

OXI DAY

**HON. MICHAEL BILIRAKIS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 28, 2005*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise proudly to celebrate "oxi" day. The historical significance of this day and what it meant to the outcome of World War II cannot be overstated. The outcome of a decision made on a day in 1940, had a profound impact on the conducting of the war by Nazi Germany. We're talking about a stand made by a small, battered and courageous nation, namely Greece, against the larger, more powerful aggressors Italy and Germany.

By October of 1940, World War II had begun, and the Nazi war machine was already in high gear. Along with Hitler's ally, Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, the German and Italian forces were threatening the whole of Europe. European nations were bowing to tyranny and destruction as the Germans and the Italians marched through Europe.

Great Britain endured Germany's aerial bombardment, forcing Hitler to seek another avenue to subdue the British. Hitler intended to eliminate British operations in the Mediterranean in order to weaken their ability to deter German advances.

To achieve this, Hitler needed the Axis powers to strike at British forces in Greece. By conquering Greece, Hitler would gain access to an important connecting link with Italian bases in the Dodecanese islands. This would give the Italians a strangle hold on British positions in Egypt, where British forces were already facing attack from the Italian army in north Africa. The British considered the defense of Egypt vital to allied positions in the oil rich Middle East.

On October 28, 1940, the Italian Ambassador in Athens presented an insulting ultimatum to Greek Prime Minister Metaxas, demanding the unconditional surrender of Greece or Italy would declare war and invade Greece. Mussolini had given the Greek Prime Minister Metaxas three hours to reply.

Prime Minister Metaxas responded with the now historic word "oxi," which means "no" in Greek. His statement embodied the true spirit of the Greek people. His words of defiance echoed the same devotion and love of country that Greek patriots exhibited during their war of independence against the Ottoman empire when they shouted the defiant words "liberty or death." Prime Minister Metaxas' actions marked the beginning of one of the world's most heroic efforts against tyranny and oppression. Italy then invaded.

It is important to note that in addition to Greece having a population seven times smaller than Italy, the disparity in their armed forces was even greater: Italy had close to ten times the firepower of Greece in its army and navy and seven times the troops. Italy's large air force had total air superiority since Greece had a very small defensive air force. However, despite their lack of equipment, the Greek army proved to be well-trained and resourceful. Within a week of the invasion, it was clear that Italian forces were suffering serious setbacks despite having control of the air and fielding superior armored vehicles.

On November 14th, the Greek army launched a counter-offensive and quickly

drove the Italian forces back into Albania. By the next month, the Greeks had captured the town of Pogradec in eastern Albania. The fighting continued for a few more months . . . it was clear that the Greeks were not going to stand for defeat. In a last ditch effort to bring the war to a close before the Italians would be forced to ask Hitler to intervene, they launched another assault on March 12, 1941. After six days of fighting, the Italians had made only insignificant gains, and it became clear that German intervention was necessary.

On April 6, 1941, Hitler ordered the German invasion of Greece. It took the Germans five weeks to finally end the conflict. This delay proved to be critical to the outcome of the war. Italy's inability to capture Greece enabled the British to win major victories against Mussolini's forces in north Africa. This solidified British positions in the region as well as in Cyprus. In addition, it contributed to the failure of the German Barbarossa campaign to conquer Russia.

Due to Mussolini's humiliating defeat by the Greeks in Albania and Greece, Hitler was compelled to capture the Balkans, mainly Yugoslavia and Greece, thus, delaying his Barbarossa plan to invade and capture the Soviet Union before the winter of 1941. The Greek resistance, both in Albania, and in the other famous battle in Crete, altered, favorably for the allies, his Barbarossa time table by at least six months.

Perhaps most importantly, the Germans never gained the advantage against the British. Although Germany had conquered much of Europe, its inability to decimate British and Russian forces early in the war would eventually prove to be fatal. Thanks to the heroic Greek resistance and their countless sacrifices, the war tide had been permanently changed for Hitler due to the delay of this critical time table.

Nearly one million Hellenes died during that time. That was 14 percent of the population in 1940. That is equivalent to losing 39 million people in this country today in the case of a war to defend our country.

The entire Western world, discouraged and fearful of the Axis powers and the growing ugly war, took hope from these incredible victories. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill said of the Greeks: "Today we say that Greeks fight like heroes, from now on we will say that heroes fight like Greeks."

Mr. Speaker, "oxi" day is an inspiration to all those who cherish democracy and freedom. It marks defiance against terrible odds. As an American of Greek descent, I am proud to honor the memory of those brave patriots who fought for freedom for themselves and ultimately for all the free world on this important day.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION  
OF H.R. 1461, FEDERAL HOUSING  
FINANCE REFORM ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

**HON. MARK UDALL**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 26, 2005*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the "Federal Housing Finance Reform Act." This legislation not only address-

es key components to ensure the stability of mortgage lenders Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac but it does a great deal more to expand homeownership opportunities for millions of American families.

