

local wage areas within the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Schedules and rates are developed for each wage area based upon a survey conducted by DoD. OPM regulation however provides that a separate schedule shall be issued for Guam with rates identical to those used for prevailing rate employees in foreign areas. Regulation also provides that the rates for foreign areas shall be an average of all wage area rates set by OPM for the United States. Under these circumstances, the prevailing rate employees in Guam are treated no differently in terms of their pay rates than if they were working in a foreign area (outside the United States). This is a matter of concern to me which I am seeking to address with the introduction of this legislation.

Guam's unique economic conditions, given its geographical isolation and the fact that it is a high cost of living area, have placed the hard working prevailing rate employees in Guam at an unfair disadvantage when compared to those that are employed in an OPM-defined local wage area. Hawaii, Alaska, and Puerto Rico, unlike Guam, are each currently defined to be their own separate wage areas and benefit from wage schedules that take into account their economic situation and cost of living environment. Guam should be treated no differently and have a wage schedule that reflects the cost of living and the level of pay for government-wage-grade-equivalent jobs in the private sector.

Therefore I have introduced this bill to provide equitable treatment for Guam, not by directing OPM to establish a separate wage area for Guam but by simply applying the same rates used for the State of Hawaii, which sustains a similar island economy with most comparable trades and blue-collar workforces.

It is generally understood that the reason Guam has been issued a separate schedule each year by regulation and has not been defined as a separate wage area, is that the number of comparable positions in Guam's private industry may be insufficient under the current standards to warrant its own wage survey and designation as a separate wage area. In passing the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002, Congress required DoD, when establishing wage schedules and rates for prevailing rate employees, to consider rates paid for comparable positions in private industry in the nearest wage area that is most similar to the wage area for which wage rates are being established when there are insufficient positions in the local industry upon which to establish wage schedules and rates (Sec. 1113 of P.L. 107-107). The legislation I am introducing today is consistent with this intent.

This bill would greatly enhance the economic viability of the prevailing rate employees in Guam, is in the public interest, and is, in my opinion, in conformance with the goal of the Federal Wage System. This is a sensible policy proposal that would ensure regional equity in wage rates. I look forward to working with OPM, DoD, the House Committee on Government Reform, and the House Committee on Armed Services, in addressing the concern over the current inequity and treatment of Guam under the Federal Wage System that this bill seeks to correct.

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 775

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, many of our immigration laws are no longer consistent with our national security and other vital interests.

The diversity visa or visa lottery system is one such example. The visa lottery was established by the Immigration Act of 1990 to offer the opportunity of immigration to individuals in countries that had been sending few immigrants to the United States.

Usually, immigrant visas are issued to foreign nationals that have an existing connection with a family member lawfully residing in the United States or with a U.S. employer. These types of relationships help ensure that immigrants entering the country have a stake in continuing America's success, and have the advanced skills necessary to contribute to the nation's economy. However, under the visa lottery program, visas are awarded to immigrants at random with no such safety precautions.

I have heard from immigrants who have legally come to the country, and they believe the visa lottery program is unfair to immigrants who comply with the United States' immigration laws. Also, the visa lottery program does not prohibit illegal aliens from applying to receive a visa through the program.

The program has many flaws. A recent report released by the Center for Immigration Studies shows that it is commonplace for foreign nationals to apply for the lottery program multiple times using different aliases and false personal information.

I support Congressman Goodlatte's bill, H.R. 775, The Security and Fairness Enhancement for America Act, which would terminate the visa lottery. This piece of legislation is an important and positive step in immigration reform and it is my hope that the House considers it in the near future.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE GIRLS SOFTBALL TEAM OF ALEXANDRIA HIGH SCHOOL

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Girls Softball Team of Alexandria High School in Calhoun County, Alabama. On May 15, 2004, these young ladies won the 4-A Girls Softball State Championship.

Congratulations to Amy Brown, Whitney Burt, Stevie Smith, Hollie Henderson, Allie Barker, Anna Pitts, Lindy Baird, Whitney Hurst, Haley Henderson, Hali Lash, Jordan Brown and Alyssa Brown. Thanks to Coaches Brian Hess and Toni Duncan for their leadership and the support of Manager Sara Borders and Bookkeeper Donya Barker.

