

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WALLACE BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to rise today to recognize the 100th anniversary of Wallace Baptist Church in my district. Through several locations and many pastors, the church has continuously provided a place of worship for the people of northwest Florida.

Originally founded as the New Smyrna Baptist Church, a small congregation first met in Bagdad, Florida, in 1905. For nearly 40 years, the church met in that location, constantly adding new members to their congregation and establishing a reputation as a house where all were welcome.

The original 40 years added many people to the original congregation, and recognizing the need for more land, a group of 32 people in 1942 began meeting a short distance away in the Wallace Schoolhouse. The land had been donated to them by a local family interested in seeing the local community prosper. Less than a year later, the church had its own building constructed and continued to use the pulpit from their first building. The pulpit still exists to this day, though it is no longer used. In addition, wood from the original building was used for construction of the new podium, instilling a physical sense of tradition that the church carries with it as it continues into the future.

Approximately 20 years later, now under the name of Wallace Baptist Church, a larger auditorium was constructed to accommodate the increasing size of the church's membership. The previous building, adjacent to the auditorium, remained in use as a meeting place for Sunday School. A few years later, recognizing their long-term stability and consistent growth both in congregation size as well as services offered, the church voted to incorporate as Wallace Baptist Church.

The church continued to add facilities over the next several decades as it continued to flourish, so much so that in 2003 the more than 300 members of the church saw the pressing need for a larger main sanctuary and voted to have one built. The groundbreaking on the new site occurred earlier this year. Under the present leadership of Rev. Lee Botts and having already shown consistent growth, I am confident that the church and its mission will continue to be recognized by many as a great place to worship, continuing to serve the community well into the future.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the U.S. Congress, I am proud of the success of Wallace Baptist Church over the last 100 years and look forward to its next century of service.

RECOGNIZING 94TH CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL DAY IN REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 94th celebration of National Day in the Republic of China (Taiwan).

Today, I join with the Taiwanese people as they celebrate their freedom. Taiwan has peacefully overcome authoritarian rule to attain democracy. It will hopefully constitute a model for the eventual establishment of a genuine democracy in China. The U.S. and Taiwan value human rights, civil liberties, a free press and the rule of law. Our shared values have produced a strong and dependable friendship for over 50 years. Today, the people of Taiwan determine their own destiny and government through free and fair elections.

Many of my colleagues will be surprised to learn that Taiwan is our 8th largest trading partner. A recent survey by the World Economic Forum ranked Taiwan fifth in the world and first in Asia for growth competitiveness. The Taiwanese have been increasing their demands for American goods becoming a more valuable trading partner. The Taiwanese people have also achieved economic prosperity with one of the highest standards of living in the world. It is impressive to find that less than 1 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. Now a strong member of the World Trade Organization, Taiwan's market-based economy is now the 12th largest in the world.

The government of Taiwan was one of the first to come to our aid after the events of September 11th and Hurricane Katrina. Taiwan continues to be our ally in the war on terrorism by cooperating with humanitarian assistance in Iraq and Afghanistan and providing intelligence. They have shown generosity and compassion by contributing to the Twin Towers Fund and Pentagon Memorial Fund, and now to the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

I hope that its neighbors, especially those in China, will notice Taiwan's celebration of freedom, democracy, and a market economy. I hope Taiwan and China will work together and cultivate a future based on respect, democracy, and freedom. I am encouraged by reports that Taiwan's President, Chen Shui-bian is willing to hold a summit with President Hu Jintao and resume dialog on cross-strait issues.

It is with great pleasure I congratulate Taiwan, our friend and ally, on the celebration of their 94th National Day, October 10, 2005.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I was absent from votes in the House on Tuesday, September 27th, due to a previous and unavoidable commitment. Therefore, I was unable to vote on H.J. Res. 66, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of "Lights On After-school!", a national celebration of after-school programs (rollcall No. 494); and H. Con. Res. 209, a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of Domestic Violence Awareness Month (rollcall No. 496). Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on both these measures considered by the House.

HONORING CAPTAIN RUSS KELLER, UNITED STATES NAVY

HON. HENRY E. BROWN, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Captain Russ Keller, United States Navy, as he retires upon completion of more than 26 years of honorable and faithful service to our nation.

