

anniversary of his humanitarian work in Tibet. Since 1995, Dr. Lieberman, an ophthalmologist and clinical professor at University of California at San Francisco, has traveled back and forth from Tibet as the founder of the non-profit, non-governmental organization called Tibet Vision Project.

Dr. Lieberman was truly inspired after meeting His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 1990 and discussing the high occurrence of preventable blindness plaguing the people of Tibet. Due to the high altitudes of Tibet and the harmful UV radiation that permeates the "roof of the world," cataracts progressively erode the sight of many Tibetans.

Tibet Vision Project's primary goals are twofold. First, the Project seeks to provide state-of-the-art eye treatment to a population suffering from cataract blindness. Second, Tibet Vision Project aims to assist Tibetans in developing their own medical resources to eliminate cataract blindness throughout Tibet by the year 2020.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Lieberman spends almost two months in Tibet each year, traveling by Land Cruisers to remote and underserved rural areas, an eye camp comprised of 6–8 Tibetan nurses and technicians, and an entire mobile hospital unit complete with microscopes, lens implants, sutures and medicines, provides free eye care to everyone who visits. During the first three out of five days of eye camp, 250 to 400 patients—who travel by yak or on foot—are evaluated. Eyeglasses are disbursed as appropriate and children receive corrective lenses. As many as 150 patients are provided free, sight-restoring lens implant surgery—all performed by Tibetan surgical teams.

Along with the 2000 people whose vision has been restored by the Tibet Vision Project, 20 Tibetan surgeons provide great hope to the people of Tibet. Dr. Lieberman and his colleague Dr. Melvyn Bert work with an extension of the Tibet Vision Project at the School for Blind Children in Lhasa, Tibet, supervising medical and referral needs to ensure the well-being of the children.

In conjunction with the Swiss Red Cross, Tibet Red Cross and Tilganga Eye Centre of Kathmandu, Nepal, Dr. Lieberman gains greater access to remote underserved populations in Tibet, meanwhile creating infrastructure for long term solutions to eye problems in Tibet.

Mr. Speaker, in the next ten years, Tibet Vision Project aspires to help Tibetans become completely self-sufficient in eye care, providing competent and compassionate care to their own people. Dr. Lieberman and his crew are developing pilot projects for primary eye care such as accessibility to reading glasses, treating simple eye infections, and referring cataract cases to larger towns for surgery.

Originally from Baltimore, Maryland, Dr. Lieberman was trained at Johns Hopkins University before coming to the West Coast. While in the United States, he divides his time treating glaucoma in his offices in San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Cruz. He is currently considering spending more time in Tibet, expanding his visits from two to four a year.

Despite the struggle to work with a budget of \$50,000 a year and the obstacles of setting up remote eye camps, on rough terrain with poor roads, and dealing with the Chinese medical system, Lieberman and his teams continue their much needed work. Dr.

Lieberman's visits to Tibet are nothing of miraculous. I admire his incredible, indefatigable work and his leadership in organizing so many others to help him on this quest. I am delighted that Tibet Vision Project has been so successful in its tireless work to help the people of Tibet.

I would like to recognize Dr. Lieberman with some words from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which summarizes the recognized need and gratitude for Dr. Lieberman, his colleagues, and his trainees' efforts.

"In Tibetan Buddhist culture numerous positive references equate clear sight with wisdom and knowledge and obstructions to it with ignorance and negativity. The quest for the clear-sightedness of wisdom is priced on par with developing the kind heart of compassion. But these largely concern cultivating the mind.

By voluntarily training Tibetan doctors and nurses in modern eye care he and his colleagues have contributed to restoring the sight of thousands of the rural poor in Tibet. What a great act of kindness!"

Mr. Speaker, it is my belief that Dr. Lieberman's generosity stems from his faith and practice of Judaism and Buddhism. In the spirit of gratitude and continued support for his humanitarian work, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Marc Lieberman in the tenth year of Tibet Vision Project.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC-CENTRAL AMERICA-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. LINCOLN DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 27, 2005

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I am a Conservative Democrat representing a rural area of Tennessee, and I rise today in opposition to the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement.

Mr. Speaker, I will support any trade agreement that results in American job growth and allows our manufacturers and farmers to export their products to new, fair, and competitive markets in other countries. In fact, I have supported previous trade agreements with Chile, Singapore, Australia, and Morocco. But my constituents and I are fearful of this particular agreement.