I am pleased this legislation creates a new and single regulator in the Federal Housing Finance Agency which has expanded strength, including full receivership powers in the event of a financial crisis and independent litigating authority. As these companies have a public mission they must comply with high standards and accountability on their activities.

As the price of housing continues to rise, especially in high cost communities, many families find the opportunity of homeownership elusive. I am pleased this legislation will allow Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae to loan up to the median average of homes in areas of high cost. This provision will help middle class families in Colorado towns such as Minturn, Balsalt and Frisco to receive needed resources so they can purchase a home.

I am also pleased the legislation includes an affordable housing fund. This fund would require these mortgage lenders to allocate a portion of their profits for purposes such as down payment assistance and closing costs for low income first time homebuyers.

While this bill has many strong elements it is important to note a significant shortcoming. I am outraged by provisions which subverts activities of nonprofit, charitable, faith based organizations and their affiliates. I find troubling that these groups would not be considered for funding from the affordable housing fund if they use their own funds to participate in political activities such as non partisan voter registration drives and get out the vote activities. This is especially troubling as the Federal Government continues to spend time and resources expanding voting opportunities with the Help America Vote Act and the National Voter Registration Act.

I hope the Senate and conference committee will reject such language to ensure that groups and organizations are not penalized for participation in the political process.

In spite of deficiencies the bill is worth supporting because it is important to strengthen regulations and operations of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. By doing so we continue to provide and further expand the American dream of homeownership to millions of Americans and their families.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS  
MONTH

**HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 28, 2005*

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the observance of October 2005 as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This month provides an important opportunity to raise the level of awareness and education among American women about the importance of annual mammograms and monthly breast self-examinations in the fight against breast cancer.

Like most American families, Long Islanders are all too familiar with the loss of a loved one to some form of cancer. Breast cancer in particular remains the leading cause of death

among women between the ages of 40 and 55. My sister-in-law, Abby Irwin, was among them, having died at the age of only 41 after a courageous eleven-year struggle against breast cancer.

This year alone, over 200,000 new cases of breast cancer will be diagnosed in the United States. In fact, a woman is diagnosed with a new case every three minutes. And one out of every eight women who live to the age of 85 will develop breast cancer in her lifetime.

However, there is good news: the survival rate of women who have breast cancer is 96 percent when detected in the early stages. I am very grateful that my mother, for instance, is a twenty-year survivor. She is one among two million survivors nationwide.

By observing Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we can do even more to promote the effectiveness of life-saving mammograms and monthly breast self-exams as the keys to early detection and prevention. Furthermore, we can recognize and applaud national and community organizations for their work in promoting awareness about breast cancer, providing information, and offering treatment to its sufferers. In my Long Island, New York district, I am proud to have an active and involved Breast Cancer Advisory Board that includes leading researchers, advocates and support personnel as well as survivors.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage each of my colleagues to join in paying tribute to the survivors, volunteers, and health care professionals who combat breast cancer and save lives each day. Until we find a cure, we should continue to do all that we can to increase research funding and expand prevention awareness for all women who are at risk today.

HONORING MARINE COLONEL  
WAYNE J. HALLEM OF FLINT, MI

**HON. DALE E. KILDEE**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 28, 2005*

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to U.S. Marine Colonel Wayne J. Hallem of my hometown of Flint, Michigan. Colonel Hallem is receiving a promotion to his present rank by Lt. General Michael A. Hough on November 2, 2005 at a ceremony at the Pentagon.

I have known Wayne and his family for many years. He spent his entire childhood in Flint, graduating from Flint Southwestern High School and Michigan State University, earning a degree in Criminal Justice and a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant via the Platoon Leadership Course (Combined) in 1983.

After completing Basic School in Quantico, Colonel Hallem reported to MCB Quantico Security Battalion for duty as a Military Police Platoon Commander. He then attended Naval Flight Training in Pensacola, Florida where he earned his designation as a Naval Aviator. After qualifying as a CH-53E pilot, Colonel Hallem reported to HMH-466, where he worked in a number of positions. He also made two deployments with the 15th and 11th Marine Expeditionary Units (Special Operations Capable) and participated in Operations Desert Storm, Desert Shield, Team Spirit, Desert Stay, Eager Mace and Nautical Mantis.

His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal with Gold Star, Air Medal with Numeral "2", Navy Commendation Medal, Selected Marine Corps Reserve Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" Device and several Unit Awards and Expeditionary Medals.