I know that Calhoun County, Alabama, and the entire Third District share with me their best wishes for this accomplishment. Only through hard work, dedication and a team ef-

fort could this be achieved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

COMMEMORATING THE 63RD ANNI- VERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF CRETE

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Ms. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the 63rd anniversary of the Battle of Crete. Last year, I introduced H. Res. 244 which recognizes and appreciates the historical significance of the people of Crete during World War II.

This is a historic event with direct significance to the Allies' victory of World War II. On May 20, 1941, thousands of German paratroopers and gliders began landing on Crete. Both the Allies and Nazis wanted Crete because of its strategic location. At that time the British controlled the island. It was a very strong point on the lifeline to India and protected both Palestine and Egypt.

The Nazi invasion force included the elite German paratroopers and glider troops. Hitler felt this was to be an easy victory, yet he is quoted to have said shortly after the invasion, "France fell in 8 days. Why is Crete free?"

The invasion of Crete took 11 days. It resulted in more than 6,000 German troops listed as killed, wounded or missing in action. The losses to the elite 7th parachute division were felt so hard by the German Military it signified the end of large-scale airborne operations.

This valiant fight by the Cretan people began in the first hour of the Nazi airborne invasion, in contrast to the European underground movements that took a year or more after being invaded to activate.

Young boys, old men and women displayed breathtaking bravery in defending their Crete. German soldiers never got used to Cretan women fighting them. They would tear the dress from the shoulders of suspected women to find bruises from the recoil of the rifle. The penalty was death.

The Times (London) July 28, 1941, reported that "five hundred Cretan women have been deported to Germany for taking part in the defense of their native island."

Another surprise for the German soldiers who invaded Crete was the heroic resistance of the clergy. A priest leading his parishioners into battle was not what the Germans anticipated. At Paleochora, Father Stylianos Frantzeskis, hearing of the German airborne invasion, rushed to his church, sounded the bell, took his rifle and marched his volunteers toward Maleme to write history.

This struggle became an example for all Europe to follow in defying German occupation and aggression.

The price paid by the Cretans for their valiant resistance to Nazi forces was high. Thousands of civilians died from random executions, starvation, and imprisonment. Entire communities were burned and destroyed by the Germans as a reprisal for the Cretan resistance movement. Yet this resistance lasted for four years.

The battle of Crete was to change the final outcome of World War II. The Battle of Crete

significantly contributed in delaying Hitler's plan to invade Russia. The invasion was delayed from April to June of 1941. The 2-month delay in the invasion made Hitler's forces face the Russian winter.

The Russian snowstorms and the sub zero temperatures eventually stalled the Nazi invasion before they could take Moscow or Leningrad. This was the beginning of the downfall of the Nazi reign of terror.

This significant battle and the heroic drive of the Cretan people must always be remembered and honored.

Democracy came from Greece and the Cretan heroes exemplified the courage it takes to preserve it.

Today, the courage and fortitude of the Cretan people is seen in the members of the United Cretan Associations of New York which is located in Astoria, Queens.

I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring the Cretans in the United States, Greece, and the diaspora.

INTRODUCTION OF HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS BILL

HON. MAX SANDLIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, if we knew that there was going to be a terrorist attack sometime in the next 5 years but did not know what kind of attack it would be, who would carry it out, or where in the United States it would occur, what actions would we take to prepare and how would we allocate our human and financial resources to do so?

The tragic events of September 11, 2001 brought home to the American people the magnitude of the danger posed by terrorism on U.S. soil. Now, almost 3 years later, we as Americans must assume that terrorists will strike again, possibly using chemical, biological, radiological or even nuclear materials. The unthinkable has become thinkable.

After the horrific September 11th terrorist attacks, the country pulled together and we began to take steps to make our homeland more secure. We enacted legislation to overhaul our airport security; we provided new border security measures; we created the Department of Homeland Security.

And yet, despite the steps that have been made, many believe that our Nation is in even more danger today than it was 3 years ago. In fact, Administration officials recently announced that they expect another terrorist attack here in the United States before November. They have resigned themselves to the inevitability of more terrorist attacks and are warning us—the American public—to be prepared.

Despite our awareness of the very real threat of terrorism here at home and despite renewed efforts to prepare since September 11, we remain, as a country, dangerously ill-prepared to handle another catastrophic attack on American soil.

That is simply unacceptable.