A native of Pittsburgh, PA, Captain Keller was appointed to the United States Naval Academy in 1975 and graduated with the class of 1979. Following initial nuclear power and submarine training, he reported to his first submarine, USS *Trepang* (SSN 674), where he served as the reactor controls assistant and later as the weapons officer. His assignment on *Trepang* was followed by a shore assignment in the Pentagon as flag lieutenant and aide for the Navy's Director of Research, Development, Test and Evaluation. Captain Keller next attended Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, where he earned a masters in public administration degree. Following his tour at Harvard, he returned to sea as the Navigator on board USS *Simon Bolivar* (SSBN 641) (BLUE), where he completed five strategic deterrent patrols in the final days of the Cold War. Upon departing *Simon Bolivar*, Captain Keller remained at sea as the executive officer on board USS *Narwhal* (SSN 671), where he prepared the ship's crew to return to sea following a 37-month refueling overhaul. Following his tour as Executive Officer, Captain Keller was assigned to the Navy Staff in Washington, DC where he served in the strategy and concepts branch. In June 1995 Captain Keller received the most coveted and demanding of all naval assignments when he was selected for Command at Sea. He served as the Commanding Officer of USS *Springfield* (SSN 761) for 31 months, during which time the ship completed several independent submarine missions vital to national security.

Based on his successful command tour, Captain Keller was selected by the Navy's Chief of Legislative Affairs to serve in the Office of Legislative Affairs, where he was assigned initially as the submarine and strategic programs liaison officer. Following two years working these issues, he was promoted internally and assigned as the Director of Naval Programs, with responsibilities for all Navy procurement, operations and maintenance, and research and development programs. His tenure in the Office of Legislative Affairs spanned five defense authorization bill cycles and earned him the trust and respect of members of Congress, committee and personal staff members as well as senior officials in the Department of the Navy. A role model and mentor to those who worked for and with him, he made his impact on people as well as programs. Through his brilliant insight and dedication, he contributed directly to the future readiness of the United States Navy and the nation.

In September 2002 Captain Keller was selected for major command, and served his final tour on active duty as the Commanding Officer of the Naval Nuclear Power Training Command in Charleston, SC from July 2003 until July 2005. Under his supervision, thousands of future naval nuclear operators and

supervisors completed the most rigorous academic training program in our military while being imbued with the highest standards of personal integrity and reliability.

Captain Keller's distinguished awards include the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and numerous unit and campaign awards.

The Department of the Navy, the Congress, and the American people have been defended and well served by this dedicated Naval Officer for more than 26 years. Captain Russ Keller long will be remembered for his leadership, service and dedication. He will be missed.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have Russ and Chris Keller as constituents. I ask my colleagues in the 109th Congress to join me in congratulating him and wishing him the best of luck in all his future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF DEMOCRACY IN AZERBAIJAN

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I wish to include in the RECORD an article by Azerbaijani Ambassador to the United States Hafiz Pashayev. This was published in The Washington Times on September 11, 2005 and is a great testament to the progress made in Azerbaijan toward holding peaceful and fair elections.

In a recent visit to Azerbaijan as National Democratic Institute chairman, former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said, "Election day is important, but the months leading up to the elections are also crucial."

She referred to the parliamentary elections to be held Nov. 6, when the citizens of Azerbaijan go to the polls to elect their representatives to parliament, or Milli Mejlis.

The Bush administration views these elections are a litmus test of the Azerbaijan government's commitment to democracy. The U.S. Congress has weighed in by passing a resolution calling on Azerbaijan "to hold orderly, peaceful, and free and fair elections in November 2005 in order to ensure the long-term growth and stability of the country."

We are the first to recognize that independence, stability and prosperity depend on successful democratic reform. President Ilham Aliyev wants an orderly transition, as our last few years of unprecedented economic growth would be jeopardized by political instability. Toward this end and to conduct elections according to international standards, the president issued an Executive Order outlining steps to be taken:

1. Allowing all political parties to organize rallies free from violence and intimidation.
2. Welcoming domestic and international election observers.
3. Providing access to media, thus ensuring fair coverage.
4. And ensuring central and regional authorities create the necessary conditions for exit polls.

