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RECOGNIZING THE COLONIAL LIFE AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE COMPANY OF COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 17, 2005

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Colonial Life and Accident Insurance Company of Columbia, South Carolina has provided tremendous support to our neighbors in the Gulf Coast region.

Colonial recently provided the following description of the company's relief and recovery efforts. As Colonial continues to respond to this crisis, I am proud to recognize the company's generosity and service:

COLONIAL LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE
COMPANY RESPONSE TO HURRICANES

Like millions of others across the country, Colonial Life & Accident Insurance Company was shocked by the suffering and devastation caused by the recent Gulf Coast hurricanes, one of the greatest natural disasters in U.S. History. The company was concerned both for its several hundred contracted sales agents in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Texas, and for its many thousands of customers who lost possessions, homes, jobs, and even loved ones.

In response, Colonial quickly announced that customers in affected areas will receive a grace period for premium payment through year-end 2005. Colonial took this action proactively before the states mandated grace periods and went well beyond the minimum state requirements. The company continues to work with employer and employee customers on a case-by-case basis to ensure their coverage continues and their claims receive priority attention. Colonial call center representatives have special instructions of supporting telephone calls from plan administrators and policyholders in the disaster areas, and the company has added new options to its automated phone system to ensure these calls are directed to the right places quickly.

The company also is supporting its sales agents in the affected areas, many of whom not only suffered personally but also have lost their business base for many months or possibly years to come. The company is making financial arrangements to help offset the lost commissions to these independent contractor agents and also is helping many of them find other temporary work opportunities. Colonial also established a special company-matched relief fund at a local bank to provide financial support to these agents in greatest need.

On a local level, Colonial employees are actively involved in drives to collect food, clothing and other vitally needed supplies for hurricane victims. The company is matching two-for-one employee donations to the American Red Cross and Salvation Army.

Colonial is committed to helping its producers and customers during this difficult time.

HONORING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VIENNA WOMAN'S CLUB

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 17, 2005

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vienna Woman's Club located in Vienna, Virginia.

The Vienna Woman's Club is a service and civic organization that was formed under the name of the Vienna Hills Woman's Club by 22 women on October 12, 1955. The following year, the group became affiliated with the General Federation of Women's Clubs in January of 1956, and membership was expanded to all Vienna women. The club meets the third Wednesday of the month, and is responsible for numerous projects that enhance and contribute to the Vienna community.

Some instrumental projects the club has participated in for years include the club's scholarship program and the Policeman of the Year award. The Vienna Woman's Club inaugurated its scholarship program in 1962, and since that time has awarded approximately \$100,000 in scholarships to Vienna high school students. In 1967, the club awarded its first Policeman of the Year award. Each year, the club recognizes a Town police officer and holds a banquet in his or her honor. The recipient also participates in the annual Vienna Halloween Parade, which is enjoyed by many Northern Virginia residents.

In addition, the club has helped to improve the community by helping to establish a branch of the Fairfax County Library, furnishing a room at Fairfax Hospital for a more comfortable stay for hospital patients, and has set up eye testing clinics for pre-school children. Some philanthropic events the club has participated in include the Annual Harvest Bazaar and Craft Fair, to which the proceeds are donated to the scholarship program, and contributing a generous donation to the Vienna Community Center. The club members have also worked to promote holiday cheer by acting as hostesses at the Annual Christmas Sing-Along held at Wolftrap Farm Park.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to commend and congratulate the Vienna Woman's Club on 50 years of success. They have served the interests of their community well, truly meriting recognition. I call upon my colleagues to join me in applauding their past accomplishments and in wishing the club continued success in the many years to come.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN CALLS ON ALL SIKHS TO SUPPORT FREEDOM

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 17, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, recently, the Council of Khalistan issued an open letter in which it called for all Sikhs to work for independence for Khalistan. The letter cites abuses against the Sikh Nation such as the torture of Jagtar Singh Hawara, who had a

cigarette forced into his mouth in contravention of a Sikh religious tenet and was forced to desecrate the Sikh holy scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib. This shows that there is no freedom and no tolerance for religious minorities in Hindu-dominated India. And unfortunately, whichever party is in power, the imposition of Hindu theocracy continues. The latest atrocities have occurred under the secular Congress Party, not the openly Hindu nationalist BJP.

It is outrageous that such atrocities against human beings are still occurring in the twenty-first century, Mr. Speaker. The civilized nations of the world must step in to put a stop to this tyrannical brutality.

We must do whatever we can to help all people live in freedom. We can start by ending our aid and our trade with India and by publicly demanding a free and fair vote to settle the question of independence for Khalistan and all the nations of South Asia the democratic way. Separating from India appears to be the only way that the Sikhs of Punjab, Khalistan, the Muslims of Kashmir, the Christians of Nagaland, and so many other minority groups will ever have a chance to live in the freedom that is their birthright as human beings.

