

[From the Carib News]

THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT—INSTRUMENT OF
DEMOCRACY

(By Marc H. Morial)

“While we have made progress and curtailed injustices thanks to the Voting Rights Act, our work is not yet complete. We cannot let discriminatory practices of the past resurface to threaten future gains. The Voting Rights Act must continue to exist in its current form.”

So said Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner, Republican, of Wisconsin, the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, in a recent speech to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People at its annual convention in Milwaukee.

We at the National Urban League couldn't agree more. We made the renewal and strengthening of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which must be accomplished by 2007, a focus of our recent annual Legislative Policy Conference in Washington, and a top recommendation of our annual scholarly volume, *The State of Black America 2005*.

And we've got plenty of company among the broad coalition of civil rights groups—including the NAACP, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, RainbowPUSH, and such members of Congress as Rep. John Conyers, of Michigan, the ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, and the Congressional Black Caucus—who've also long vigorously publicized the continuing need for voting rights protections.

So, we welcome Rep. Sensenbrenner's vigorous expression of support—which he said he'll soon back up with legislation—and his bringing word that Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert, Republican, of Illinois, has put the renewal “high on list of issues the House will address this congress.”

Such words are further evidence that it's impossible to overstate the Voting Rights Act's importance. For, by granting the Federal government specific powers to ensure that Americans of African descent in the South could register to vote and vote, the Voting Rights Act made the word “democracy” an accurate description of American Society.

Its enactment was a hard-won victory for the nonviolent Civil Rights Movement, one that had produced casualties in the South literally up to the moment (and beyond) President Lyndon Johnson personally introduced the legislation to Congress on March 15, 1965—against the backdrop of the “Bloody Sunday” beating of civil rights demonstrators in Selma, Alabama to previous week.

His words then were equal to the moment: “At times history and fate meet at a single time in a single place to shape a turning point in man's unending search for freedom,” he said. “About this there can be and should be no argument. Every American citizen must have the right to vote.”

With token opposition the law quickly passed the House and the Senate and President Johnson signed it on August 6, 1965.

The political impact was immediate, according to Dianne Pinderhughes, of the University of Illinois, who wrote about the Voting Rights Act in the *State of Black America 2005*. Within a year, more than 250,000 African Americans had registered in the thirteen states covered under the Act; and Mississippi, which had harbored the fiercest resistance to civil rights for blacks, recorded the nation's highest black voter turnout—74 percent.

A similar response in the other states ultimately produced enormous growth in the number of blacks holding elective office throughout the country—from about 350 in 1965 to more than 1,400 just five years later. Now, there are more than 9,000 black elected

officeholders, including 42 members of Congress, according to the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington, D.C. think tank.

In the intervening four decades the Act has been extended three times, and new provisions added extending the right to vote to 18-year-olds (1970), protecting the voting rights of Spanish and other language speakers (1975), and most contentious of all, allowing the creation of Congressional districts in which the majority of voters would be members of a minority group (1982).

The consequences of these amendments underscore the powerful democratizing dynamic the Civil Rights Movement as a whole injected into American Society.

Now, as the date for renewal looms, it's clear the Act is still necessary. The vote-related controversies of the past two presidential elections, which led to some significant number of voters in some districts not being able to vote or not having their votes counted have made that clear—as have continuing debates regarding voter registration, the purging of voter rolls, access to the polls and reliability of election equipment, and the impact of state laws which bar ex-felons and those on probation from voting.

Thus, Professor Pinderhughes concluded in *The State of Black America 2005*, this new landscape “demands that the civil rights lobby educate its mass constituency and the broader American public about these issues which are now wreathed in complexity.”

That's another reason the NAACP invitation to Representative Sensenbrenner and his speech to them are noteworthy: they move us further toward the renewal of that instrument of democracy, the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

HONORING MOLDED FIBER GLASS
COMPANIES

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of Molded Fiber Glass Companies in Gainesville, Texas, located in my district, and to celebrate the passage of H.R. 6, The Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Molded Fiber Glass Companies had modest beginnings near Lake Erie in Ohio when they first opened their doors in 1948. Since then they have continued to push the limits of technology and have added offices and research facilities across the nation. In 2001, MFG began producing massive blades to harness the power of wind and open new doors in renewable energy. With this new bill, MFG will be able to provide more energy at a lower price to the surrounding communities.

A major component of The Energy Policy Act of 2005 extends the renewable electricity production credit through December 31, 2007 for wind, closed-loop biomass, open-loop biomass, geothermal, small irrigation power, landfill gas, and trash combustion. The provision will encourage the use of renewable energy, like wind energy, thereby increasing the demand for wind turbines such as those manufactured by MFG.