Among many provisions of the Order already carried out are those that concern participation in the political arena by opposi-

tion parties. There has been dialogue between ruling and opposition parties, all opposition parties may freely conduct rallies and demonstrations and, thus far, all opposition activists—including those who called for overthrow of government in October 2003—have been allowed to become candidates if they wish. During his visit to Azerbaijan at the end of August, Sen. Richard Lugar, Indiana Republican, said: "The opposition leaders underlined that the registration process of the MP candidates went well, which is a step forward compared to the previous elections." President Aliyev went further by warning all regional election officials not to interfere in the old Soviet fashion, when ballot-stuffing was common.

President Aliyev's insistence on free and fair elections in November is based on the idea Azerbaijan's secular government can co-exist with its Muslim traditions.

Our vision is premised on the belief democratic pluralism will ensure, a peaceful outlet for dissent, eliminating the need for violent alternatives. Citizens of all ethnicities and political persuasions are free to advocate their positions peacefully.

Today, Azerbaijan is a vibrant, independent state. We have faced many challenges in our young country's life: preserving our independence in a tough neighborhood; making the transition from a shattered to a market economy; building government institutions and an independent judiciary; finding a peaceful solution to our conflict with Armenia; and developing our natural resources to world markets.

Throughout these difficult years, the United States has been a friend and ally of Azerbaijan. Our strategic partnership has blossomed since the attacks on America on September 11, 2001. Immediately after, the late President Heydar Aliyev visited the U.S. Embassy in Baku not only to express his condolences but to offer his full support. Today, we stand side-by-side in the global war on terrorism. Our troops proudly serve in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Azerbaijan's location between Russia, Iran and Turkey, coupled with our desire to integrate into the Euro-Atlantic community, requires that we conduct a balanced foreign policy fostering development of democratic institutions and a strong economy. Azerbaijan has come this far without tangible foreign aid and expects to continue democratic and economic development, primarily through its own resources.

According to a recent survey by the International Republican Institute sponsored by USAID, an overwhelming majority of Azerbaijanis want economic and social development to be their government's priority concerns.

This November, the people of Azerbaijan will elect a Parliament I believe will accelerate our transition toward democratic pluralism to match the country's unprecedented economic growth. Mr. Lugar told the press in Baku: "I sense in Azerbaijan a yearning for building strong democratic institutions."

CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF EMILY QUINN MUSTIAN

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today, I am happy to congratulate Rebecca

and Ben Mustian of Columbia, South Carolina, on the birth of their beautiful baby girl. Emily Quinn Mustian was born on September 29, 2005 at 12:01 PM, weighing 7 pounds, 4 ounces and measuring 19 inches long. Emily has been born into a loving home, where she will be raised by parents who are devoted to her well-being and bright future. Her birth is a blessing.

TRIBUTE TO SOUTH LYNCHES FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the South Lynches Fire Department and to recognize their 50 years of service to the South Carolina counties of Florence and Williamsburg. Chartered as the Lake City Rural Fire Department on January 27, 1955, they started with only one tanker. Today, they have 19 vehicles with which a full time staff and 125 volunteers provide fire and rescue services to the 250 square mile area that encompasses the South Lynches Fire District.

The original directors of the department in 1955 were S. Keels Brockington, Sr., H. Raymond Askins, Sr., Roy Rogers, J.P. Grimsley, L.W. McDaniel, Joe Tucker, and Walter Moody. Within 10 years, the department had completed a permanent home and secured a second tanker. The department changed its name in the middle 1970s to the Lower Florence County Fire Department as it had expanded its coverage beyond the Lake City area. In 1982, residents created the South Lynches Fire District establishing the area that the department currently services.

The South Lynches Fire Department today operates out of six locations within the district. The original station, in Lake City, is still operational. Station 2 "Coward" was built in 1971. Station 3 "Camp Branch" was built in 1979, Station 4 "Cades" in 1979, Station 5 "Leo-Camerontown" in 1979, and Station 6 "Scranton" in 1990.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me today in honoring the South Lynches Fire Department as they celebrate their 50th anniversary. I thank each and every member of the Department for their service over the last 50 years and wish them great success and Godspeed in the future.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 29, 2005

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, on September 28, 2005, I was absent for two votes because I was chairing a classified briefing with the Secretary of Defense providing information to members about U.S. efforts in Iraq. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on roll-call vote No. 500, on motion to recommit and "yes" on rollcall vote No. 501 on passage.