

Boeing missile defense programs including its work on PAC-3, SLAMRAAM, Avenger, and advanced systems initiatives. Furthermore, he was instrumental in creating the missile defense market area within the company and aligning it with the Missile Defense Agency to ensure a seamless working relationship on the programs critical to national security.

In addition to his Boeing responsibilities, Jim is a member of the Air Force Association's Science and Technology Committee and the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

Mr. Speaker, Jim has been an integral part of our national security for many years. His experience, dedication, and knowledge will be greatly missed. On behalf of everyone in north Alabama, I rise to thank him for his service and join his colleagues, family, and friends in congratulating him on a job well done.

TRIBUTE TO HILDA GAY LEGG

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2005

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of the true diamonds working inside the rough and tumble granite rock of the Federal Government that will be leaving her post on January 31, 2005. The gem I'm referring to is Adair County, Kentucky, native and USDA Rural Utilities Service Administrator, Hilda Gay Legg.

I had the privilege of working closely with Hilda prior to her appointment to RUS. She served as executive director and CEO of the Center for Rural Development in Somerset, Kentucky, from 1994 until October 2001. Hilda provided true leadership by turning an upstart conference site into a world class community-oriented interactive center. In that position, she helped develop and implement a broadband telecommunications program in rural communities throughout southern and eastern Kentucky. The Center grew to manage 40 Internet centers that offer high speed, interactive video conferencing and community access to computers. Thanks to the solid foundation built by Hilda, those activities continue today.

In 2001, President George W. Bush tapped Hilda as the 15th person, and first woman, to serve as the Administrator of the Rural Electrification Administration—Rural Utilities Service. Shortly thereafter, Congress passed the landmark 2002 Farm Bill which in turn launched a number of new RUS initiatives including a broadband loan and grant program, energy efficiency grants, weather radio grants, and local television guarantees. Hilda took these new responsibilities in stride, leading the agency with professionalism and accomplishing much of our agenda.

While Administrator, Hilda approved some 5,570 loans and grants totaling nearly \$20 billion. These funds will improve water quality in communities throughout America, provide access to top-level treatment in our rural health clinics, and give our schools Internet access to the world. Under her faithful and deliberate watch RUS programs increased by nearly 60 percent while loan delinquency was a mere .1 percent. Hilda's leadership also improved loan processing efficiency, set in motion an intense

review of risk management, and accomplished much toward President Bush's goals in the areas of efficient and effective management, broadband deployment, energy independence, and job creation in rural America.

Hilda has never ceased to serve as an advocate for rural America and she has done so with remarkable class, spunk, and spirit. As her legacy still remains at the Center for Rural Development, I am confident it will also remain at RUS and in communities throughout the nation that have been touched by her efforts.

Mr. Speaker, although the Federal Government is losing out with Hilda's retirement, I can selfishly say I am thrilled that this precious gem is coming home to Kentucky.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HEROES ACT

HON. TERRY EVERETT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2005

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to join with 18 of my colleagues, including the entire congressional delegation of Alabama, in introducing legislation aimed at honoring the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform by greatly enhancing military combat death benefits. My legislation is also needed to ensure that military families are properly compensated in the event of the loss of a loved one in combat.

The nearly 170,000 American military personnel in harm's way in Afghanistan and Iraq are there to defend our nation's freedom and security. Their service is vital to the long term protection of our land and they must know that their government and fellow citizens are fully behind their efforts. I believe one of the best ways to demonstrate this support for our military is to provide them with the peace of mind that if they should lose their lives in combat their families will receive adequate death benefits.

The need to improve military combat death benefits is not new to Congress. In 2003 and 2004, enhancements were made to these benefits as part of the annual Defense Authorization bills. For example, the military combat death benefit was increased from \$6,000 to \$12,000 and Congress directed the Pentagon to study the feasibility of increasing Servicemen's Group Life Insurance maximum coverage to \$350,000 with the military covering the first \$100,000 of insurance for service members who purchase the maximum benefit. However, that's simply not generous enough.

I do not believe these benefits adequately compensate military families, nor do they send a strong enough message to our military personnel that their government will honor their sacrifice by providing proper benefits in the event of their death in combat.

My bill, known as the Honoring Every Requirement of Exemplary Service (HEROES) Act, would increase the military gratuity death benefit from the present \$12,000 to \$100,000. Furthermore, it would also increase the Servicemen's Group Life Insurance maximum coverage from the current \$250,000 to \$400,000 with the first \$150,000 in coverage guaranteed by the Department of Defense once a soldier is deployed into combat.