This company provides so much to our community, and I am proud to have them within the district I represent. I hope that their dedication to renewable energy and our environment continues well into the future.

IN HONOR OF DAVID J. MORALES,
MARCH 5, 1945—JULY 9, 2005

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. David J. Morales, a dear friend, loving family man and devoted civic leader who passed away Saturday, July 9, 2005 after a valiant struggle with leukemia. David was laid to rest on Friday, July 15, 2005 surrounded by those who loved and admired him. We are comforted knowing that today he rests in peace.

David Morales was living proof that adversity exists to be overcome. Born to Pablo Morales and Bernardina Diaz Morales in Salinas, California on March 5, 1945, David was the youngest of 13 children. Before he had reached his first birthday, David's mother had succumbed to breast cancer. Thus began his life in his beloved Los Angeles where he was raised in the San Fernando Valley by his godparents, Ventura and Felicitia Borbon.

Living modestly, David learned the lessons of life at an early age. He sold fruit and scrap metal that he found on his family farm. He began to nurture the strong entrepreneurial spirit that would guide his personal and career success that awaited. But before then, at the age of 14, David faced yet another tragedy—his beloved godmother Felicitia passed away.

To finish high school, David moved in with an older brother. His brother would teach him to be a commercial painter, the trade that would shape his future.

In 1975, risking everything he had in order to support his family, David created Borbon, Inc. Over the past 30 years, Borbon, Inc. has become one of the largest commercial painting contractors in the country. A union painting company based in Southern California, Borbon Inc. has been recognized numerous times by *Hispanic Business Magazine* as one of the most successful Latino-owned enterprises in the Nation.

But here I must pause, because those of us who knew him are very familiar with David's rags to riches story. David had the heart, the brains and the guts to succeed. But more importantly—and it's no secret—he had Celia Martinez Morales. Together David and Celia raised five accomplished children, David, Lisa, Melissa, Christina and Paul. They gave their children what a youthful David could only dream of, a solid education, a world of opportunity and a reputation stronger than steel. None of that expired on July 9, 2005.

David defied great odds to become an accomplished businessman and took it upon himself to provide opportunities to others. He was an anchor of support to the Boys and Girls Club of Buena Park, California and the University of Southern California Mexican-American Alumni Association. As a member of the Latin Business Association and the Buena Park Chamber of Commerce, David sought to open doors for America's next generation of entrepreneurs.

In an era where we cannot trust who boards our planes or enters our Capitol, David succeeded on a handshake. In a world marked by indifference and tumbling civility, David was a builder. And in a place we call the City of Angels, David belonged.

Mr. Speaker, it is with heart-felt sorrow, yet great admiration and appreciation that I ask my colleagues to join me today in saluting David Morales, a wonderful husband and father, a cherished friend, and an inspirational example of America's dream come true. May his generosity and dedication to opening doors for others be remembered and carried on by his family and those of us who were fortunate enough to call him friend. David, you left us more than you could ever know.

RECOGNIZING THE ATHLETIC
EXCELLENCE OF MARIBEL ZURITA

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the athletic excellence of Maribel Zurita.

Maribel Zurita made her pro boxing debut on July 31, 2001, in San Antonio, the city where she was born and raised. San Antonio still serves as her base, and she continues to train in the area. Maribel held the IFBA Flyweight title from 2004 to 2005.

Aptly nicknamed "Little Thunder," Zurita more than makes up for her smaller size through a fierce tenacity and effervescent energy in the ring. She possesses a unique combination of grace and toughness which, when complemented by her skill and agility, make her a formidable opponent.

Maribel has succeeded in raising the profile of an industry so often dominated by men through her charismatic style and charm. She wins over fans of all ages and nationalities with ease. Zurita brings a professional attitude and a commitment to sportsmanship, characteristics that are all too often absent in many aspects of today's professional athletics.

I am honored to recognize Maribel Zurita for her remarkable success in athletics and beyond. Her work ethic and dedication provide an outstanding example for any aspiring athlete.

COMMEMORATING THE 30TH ANNI-
VERSARY OF THE MESQUITE RE-
PUBLICAN WOMEN

HON. JEB HENSARLING

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Mesquite Republican Women. On July 14, 1975, at the home of Mrs. Poppy Airhart, the Mesquite Republican Women were formed, based on the guiding principle of the National Federation of Republican Women, "to foster and encourage loyalty to the Republican Party and the ideals for which it stands."