I would like to introduce the Council of Khalistan's open letter into the RECORD for the information of my colleagues. It goes into much more detail than I am able to go into here. I urge my colleagues to read it carefully.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN,
Washington, DC, October 12, 2005.

ALL SIKHS MUST WORK FOR THE LIBERATION OF KHALISTAN

DEAR KHALSA JI: WAHEGURU JI KA KHALSA, WAHEGURU JI KI FATEH!

Recent events have underlined again the importance of liberating our homeland, Khalistan. All Sikhs must work toward that goal.

Recently, the Council of Khalistan completed its highly successful annual convention. There was great enthusiasm for Khalistan. There have been marches in Punjab demanding a free and sovereign Khalistan. Over 30,000 Sikhs were present at the raising of the Khalistan flag on the anniversary of the Golden Temple attack in June. 35 Sikhs were arrested and many were charged at that time for making speeches and raising the flag. On Republic Day the same thing happened. Sikhs were charged and arrested for raising the Sikh flag and making speeches in support of Khalistan. This blatant attempt to put an end to the Khalistan movement through the use of naked intimidation will not work.

Recently, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh apologized to the Sikh Nation for the Indian government's massacre of Sikhs in Delhi in November 1984. Over 20,000 Sikhs were killed in these massacres while Sikh police were locked in their barracks and the state television and radio issued a call for more Sikh blood. Manmohan Singh's apology squarely establishes India's guilt and it is greatly appreciated. Now we await the apology for Operation Bluestar and the withdrawal of all Indian occupation forces from Punjab, Khalistan.

Captain Amarinder Singh became a hero of the Sikh Nation by asserting Punjab's sovereignty and preserving Punjab's natural resource, its river water, for the use of Punjab farmers by cancelling Punjab's water agreements. This action is saving Punjab from the Hindu regime's plan to make Punjab a desert and eliminate the Sikh Nation, the Sikh people, the Sikh culture, and the Sikh religion

from the face of the Earth. The Delhi government, which is always a Hindu majority government whether the BJP or the Congress Party is in power, has never treated Punjab fairly. The government is determined to destroy the Sikh religion and the economy of Punjab.

A recent report issued by ENSAAF entitled *Fabricating Terrorism through Illegal Detention and Torture* shows that India is still illegally detaining and torturing Sikhs on false charges of "militancy." Yet India claims to have ended the "militancy" years ago. Why are there still Sikhs who are being arrested and tortured on these charges?

Jagtar Singh Hawara is a hero of the Sikh Nation. The Sikh Nation is proud of him. He is a living martyr whose name will be written in golden letters in Sikh history. According to the *Indian Express* of July 13, 2005, the Delhi police stuffed cigarettes in his mouth, in violation of the Sikh religion, and forced him to desecrate the Guru Granth Sahib. His attorney, Arvind Thalmr, expressed concern that Sardar Hawara could be eliminated in a fake encounter like so many thousands of Sikhs before him. This treatment is a deliberate affront to the entire Sikh Nation. How would Sardar Hawara's captors feel if they were forced to eat beef (cow meat) prepared by Halall?

Sikhs will never get any justice from Delhi. The leaders in Delhi are only interested in imposing Hindu sovereignty over all the minorities to advance their own careers and their own power. Ever since independence, India has mistreated the Sikh Nation, starting with Patel's memo labelling Sikhs "a criminal tribe." What a shame for Home Minister Patel and the Indian government to issue this memorandum when the Sikh Nation gave over 80 percent of the sacrifices to free India.

The Sikhs in Punjab have suffered enormous repression at the hands of the Indian regime in the last 25 years. Even now, the capital of Punjab, Chandigarh, has not been handed over to Punjab. It was built as Punjab's capital but remains a Union Territory. The Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984. Over 50,000 Sikh youth were picked up from their houses, tortured, murdered in police custody, then secretly cremated as "unidentified bodies." Their remains were never even given to their families! 52,268 Sikhs sit in Indian jails as political prisoners without charge or trial, according to the Movement Against State Repression (MASR.) Some of them have been in illegal custody for 20 years! Even those sent to prison for life for murder only serve 16 years. According to Amnesty International, tens of thousands of others are also being held as political prisoners. We call for the immediate release of these Sikh political prisoners and all political prisoners in India. The Indian government must return remains to grieving Sikh families.

The attack on the Golden Temple, the murder of over 20,000 Sikhs in June 1984, diverting Punjab's river water to Hindu states without compensation, giving Punjab farmers lower prices for their produce, and other abuses have left Sikhs with no other choice but to sever all ties with Delhi and finally reclaim our lost sovereignty in a free and independent Sikh state called Khalistan, as declared on October 7, 1987. That is our destiny. Remember that the Guru gave us sovereignty: "In Grieb Sikhin Ko Deon Patshahi."