What's more, the HEROES Act would make retroactive payments of \$238,000 to the fami-

lies of those military personnel who've already lost their lives in combat in Afghanistan and Iraq. This amount is equal to the \$88,000 increase in the death gratuity payment as well as the \$150,000 insurance coverage benefit boost. These enhanced benefits would apply to military personnel losing their lives in combat as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

In closing, I would urge quick adoption of this measure in order to give our military personnel and their families greater comfort as they are called upon to defend America.

THE NATIONAL FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION—PROVIDING PRAISEWORTHY SERVICE TO THOSE IN NEED

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2005

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the National Funeral Directors Association for their relief efforts in light of the recent tsunami tragedy in South Asia. Following President Bush's plea for monetary donations to assist the humanitarian effort, they established the Funeral Service Asian Relief Fund, which directs the funds to one or more charitable organizations assisting in the relief effort.

The National Funeral Directors Association has long been involved in volunteering their time and resources to aid in domestic disasters, such as the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack and the Oklahoma City bombing. However, it is clear that their care and concern for humanity goes beyond our American borders as well.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the efforts of the National Funeral Directors Association, including a member in my East-Central Indiana district, to aid the international relief efforts assisting the victims of the South Asia tragedy. I sincerely hope that Americans, and men and women throughout the world, will look to this as an example of care and compassion for mankind.

TRIBUTE TO MR. PETER VAN DER VELDE

HON. BILL PASCHELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2005

Mr. PASCHELL. Mr. Speaker, Mr. ROTHMAN and I would like to call to your attention the work of an outstanding public servant, Mr. Peter Van Der Velde, Captain with the Hawthorne Police Department, who was recognized on Friday, January 21, 2005 for his lifelong dedication to public safety. It is only fitting that he be honored in this, the permanent record of the greatest freely elected body on earth, for he has a long history of leadership, creativity, and commitment to his noble profession.

Mr. Peter Van Der Velde was born on August 23, 1947 in Paterson, New Jersey. He eventually moved from Paterson to the nearby Borough of Ramsey, New Jersey where he finished his formal education. After he graduated, Peter decided to serve in the United

States Army and subsequently spent two years stationed in Vietnam. Upon the completion of his tour of duty, he returned home and quickly became an employee of the Passaic County Sheriff's Department.

Captain Peter Van Der Velde has served with the Hawthorne Police Department for 30 years. During his long tenure with the department he has steadily climbed the ranks from Patrolman to Captain and completed countless assignments. Peter began his career with the Hawthorne Police Department in April of 1974 and by December of 1986 he was awarded the title of Sergeant. He then received a promotion to the rank of Lieutenant, before being named Captain.

On October 6, 1993 Peter was appointed to the rank of Captain and immediately he began tackling the Borough's most challenging projects. As Captain he was in command of both the Uniformed Patrol as well as the Auxiliary Police but Peter insisted on expanding his duties. True to his nature Peter assumed as many additional responsibilities as possible including the posts of Traffic Safety Officer and Emergency Management Coordinator.

Captain Van Der Velde exudes courage and dedication. Over the years Peter has been confronted by a wide array of obstacles and in each instance he has proven his resiliency. As President of PBA Local 200 he truly showed his concern for his fellow brethren as well as for the families of those police officers.

The talents that have made Van Der Velde a successful Police Captain were echoed in all the areas of his community service. His multiple roles in the Ramsey Rescue Squad, Ramsey Fire Department, North Haledon Fire Department and the Hawthorne Ambulance Corps have enabled Peter to develop into the inspiring leader he is today.

The job of a United States Congressman involves so much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to learning about and recognizing the efforts of individuals like Captain Peter Van Der Velde.

Mr. Speaker, we ask that you join our colleagues as well as Peter's family and friends, in recognizing the outstanding and invaluable service of Captain Peter Van Der Velde.

COMMENDING COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS FOR MARKING 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF LIBERATION OF AUSCHWITZ

SPEECH OF

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 25, 2005

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I solemnly rise today to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the first and largest Nazi concentration camp stumbled across by Allied troops as they fought back Nazi Germany.

Today, the twin camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau are silent, yet full of the ghosts of horrors of boundless slaughter, torture and sadistic human experimentation. We lost over one million souls at Auschwitz alone. Over 5 million more innocent people with names, families and lives were murdered at several other Nazi concentration camps.

