

gallon. Do the math. Oil is not infinite, but our capacity to subsidize the waste of oil seems boundless. The Administration's energy policy is like a hamster spinning in his wheel—lots of activity, no progress. According to the Administration's own Energy Information Administration, passage of the Energy Act will result in our dependence on foreign oil soaring from less than 65 percent today to 80 percent in 2025.

The public understands that. In a recent Zogby poll, Americans soundly rejected the link between drilling in the wildlife refuge and energy independence. Only one in six respondents agreed that more domestic oil drilling is the way to reduce our foreign oil dependence. More than two-thirds believe the United States should promote increased fuel economy and alternative energies instead of drilling. Americans have also made it clear to Congress that they disagree with attempts to make an end run around the legislative process by cramming the fate of the Arctic Refuge into the 2005 Budget resolution. The people of America recently expressed their disapproval of this "backdoor maneuver" by a margin of 59 to 25 percent.

Even the oil companies have publicly announced that they are shifting their focus away from the Arctic Refuge and toward fields in other parts of the North Slope of Alaska; so should Congress. BP, ConocoPhillips and ChevronTexaco have all quietly walked away from this political drilling frenzy, suggesting that there are higher priorities for the oil industry than drilling in this refuge. Is it possible that oil companies know something that the politicians do not?

If we allow this Congress to turn the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge into an industrial footprint, the impact on the land and the wildlife would be permanent and the hoped-for energy benefit only temporary. Let us join the American people in saying, unequivocally, that there are places that are so rare, so special, so unique that we simply will not drill there as long as alternatives exist.

We have an opportunity to preserve the Arctic Refuge as the magnificent wilderness the way God made it. It is arrogant and immoral to sacrifice this ecological gem when we have better ways to meet our energy needs, and no other place with such environmental significance on Earth. We do not dam Yosemite Valley for hydropower. We do not strip-mine Yellowstone for coal. And we should not drill for oil and gas in the Arctic Refuge.

CARIBBEAN NATIONAL FOREST ACT OF 2005

HON. LUIS FORTUÑO

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Mr. FORTUÑO. Mr. Speaker, during these cold Washington winter days, when the temperature hovers near freezing and another snow emergency is called, I wanted to take this opportunity to remind my Colleagues of my Puerto Rico. I hope that my Colleagues will think of the lush tropical island with warm sun, the inviting white beaches and the aqua blue waters. That is my Puerto Rico but my home is much, much more than that.

While for many, their thoughts of Puerto Rico end at the beaches, the fact is that the

Island is a diverse landscape with vibrant communities, impressive mountains and a tropical rainforest that is home to hundreds of species of plants, trees and vertebrates. It is that part of my homeland that I would like to bring to my Colleagues attention today.

The Caribbean National Forest, the only tropical rainforest in the U.S. Forest System, is a historic and natural treasure to both Puerto Rico and our Nation. The Spanish Crown proclaimed much of the current CNF as a forest reserve in 1824. Recently the CNF celebrated its 100th anniversary, commemorating the date when President Theodore Roosevelt reasserted the protection of the CNF by designating the area as a forest reserve.

Located 25 miles east of San Juan, the forest is a biologically rich. The CNF ranks number one among all national forests in the number of species of native trees with 240. In addition, the CNF has a wide variety of orchids and over 150 species of ferns. There are over 100 species of vertebrates in the forest. Of particular note is the endangered Puerto Rican parrot. At the time that Columbus set sails for the New World, there were approximately one million of these distinctive parrots, today there are under 100.

The CNF is integral to the lives of hundreds of thousands of Puerto Ricans. It is a major source of water to the island. The CNF receives over 10 feet of rain each year. As a result, the major watersheds in the CNF are able to provide water to over 800,000 residents. In addition, the CNF provides a variety of recreational opportunities to the nearly 1,000,000 Puerto Ricans and tourists each year. Families, friends and school groups come to the forest to hike, bird watch, picnic, swim and enjoy the scenic vistas.