During his participation in Desert Storm, Colonel Hallem flew approximately 60 missions. After serving for 10 months in Desert Storm, Colonel Hallem volunteered to remain in the Middle East in order to allow married Marines to return to their families. That kind of sacrifice represents the spirit of Wayne Hallem and is why I am so honored to pay tribute to him today.

In March of 1993, Colonel Hallem reported to the 4th Marine Aircraft Wing in New Orleans where he worked as a pilot and instructor. But more importantly, it is here where Wayne met his wife, Denise. They were married in New Orleans in October of 1995 and they now have three children, Sidney, Jake and David. Colonel Hallem was stationed in Japan for several years before being transferred back to Andrew Air Force Base in Maryland. He also maintains a career flying commercial aircraft for Northwest Airlines. Colonel Hallem's commitment to a strong America was evident once again when he was mobilized back into active duty in support of the global war on terrorism. Today, Colonel Hallem is the Director of the Crisis Response Center, Marine Corps Operations Center, the Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

I know that family is very important to Wayne. He is close to his parents and his brother, Joe as well as his extended family. He is actively involved with all of his children. Whether he is watching Sidney play football and soccer, or playing Monopoly with Jake or playing catch with David, Wayne cherishes his time with his family. Despite his busy schedule, Wayne finds time to stay involved in neighborhood activities and go on field trips with his children's school.

Wayne also deeply values his relationship with his friends and colleagues. He was always looked upon as a leader in the Marines. In fact, many of his Marine friends continue to seek Wayne's counsel when they consider career decisions and personal issues. It is a role that is well suited for Wayne.

I have been friends with Wayne's parents for decades, and I know Joan and Jim are extremely proud of Wayne's accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Marine Colonel Wayne Hallem on his promotion to the rank of Colonel. His dedication and service to our country and his commitment as a husband, father and friend serve as an example for all of us. I wish Wayne all the best on his future endeavors.

HONORING BONNIE DETTMER—2005  
CASTRO VALLEY BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 28, 2005*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise with my colleague and neighbor Ms. BARBARA LEE to pay

tribute to Bonnie Dettmer who is being honored as the 2005 Castro Valley Business Person of the Year in Castro Valley, California.

Bonnie Dettmer died recently and her admirers felt it a fitting tribute to honor her as the 2005 Castro Valley Businessperson of the Year. She was the Castro Valley Chamber of Commerce's top administrator for twenty years and worked tirelessly, during her long tenure as Executive Director, to make Castro Valley a better place to live and work.

She achieved many milestones as Executive Director of the Castro Valley Chamber of Commerce. Her noteworthy accomplishments include personal outreach to businesses in Castro Valley to increase membership, serving as liaison to the Castro Valley Sheriff's Department and membership on the Sheriff's Advisory Committee, working to negotiate a water pipeline installation through Castro Valley that proved to be least disruptive to the business and community at large, honoring over 380 students for awards as Student Citizens of the Year at the Chamber's annual luncheon, leading an Anti-Racism march in Castro Valley and uniting the community to denounce bigotry and racism, and organizing hundreds of volunteers to successfully manage community events, such as the Fall Festival, Volunteer Recognition Night, and Citizen of the Year.

She is a recipient of the Rotary Paul Harris Fellowship Award for "Service Above Self", an award from the Private Industry Council and a Public Education Service Award for her commitment to the Student Citizen of the Year Program.

Friends and admirers describe Ms. Dettmer's love for Castro Valley. She would work her regular 40 hours a week and then add another 20 to 30 hours on nights and weekends. She left a special mark on any activity in which she was involved.

The Business Person of the Year Award will be presented in her memory at the Castro Valley Chamber's annual luncheon on November 1, 2005. We join the community in honoring her memory by designating the award to this well deserved, exemplary community leader. We shall miss Bonnie Dettmer. She leaves a legacy of accomplishments that will continue to be felt for many years to come.

THE SHOCK AND AWE OF  
REPUBLICAN SCHOOL VOUCHERS

**HON. MAJOR R. OWENS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, October 28, 2005*

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, disgracefully taking advantage of the misery of the evacuees of Katrina the Republicans have launched a backdoor, covert, but not so subtle effort to establish a federally funded school voucher program on a mass scale. The Republicans call this initiative by the code name Family Education Reimbursement Act (FERA). Under FERA parents would be given an account number that provides up to 6,700 dollars per general education student and 8,200 dollars per special education student. At present Federal voucher intervention exists only in Washington DC for 1,700 students. FERA may expand this reach of vouchers to more than 200,000 students. Overwhelming Federal