Our fear is that the only export we will see in this country because of CAFTA is American jobs. This fear is based on our real life experience with a similar agreement that sounds much like this one. That agreement, of course, was NAFTA. My congressional district has been devastated by the loss of jobs since NAFTA's passage.

You know, I've been told a lot of different things by a lot of different folks about why I should support this agreement. One argument was that supporting CAFTA is the Christian thing to do. Well, I am a devout Christian, and I for one do not think exploiting cheap labor for corporate profits is particularly Christian. So, I have a message for corporate America: the real Christian thing for you to do is provide wages to your new Central American employees that are equivalent to wages of the employees in my district who will lose their jobs

as a result of this Central American Free Trade Agreement.

I strongly urge all my colleagues who truly care about the American working man and woman to reject this trade agreement, and let's work on creating new jobs in this country instead of outsourcing the ones we currently have.

INTRODUCTION OF THE NORTH MAUI COASTAL PRESERVATION ACT OF 2005

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the proposed North Maui Coastal Preservation Act of 2005, a bill directing the National Park Service to assess the feasibility of designating certain coastal lands on the north shore of the Island of Maui between the towns of Pa'ia and Sprecklesville as a unit of the National Park Service. This area is fully worthy of designation as a National Seashore, National Historic Park, or National Recreation Area.

Since assuming office as the representative for Hawaii's Second Congressional District, I have heard loud and clear from the people of Maui, in person during countless times on the island and through petitions and postcards from some 2,000 constituents, about their deep concern for preserving this beautiful, historically significant and resources-rich coastline. Although the 128 acres identified in the bill are currently zoned as open space or parkland, they lie directly in the path of development in Maui's hot real estate market.

The desire of the people of Maui is to have the natural, scenic, and cultural resources of this unique area preserved and protected from development, and ultimately designated as the Patsy Takemoto Mink North Shore Heritage Park. As many of my colleagues know, my predecessor in this body, the late Congresswoman Patsy T. Mink, was born and grew up in Hamakua Poko, a small village near Pa'ia on just this coastline. If the Park Service finds that the area merits inclusion in the National Park System, I will introduce legislation authorizing establishment of a park and directing that it be named after Congresswoman Mink.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of the Maui Sierra Club and especially of Lance Holter, a dedicated community activist, for inspiring the introduction of this bill. I can tell by the hundreds of cards I continue to receive from Maui residents in support of establishing such a park that there are many more people who have dedicated enormous energy and time in the hopes of preserving our precious natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill, and invite you to come to the Island of Maui to visit this special area. I know that if you do so, you will be convinced as I am of the vital importance of protecting these lands.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS SUBCOMMITTEE ON SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit my testimony on Select Revenue Measures before the Committee on Ways and Means for the RECORD:

Thank you Chairman Camp and Ranking Member McNulty for holding this important hearing. I would like to bring to your attention a proposal I introduced last Congress, H.R. 3655, the Progressive Tax Act of 2003, which will have a positive impact on millions of taxpayers.

I think it is fair to say that all Members of Congress believe we need to strive for a fair, simple, and adequate tax system. We may disagree on how this has been accomplished, but we have the same goals.

However, I think we can agree on the need for transparency. Transparency in the tax system is necessary to achieve fairness. Transparency permits the taxpayer to understand how fairness is arrived in the tax code. A simplified tax code can provide this transparency, which in turn provides a sense of trust in the government.

This committee should enact my proposal to create a \$2000 Simplified Family Credit, a refundable tax credit that simplifies the tax code by consolidating the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Child Tax Credit, Additional Child Credit, and dependent exemption for children into one streamlined Simplified Family Credit. This tax credit will simplify the tax code, provide greater transparency, provide extra work incentives, and provide a stimulus effect.

Families should not have to struggle to understand the eligibility requirements for each of the various family tax breaks in current law. All families should follow the same set of rules.

The Simplified Family Credit is structured to provide progressive tax benefits and a work incentive. The families with lower income will get more benefit, but they are also rewarded for work. The credit would be steeply phased in at the lowest income levels providing the incentive to work and a substantial benefit. As income rises a slow phase out would be necessary to ensure we maintain a progressive tax system.

The cost of this proposal would fall in the range of \$20 billion a year. Given our current deficit problems, I believe that Congress should only create the Simplified Family Tax Credit if it is paid for. In my legislation H.R. 3655, there are several options to pay for this proposal including rolling back parts of the tax cuts enacted in the last 5 years. Those tax cuts only added to the complexity of the tax code and removed any remaining transparency.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify today.

