness in today's worldwide economy. By eliminating unnecessary government regulation, we took action, helping business owners across the nation to reduce countless hours and resources sacrificed to comply with unnecessary red tape.

Mr. Speaker, small businesses disproportionately bear the burden of government regulation costs. The U.S. Small Business Association estimates that in 2000, small businesses with 20 or fewer employees faced an annual regulatory burden of approximately \$6,975 per employee. That is almost two thirds more than the \$4,463 estimated for large firms. We also know that these small businesses are the Number One jobs creators in the United States accounting for 60 to 80 percent of new jobs. In other words, nearly 8 out of 10 jobs created in this economy come from the very business owners being strangled by regulation costs.

Common-sense regulatory reforms will help reduce costs to American businesses, allowing them to compete in the global market and bring careers to those bright Americans seeking them. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for voting to eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic red tape.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. CON.
RES. 995, CONCURRENT RESOLU-
TION ON THE BUDGET FOR FIS-
CAL YEAR 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 19, 2004

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to revise and extend my remarks.

I rise in opposition to the Republican Budget Resolution conference report. For the first time since the Congressional Budget Act was enacted, the Republicans are bringing only a 1-year budget resolution to the floor. This 1-year conference agreement provides no plan to reduce the deficit and no commitment to provide critical resources for defense, homeland security, education, veterans, and other priorities in future years.

The budget agreement cuts funding for key priorities to help fund another round of Republican tax cuts totaling \$55.2 billion. After 3 years of the Bush administration's fiscal policies, we are facing a \$363 billion deficit in 2005, and that is before any new tax cuts or other policies the President is proposing. Republicans have managed to turn a projected \$5.6 trillion surplus into a projected \$3 trillion deficit.

This budget also fails to protect Social Security. The conference agreement not only fails to attempt to restore the budget surpluses to begin to protect the Social Security trust fund, but it also spends every penny of the \$1 trillion Social Security surplus over the next 5 years.

If that's not enough, the Republican budget shortchanges education and health programs. It provides \$81 billion for education and training programs, which is \$2.9 billion less than the Senate budget. The conference agreement provides \$8.8 billion less for education than was promised in the No Child Left Behind Act. It represents the smallest increase in education spending in 9 years, cutting \$1.4 billion in critical education programs, including those that improve family literacy, and provide school counselors to elementary school children.

It fails to provide any new money to help the 43 million Americans who are without health

insurance. There are over 12 million Hispanic Americans without health insurance and millions more who can barely pay their premiums, yet Republicans do nothing to hold costs down.

The budget cuts spending for mandatory health programs by \$905 million over 5 years. Medicaid constitutes over 90 percent of the dollars for these programs, so it is likely that disabled Americans, children and the elderly would bear the brunt of these spending cuts, if enacted. The budget also does nothing to hold down prescription drug costs. This administration and the Republican Party are failing the 2 million Hispanic seniors and all seniors on Medicare.

The budget cuts and underfunds critical housing programs. At this funding level, approximately 250,000 low-income families with children, senior citizens, and people with disabilities could lose their Section 8 vouchers.

The Republican budget leaves our veterans behind. The conference agreement provides only \$31 billion for appropriated veterans programs for 2005, which is \$1.3 billion less than the Veterans Affairs Committee, on a bipartisan basis, stated is needed for these vital veterans' health care programs. It shortchanges veterans' health care, raising health care costs for 1 million veterans. It makes it harder for veterans to get their disability, education, pension, housing, and employment benefits by eliminating critically needed staff that process claims for veterans' benefits. The Republicans talk about patriotism, yet how quickly they forget about the men and women who are coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan, and the over 1 million Hispanic veterans.

The conference report before us is a failure of our fiscal and moral responsibility. We should reject this conference report and ask the conferees to go back to the drawing board.

I yield back the balance of my time.

TRIBUTE TO DENA SCHECHTER

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, Mr. WAXMAN and I rise today to pay tribute to Dena

Schechter, a good friend and wonderful person. Dena is being honored by the University of Judaism (UJ) at its annual dinner on May 20, 2004, for her leadership in Jewish education and her many outstanding contributions to worthy causes.

The UJ is one of the leading institutions of higher education in our community. It maintains a proud tradition of academic excellence and a progressive viewpoint. Dena shares the University's intellectual and spiritual vision—maintaining Judaism's traditional beliefs and values in a way that is relevant to our increasingly complex and modern world.

In 1947, Dena's grandparents helped found the University. In the late 1950s, her grandparents endowed the University's first public lecture series. Throughout the years, Dena has continued her family's dedication and support for the UJ, serving on the Board of Directors and for the last five years as Chair. Under Dena's leadership the UJ's College of Arts and Science, the Ziegler School of Business and the Fingerhut School of Education have seen tremendous growth and development. Dena has helped underwrite an innovative community service component to the UJ's undergraduate curriculum. In addition, she helped establish the Sid Levine Service Learning Program—a feature in UJ's College of Arts and Sciences that emphasizes the critical nature of community service.

To know Dena is to be greatly blessed. She is the sister of our good friend and former colleague, Mel Levine and we feel extremely fortunate to know her personally. We are inspired by her belief that "participation in the community is not something you choose but something you are obligated to do." In addition to her contributions to the UJ, she actively works on behalf of the Federation Family and Jewish Family Services.

A native of Los Angeles and a graduate of UCLA with a degree in Philosophy, Dena successfully balances family, a career in business and a strong commitment to community service. She is married to Irving Schechter and is the mother of four.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, we ask you to join us in saluting Dena Schechter and congratulating her upon receiving this richly deserved honor.