On January 27, 1945, Allied troops marched by the ashes of those killed at Auschwitz, and

freed the few remaining survivors. Tattooed with a number on their left forearm, and inconceivable torment in their minds and bodies, the survivors walked under the Auschwitz gate adorned with the words "Arbeit Macht Frei" or "Work Makes Freedom" as emancipated men and women.

The survivors miraculously got on with their lives, although the pain of their memories did not diminish. Many have become successful doctors, teachers, writers and entrepreneurs. Others served valiantly in defending the state of Israel against hatemongers with similar intentions as the Nazis. Many others settled in New York's Eight Congressional District, which I proudly represent, and added immensely to New York City's soul and wealth of character. Theirs is a remarkable story of the human spirit.

It is an appalling realization that 60 years after the Holocaust, the Jewish people are still persecuted, anti-Semitism remains prevalent in many parts of the world, and genocide occurs and is often ignored.

As we commemorate this 60th anniversary, we face the terrible reality that anti-Semitism did not die in Auschwitz. Many of those who survived the holocaust are now reliving the unspeakable horror of anti-Semitic hatred for the sole reason of their religion and identity.

Moreover, sixty years later, we continue to turn our backs on the victims of hatred and genocide. We failed to appropriately respond to devastation and death in Rwanda, and now we repeat our desertion of innocent women and children in Sudan.

Let us honor the memories of those who died in Auschwitz and the Holocaust and the lives of those who survived it, by combating anti-Semitism, hate and bigotry today, tomorrow, and always.

Let us never forget.

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL CAPTIONING INSTITUTE'S QUARTER-CENTURY OF ACHIEVEMENT IN CLOSED CAPTIONING AND RELATED MEDIA ACCESS TECHNOLOGIES

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2005

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, as the co-chair of the Congressional Public Broadcasting Caucus, I am introducing a bipartisan resolution to recognize the achievements of the National Captioning Institute, NCI, in providing closed-captioning services and other media access technologies to Americans who are disabled by hearing loss and/or vision loss, or who are limited by their inability to read or master English as a second language. Given that communication delivery systems such as television and, more recently, the Internet, play an absolutely essential role in American society, this resolution salutes NCI's quarter-century of progressive development in bringing media-access technologies to the American people.

The National Captioning Institute was founded in 1979 as a nonprofit corporation with the mission of ensuring that deaf and hard-of-hearing people have access to television through the technology of closed captioning. Prior to this time, captioned television was of-

fered on an extremely limited basis, and the captions were "open," resembling subtitles, an obtrusive system roundly rejected by broadcasters and audiences alike. NCI pioneered the closed-caption technology in which captions could be accessed through special decoder units. This revolutionary solution made it possible for both hearing and hearing-impaired audiences to enjoy television programming at the same time, and made the goal of accessible television a reality. NCI pioneered the way for the first, nationally broadcast closed captioned television programs 25 years ago—an event so momentous that it was announced from the Rose Garden of the White House and made international headlines.

It is estimated that more than 100 million Americans benefit from captioned programming. These audiences include 28 million people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing; children and adults learning to read; and those learning English as a second language. Hearing and nonhearing audiences are most likely to use closed captioning in their homes, although the system is embedded throughout today's society in public spaces such as bars, gyms and airports. As part of NCI's commitment to providing media access to everyone, NCI is making great advances in the development and application of described video technology, a service that provides an audio description of the visual elements of video programming for people who are blind or have low vision, which is an audience of more than 14 million people.

The span of NCI's perseverance and dedication extends far beyond technology for our televisions. NCI established the Nation's only free consumer help desk for communications access issues where citizens may pose questions on topics such as the availability of captioned programming, how to resolve problems with displaying captions, accessibility of closed captions with digital cable and high definition television, and the availability of closed captions in Spanish and on DVDs and home videos.

In addition to its technologic achievements, NCI recently took the lead on auditing how the entire captioning industry is performing. It commissioned the field's first study to evaluate the quality, availability, and use of the Nation's use of captioning services in order to improve performance throughout the entire captioning industry.

In light of all of the above achievements, I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this resolution and demonstrate our support for the National Captioning Institute's dedication to improving media access to millions of our fellow Americans.

CLARKRANGE HIGH SCHOOL WINS SECOND NATIONAL TITLE

HON. LINCOLN DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 26, 2005

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the Clarkrange High School Chess Team for winning the 2004 National K-12 Grade Championships Chess Tournament. This marks the second national title for the Clarkrange High School Chess team in the past 5 years, winning the 2000 title in Charlotte.