Much more needs to be done to make Americans safer and more secure than they are today. Securing our homeland must be the number-one priority of our Government. Indeed, our Nation's very charter—the Constitu-

tion—in its preamble states clearly that among the first priorities of Government is to provide for the common defense. Improving the safety of the American people at home must be undertaken as aggressively as pursuing terrorists in far-off lands.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce an appropriations measure that will provide the resources needed to secure our hometowns and ensure our police, fire fighters and paramedics—the Nation's first responders—are fully prepared for anything they may face.

Unfortunately, our efforts have too often been—as we say in Texas—a day late and a dollar short. In this case, however, the \$3 billion shortfall contemplated by the budget passed yesterday is dangerous and unconscionable.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce an appropriations measure that would meet these critical needs and would—

Improve Our Hometown Response Capabilities by providing: \$3.874 billion for the Office for Domestic Preparedness; \$180 million for Emergency Management Performance Grants; \$800 million for Fire Grants; \$60 million for Metropolitan Medical Response System grants; \$515 million for Hospital Preparedness Grants (in HHS); \$940 million in Bioterrorism Aid to Health Departments (in HHS); and \$250 million in Rail and Transit Security Grants.

Secure Our Borders and Meet Airport Security Mandates by providing: \$700 million for Federal Air Marshals; \$650 million for explosive detection systems purchase and installation; \$100 million for air cargo screening; \$250 million for port security grants; \$161 million for the Container Security Initiative; \$400 million on border and port inspection and surveillance technology, including radiation portal monitors in U.S. ports; \$50 million for radiation portal monitors at overseas ports (in DOE); \$100 million more for border patrol and inspector staffing; \$96 million for the northern border airwing expansion; and \$50 million more for bus, trucking and port pilot grants.

Mr. Speaker, we have nothing less than a moral obligation to ensure that our nation is fully prepared and vigorously defended. We have troops deployed around the world fighting the war on terror, but we cannot forget our frontline defenders here at home.

I urge my colleagues in this, the People's House, to act now to provide our police; officers, our firefighters, our paramedics and all other emergency personnel the equipment and support they need to protect our hometowns. I hope the House will take up this carefully drafted piece of legislation soon and provide our Nation the security we need.

PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITIES FROM WILDFIRE

HON. JIM MATHESON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, given current drought forecasts and the condition of Utah's forests, this year's fire season is expected to be very difficult and expensive. Today, I am introducing legislation, along with my colleagues Congressman DICKS and Congresswoman HOOLEY, to provide \$500 million in

Emergency Supplemental funding for the Forest Service and the Department of Interior to maintain our nation's wildland firefighting efforts this year.

We all know how devastating it would be if the Forest Service and Department of Interior were to stop fighting fires because of a lack of funding. Without passage of this legislation, it is likely that these agencies will quickly deplete the funds that Congress designated for this fire season. When this funding runs out, the Forest Service will be forced to choose between cutting back its firefighting efforts or taking funding away from other essential forestry programs. As a result of funding concerns, the Forest Service and the Department of Interior have employed almost 3,000 fewer firefighters this season than they did at the same time last year. The legislation I am introducing today would provide the additional funding that is needed to employ more firefighters and protect our communities from the devastating effects of wildfires.

The passage of this bill is critical to protecting the health of forests and communities in my home state of Utah. We've seen too much devastation and damage in recent years due to the extreme drought conditions in the West. I am committed to the passage of this legislation as an important step toward protecting Utah's communities from the devastating effects of forest fires.

COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN v. BOARD OF EDUCATION

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2004

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, a landmark Supreme Court case that gave rise to Linda Brown's dream of equality in education in this country, a dream deferred that has become for many a broken promise.

The 1954 Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision marked a turning point in our history and incited a movement to break down barriers of race that had long plagued communities across the nation. It helped pave the road toward integral measures such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Voting Rights Act of 1965 and Fair Housing Act of 1968 and began the movement for desegregation. Chief Justice Earl Warren felt the ruling was so historic he issued a rare public statement: "We conclude that in the field of public education, the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place." In declaring segregation unconstitutional, the Supreme Court mandated a focus on equality not only in education, but also in public transportation, accommodations and commerce.

The Brown v. Board of Education decision demanded that all Americans be entitled to the fundamental right to equal educational opportunities, regardless of race, and the resources to achieve their dreams. But by the time Martin Luther King, Jr. addressed America from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in 1963, nearly ten years later, that promise remained unfulfilled. And half a century later, with the convulsing explosions of the Civil Rights Movement behind us, the future assured to