The time has come for the Sikh Nation to take its seat among the nations of the world at the United Nations and send its ambassadors to almost 200 countries around the world. This will promote the interests of the Sikh Nation and the Sikh religion worldwide. The Sikh diaspora will gain tremen-

dous respect within their host countries when we have our own independent, sovereign country and representatives at the United Nations.

The Sikh Nation must beware of Sikh puppets of the Indian government. Such puppets do not serve our interests. If you want to be remembered as a true Sikh, Mr. Prime Minister, you will fire the Hindu militants from your government, release all political prisoners, and make compensation to the families of the victims of Indian government genocide against the Sikhs.

Nehru promised that Sikhs would have "the glow of freedom" in northwest India, but as soon as independence was achieved, he told Sikh leaders that "things have changed." His Home Minister, Patel, sent out a memo calling Sikhs "a criminal tribe." That is why no Sikh representative has ever signed the Indian constitution.

We must bring back our Khalsa spirit. We must commit ourselves to the greater well being of the Sikhs Nation and to the cause of freedom. We must remember our heritage and tradition of "Khalsa Bagi Yan Badshah" by committing ourselves to the cause of freedom for our Sikh brothers and sisters. Will you commit yourself to this cause, Prime Minister Singh, or will you be a tool of the regime that has unleashed a brutal genocide on our people?

Last year's seminar on Khalistan held in Chandigarh shows that the flame of freedom still burns brightly in Punjab in spite of the Indian government's brutal repression. Always remember our heritage: Raj Kare Ga Khalsa; Khalsa Bagi Yan Badshah. We call on you to take these necessary steps to bring the glow of freedom that was promised to the Sikhs to fruition. That is the only way that you can be considered a good Sikh in alignment with the gurus.

Panth Da Sewadar,

DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,
President, Council of Khalistan.

CONGRATULATING PASTORS RANDALL AND SHARLENE HOLTS ON THIRTY YEARS OF MARRIAGE

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 17, 2005

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate and pay tribute to two people who are bound both by marriage, and by their service to God and our community. It is one of these ties that I want to recognize today, for Pastors Randall and Sharlene Holts of New Hope Missionary Baptist Church are celebrating their 30th wedding anniversary.

Reverend Randall E. Holts is the Senior Pastor of the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church of Miami. Since 1985, Pastor Holts has served as the Chief Administrator responsible for administering the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church. Under his dynamic leadership the congregation has grown to more than 2,500 members. In addition, in 1997, Pastor Holts and his leadership team organized and established the "New Hope Development Center, Inc.," a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The mission of NHDC is to foster self-sufficiency of families through economic empowerment, and delivering human and social services to improve the quality of life for residents in the community.

Mrs. Sharlene D. Holts currently serves as Pastor of Women's Ministry at the New Hope

Missionary Baptist Church of Miami, Florida. In December of 1995, Mrs. Holts heard and accepted the call of God summoning her to the Gospel Ministry. Since that time, she has faithfully prepared herself in prayer and study of the Word to do God's will.

Pastors Randall and Sharlene Holts were high school sweethearts, and are currently partners in life, as well as, ministry. They are the proud parents of Shontel Holts-Rich, Ericka Holts and Randall Holts, Jr.

Each is a valuable contributing member of the South Florida family, and together they have truly emerged as leaders helping to foster the empowerment of a people and an overall better quality of life in our community. Our prayers and good wishes go with them for many more happy, productive years in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF BARBARA SEAMAN ON THE OCCASION OF HER 70TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 17, 2005

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the achievements of Barbara Seaman, a great New Yorker, groundbreaking author, perceptive reporter and researcher and dear friend of mine. On October 2, 2005, many of Barbara's friends and colleagues will gather to celebrate her 70th birthday. I am very pleased to offer my best wishes to Barbara for a truly memorable and enjoyable afternoon.

I have heard it said more than once that Barbara Seaman is to women's health what Ralph Nader was to automobiles. Barbara's contributions to the welfare of women throughout the world have been simply extraordinary: she was the first reporter to expose the serious health risks posed by the birth control pill, and she pioneered efforts to allow women to take control of their own health care decisions.

Barbara's 1969 book on the dangers of oral contraceptives, *The Doctors' Case Against the Pill*, spurred a U.S. Senate hearing on the topic, though patients harmed by the pill were not allowed to testify. The hearing became known as the "Boston Tea Party" of the women's movement when female audience members' demands to be heard repeatedly brought the proceedings to a halt. As a result of Barbara's work, the Federal Government required that health warnings be placed on oral contraception packaging and advertisements, a first for any prescription drug.

Barbara also strives to make sure that women have the information they need to make good decisions about a range of health topics, including contraception, childbirth and infant nutrition. Indeed, *The New York Times* commented that "Barbara Seaman triggered a revolution, fostering a willingness among women to take issues of health into their own hands."

In the 1980s, Barbara was essentially blacklisted from magazines by pharmaceutical companies who would not advertise in publications that carried her stories. Her relentless insistence on questioning the safety and effectiveness of their products earned her their