A resource this special needs to be protected for current and future generations. For this reason, I am introducing today my first legislation as a Member of Congress, "The Caribbean National Forest Act of 2005." My legislation builds upon earlier proposals introduced in the House and the Senate. These proposals, endorsed by the Bush Administration, The Wilderness Society and the National Hispanic Environmental Council, would protect approximately 10,000 acres of the most crucial portions of the CNF as the El Toro Wilderness. My bill would insure that this crucial watershed, this diverse and vibrant ecosystem, and a major recreational destination in Puerto Rico will remain available for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, soon after I was elected to office by the people of Puerto Rico. I visited the CNF and met with Forest Supervisor Pablo Cruz. During my visit, I recalled the many times that I have visited the CNF with my family and friends. I want this special place to be there for our future generations. My legislation, the Caribbean National Forest Act of 2005, will make that goal a reality.

THE EDUCATION, ACHIEVEMENT AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, this week marks the 31st Anniversary of National

Catholic Schools Week, a week in which Catholics spotlight the important mission of providing quality education and strong character building of the 7,955 Catholic Schools across the country.

In conjunction with this important recognition as well as National Catholic Schools Appreciation Day, I have introduced legislation designed to ensure that the federal government appropriately assists parents with the financial burdens associated with their children's education at a public or private school. My legislation, the Education, Achievement and Opportunity Act will provide refundable tuition tax credits for the educational expenses incurred by parents of children enrolled in elementary and secondary school. The legislation offers parents of elementary school children up to \$2,500 in tax relief, while parents of a child in high school could claim up to \$3,500 in assistance.

Parents who choose to send their children to a Catholic school, or any private school, already pay twice for their child's education: once through their taxes and a second time for the tuition. These out-of-pocket expenses can certainly add up for some families and may pose an enormous obstacle to others. Sadly, many parents struggle—and some may have to forgo a Catholic School education—or any religious based school education—for financial reasons.

Recognizing the unique and enriching educational value that Catholic schools provide, I feel it is important that every parent have the option to send their children to such a school if they wish. It is important to note that not only parents of children in the Catholic School system will benefit from this legislation. The tax relief contained in my proposal can be utilized by parents of children in private and public schools to pay for a variety of educational expenses. Most significantly, the tax credits are designed to help parents with the cost of tuition. However, the tax credits can be used to help meet the costs of other educational needs: (1) computers, educational software, and books required for course of instruction; (2) academic tutoring; (3) special needs services for qualifying children with disabilities (4) fees for transportation services to and from a private school, if the transportation is provided by the school and the school charges a fee for the transportation; and (5) academic testing services.

The Education, Achievement and Opportunity Act proposes a tax credit, not a voucher, so the total amount of educational resources available for all school age children will increase. Under a voucher system, if a school loses enrolled students to a competing school, that school may lose the funding along with the student. Under my plan, that negative outcome is avoided.

There are over 59 million youngsters in elementary and secondary schools across the U.S. today—about 10 percent of these students are enrolled in private, parochial and rabbinical schools. If the public education system had to suddenly absorb all of these students, they would be financially unable to do so. Therefore, the public schools benefit from the existence of the private schools as well.

As every child is unique, so are their educational needs. It is important to support our nation's public school systems which are critical in providing educational opportunities for all. At the same time, it is important to support

those parents who have a desire to provide a secure academic education for their children but in a faith oriented setting.

It is my belief that the tuition tax credit should be available to all, no matter what their race, color or national origin. And make no mistake: the public school system will and must continue to remain the backbone of our nation's education system. However, we must never forget that the public school system was created to serve students—not the other way around. If a student is performing poorly in a school for one reason or another, parents should have the opportunity to move their child to what may be a better setting. And the federal government should help—not stand in the way.

To truly make good on our promise that “No Child is Left Behind,” ensuring that Catholic Schools are included in this national promise brings us closer to achieving this important goal. A child is a child, regardless of which school system they are enrolled. The children enrolled in Catholic, private and rabbinical schools deserve nothing less than our full support.

I urge my colleagues to support the Education, Achievement and Opportunity Act.

TRIBUTE TO MR. EDWARD
MALCOLM CHAPMAN

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to mourn the death and celebrate the life of Mr. Edward Malcolm Chapman.

Edward Malcolm Chapman was born in Greenwich, Connecticut to Malcolm and Jessie Chapman on December 14, 1942.

While growing up in Greenwich, Ed attended the Greenwich school system. He was a member of the high school choir, played in the band where he was the first student to go Allstate in their freshman year. He attended Bethel A.M.E. Church where he sang in the choir. He graduated from Westchester Business School and graduated with a degree in Business and attended music school in Stamford, Connecticut.