CHALLENGES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, with the world watching, Israel announced on April 18,

2004 its disengagement plan to withdraw Israeli settlers from the Gaza Strip and four West Bank settlements. Intended to improve security for Israeli citizens, Israel's disengagement plan also creates a possibility for greater Middle East peace.

Beginning in 1948, hostile nations have denied Israel's right to exist. Today, violence from terrorist organizations not only threatens stability in the region but the sovereignty of the Israeli people.

With the future uncertain, we must recognize one thing: freedom and security can be the future for both the Palestinian and Israeli people. The impending disengagement creates the opportunity for progress towards this goal.

We must recognize the difficulties Israel will face and support our dependable ally. We must also support efforts by the Palestinian leadership to fight terror and create more peaceful, sound Palestinian regions.

And, as Americans who have faced threats to our own existence, we must never forget what freedom is.

A TRIBUTE TO STEVE DIGERLANDO

HON. CHRISTOPHER COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Mr. COX. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a close, personal friend, Steve DiGerlando, on his last day as Chief of Staff in my California office. It is with deep gratitude—and more than a little sadness—that today my staff and I wish Steve farewell. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his twelve outstanding years of dedicated service to my office and to the residents of the 48th district of California.

For more than a decade, Steve has been a tireless advocate on behalf of Orange County residents. Since first joining my staff in 1991, Steve has personally handled more than 5,000 cases and he has helped literally thousands of people resolve their problems with Federal agencies. After a brief leave from my office a few years back, Steve returned in 2003 to take the post of Deputy District Director. Soon thereafter he was promoted to California Chief of Staff, where he demonstrated superb leadership and management skills. Steve has been a loyal and capable director, and his expertise, endless patience and imperturbable spirit have guided the office through the most hectic of times. All of us who have been fortunate to work with Steve over the years are deeply grateful for his generosity, his thoughtfulness and his friendship.

Steve was born and raised in Orange County, and his entire family still resides in Southern California. He is a staunch supporter of his alma mater, California State University, Fullerton, where he earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees. Upon completing his Masters in History at Cal State Fullerton, he went on to become a professor of world history and American history at Cypress Community College and Mt. San Antonio College. Thankfully for us, Steve's vast knowledge of history includes that of Orange County. He has been most helpful in educating members of my Washington staff who have not been

personally familiar with the district, and he could often be found behind the wheel of a car giving his famed Orange County tour to visiting staff.

Though he is an Orange County native, Steve is somehow, mysteriously, an ardent Dodgers fan. As a big Angels fan myself, this has created a friendly baseball rivalry in the office, even though Steve always trumps me in baseball trivia regardless of the team we're discussing. I know he'll be missing those Dodger dogs once he leaves California.

Steve is a scholar and historian in the truest sense. Beyond academia, his wealth of knowledge ranges from the most important to the most trivial of facts. After working with him for more than twelve years, I am now ready to audition for Jeopardy. One particular anecdote I'll always remember relates to the statue of a rather obscure hero in California history that stands in the United States Capitol. Whenever I lead tours down this particular hall, I always bet my visitors that they cannot name the two statues that represent California. Invariably, most are able to name the most famous statue, Father Junipero Serra, the founder of the California missions. To this day, not a single one has correctly identified the second statue—except, of course, for Steve. Not only did he know the name, but he was an expert on the legacy of Thomas Starr King, the little known leader whose eloquent speeches and brave action saved California for the Union during the Civil War. In fact, Steve's knowledge of Thomas Starr King has even made its way to the pages of Orange County's local newspaper.

My staff and I are not the only ones who will miss Steve after he departs the office. A void will be felt throughout the county and the state when he and his family move to their new home in Houston, Texas. While we will miss having him in Orange County, we're excited for the great opportunities that await Steve, his wife Rita, and their daughter Samantha in the Lone Star State.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Steve DiGerlando on the occasion of his last day as my California Chief of Staff. He will be greatly missed, and I wish him every success in his future endeavors.

GAMBLING EXPLOSION

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I remain terribly concerned about the explosion of gambling outlets, particularly casinos, opening around our country.

I am deeply concerned about the impact this is having on our society. Gambling destroys families and preys on the poor. According to the California Council on Problem Gambling, which operates a crisis hotline, 3,400 callers had lost an average of \$32,000 each. That's \$109 million of lost wealth, many who probably could least afford to lose it. Even more tragic is the fact that this statistic represents problem gamblers in only one state.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD a copy of the article When Gambling Becomes Obsessive from the July 25 edition of Time magazine. I recently wrote President Bush