For the past 30 years the Mesquite Republican Women has worked hard to promote the principles of the Grand Old Party and to elect Republican leaders from the Courthouse to the White House.

The Mesquite Republican Women are truly helping make our community and our country a better place to live. The Mesquite Republican Women continue to strengthen the Re-

publican Party through candidate recruitment, training and election activities as well as advocating the GOP common sense conservative philosophy of faith, family, free enterprise, and freedom.

Today, I would like to honor the first officers of the Mesquite Republican Women. President Mrs. Kay Ballard, 1st Vice President Mrs. Poppy Airhart, 2nd Vice President Mrs. Janice Houston, 3rd Vice President Mrs. Elaine Bernhagen, Secretary Mrs. Jonette Thornhill, and Treasurer Mrs. Ginger Kraft. These strong Republican women embody the energy, visions and values of our party.

THE APOLLO THEATER PROVISION
CONTAINED IN THE HIGHWAY
CONFERENCE REPORT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank all of my colleagues on the highway conference for including in the highway conference report a provision that would allow the Apollo Theater in Harlem, New York, to apply for historic tax credits, notwithstanding their remaining two EDA grants from the Economic Development Administration.

As most of my colleagues know, the 1,500 seat Apollo Theater is truly "where stars are born and legends are made." A historic landmark building, the Apollo was responsible for launching the careers of artists including Sarah Vaughn, Elle Fitzgerald, James Brown, Stevie Wonder, Gladys Knight, Ray Charles and Luther Vandross, just to name a few. The Apollo is also an economic engine for the community with annual audiences of over 400,000 which generates almost \$100 million annually to the local economy.

The 1914 Apollo building had begun to decay over the years and in the year 2000 the foundation began a capital campaign to make needed repairs and upgrades. The foundation has raised over \$35 million from the public and private sectors to date.

The language included in the conference report on H.R. 3, will allow the Apollo Theater to capture other fundraising venues, including historic tax credits, notwithstanding the EDA grants numbered 01-01-07308 and 01-01-07552. The language would release EDA from the perimeters of the two grants and thus allow the Apollo to complete the renovation.

Again, I thank my colleagues for their consideration and approval of this provision and I yield the floor.

HONORING THE 25TH ANNIVER-
SARY OF THE CAREFLITE EMER-
GENCY RESCUE TEAM

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise so that I may celebrate the 25th anniversary of the CareFlite Emergency Rescue Team. This non-profit rescue organization provides a crucial service to north central Texas serving

nearly six million people in 100 counties and communities within a 150-mile radius of Dallas-Fort Worth.

Just this past year, CareFlite answered the call of duty 19,000 times with one of their six helicopters or one of their 21 ambulances. They are able to get a medical team to a site, stabilize the injured and transport them to the nearest medical facilities in a matter of minutes. Especially in situations where injuries affect several systems, this quick response time can make all the difference.

Beyond saving lives, CareFlite is very active in the communities which it serves. They offer the "Third Rider" and "Landing Zone" programs to educate other medical professionals about their area of expertise; and, perhaps most importantly, CareFlite works closely with the Texas Alcohol and Beverage Commission to put on their "Shattered Dreams" program to educate high school students about the dangers of underage drinking.

CareFlite provides an invaluable service to the Metroplex and it is imperative that we recognize that service. These men and women who dedicate their lives to saving others truly make every precious minute count.

H.R. 3199: USA PATRIOT AND TER-
RORISM PREVENTION REAU-
THORIZATION ACT OF 2005

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my opposition to the bill we consider today—H.R. 3199—which extends certain controversial provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act. As many of my colleagues have pointed out, the PATRIOT Act is already the law of the land. However, what we consider today—and what I am opposing—are the extension of 16 sunsetted provisions that increase access to personal information. I voted to support the USA PATRIOT Act of 2001; I did so because there was a structured and reasonable limit to how long these questionable provisions would be in effect. In the bill we consider today, the sunsets have been either removed or extended to such unreasonable lengths that they are rendered pointless.

In the 4 years since the bill has passed, little effort has been expended to ensure that the civil liberties of the American people are not being violated. As such, I will oppose this bill today, but I do not foreclose supporting this bill in the future should it come back with improved and more acceptable language that provides for the strong oversight we need to effectively combat terrorism while at the same time maintaining our civil liberties.

IN RECOGNITION OF ROSA PARKS

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give honor to Rosa Parks, considered to be the pioneer of the Civil Rights Movement, who protested the discrimination of