Eddie entered the work force at a young age. He held several positions in the work force from the technological end to the consultive; Bunker Ramo; Perkin Elmer; and Digital Equipment Corporation. He spent the last nine years of his career at Drake Beam Morin, “DBM” becoming a very present part of the lives of many displaced individuals, consulting and encouraging them to be ever faithful in their present journey.

In keeping a rhythm with all life's great gifts, Ed was able to hit the golf course before photographing his five grandchildren, in the middle of preparing egg rolls in the wok to the melodious sounds of Stan Getz, all while hearing, listening, and understanding the problems of others.

He openly received the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ into his life in 1997 while attending Full Harvest International Church under Bishop Clarence E. McClendon. He was baptized in the summer of 2002, and excitedly proclaimed the Word of God with every opportunity. It is Ed's fondest wish that we continue to convey the Gospel throughout the world.

He is survived by his wife, Pamela Chapman; his parents, Malcolm and Jessie Chapman; his children, Darlene, Kimberly, Darrin, and Jamal; his brother, Arnold; his sisters, Deborah and Diane; his five grandchildren, Olivia, Austin, Karl, Lauryn, and Xavier; and a host of family and friends.

Ed's giving and loving spirit lives on through all who survive him and his presence though never forgotten will often be missed.

CONGRATULATIONS TO JOHN
KNAPP

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer congratulations to John Knapp on his retirement from the city of Roseville.

Occasionally, we hear of people who are described as “fixtures of their communities.” John Knapp is a good example of what is meant by this term. For all the years that I have had the pleasure of serving in Congress, John Knapp has been serving the people of Roseville, Michigan. Since I began representing the city of Roseville a few years ago, John Knapp and the city of Roseville have always seemed to be a perfect match—they both epitomize the best in the definition of “community.”

John Knapp has held the position of City Manager in Roseville since April 11, 2000. He came to Roseville in 1984, where he held the position of City Controller for over 15 years. Thereafter, John served as Interim City Manager, in addition to his duties as City Controller, from December 31, 1999, until his formal appointment in April, 2000. John's life of public service began long before this in the Wayne County Treasurer's Office, where he served for over 22 years.

During John's years as City Manager of Roseville, he oversaw the completion of the building addition to the Roseville Police and Court Building. He was also instrumental in the development of Veteran's Memorial Park.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding John Knapp for his years of effective service to the city of Roseville and for his tireless commitment to the well-being of its citizens. My best wishes to John with whom I have been privileged to develop a personal friendship, and to his wife of 40 years, Karen, for a healthy and happy retirement.

THE SHUTTLE WILL FLY

HON. TOM DELAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the victims of the space shuttle *Columbia* disaster, and also to honor the survivors here on the ground, who have worked without interruption for two years to see that the legacy of those seven explorers lives on.

Against a striking blue sky that Saturday morning, the shuttle burst like a star, and our friends, our astronauts—who, as President Bush said, faced their dangers willingly because they knew they had a “high and noble purpose in life”—were gone.

That day our Nation mourned their loss and gave thanks that such men and women lived.

And that day, our space program, brought low by tragedy, began a new ascent in the hard, hard work of discovery.

Because no organization works with higher stakes, no organization has ever had to be as good as NASA at recovering from mistakes and adapting to new and more dangerous challenges.

That is why, as we remember the *Columbia* seven, those of us still inspired by America's mission in space joined our sorrow with hope when we heard the news that the shuttle could soon return to flight.

NASA's “Return to Flight Task Force” reported this week that the space shuttle *Discovery* could be cleared to fly again as early as this summer.

This news is not only great, Mr. Speaker, but noble.

The legacy of the *Columbia* seven was a legacy of exploration and discovery not despite the risks, but, in a way, because of the risks—because knowledge has no price.

Every astronaut who has ever suited up for NASA is driven by the same spirit that drew early man out of his cave and into the light.

We crossed an ocean, then a continent, and walked the surface of the moon, not in search of profit but knowledge.

America's mission in space is nothing less than the answering of ancient questions, on behalf of all the nations and all people who have ever stared into the night sky and wondered.

Intrepid, wise, and good, the *Columbia* seven—sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, parents and friends—left us that day two years ago, but their souls echo still in the brave and brilliant they left behind at NASA.

The shuttle will fly, Mr. Speaker, and the *Columbia* seven wouldn't have it any other way.

So today, we remember, we mourn, and we hope, confident as Americans always are, that those who died in a quest to conquer ignorance can never die in vain.