

I commend Charles for his admirable triumphs thus far and wish him success as he continues to complete in the future. He is an inspiration to all of us—and to quote him, “Who said getting older can’t be a blast?”

RECOGNIZING CENTENNIAL OF
SUSTAINED IMMIGRATION FROM
PHILIPPINES TO UNITED STATES
AND ACKNOWLEDGING CON-
TRIBUTIONS OF FILIPINO-AMER-
ICAN COMMUNITY

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2005

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 218, a resolution to recognize 2006 as the centennial of sustained immigration from the Philippines to the United States and to celebrate the achievements and contributions of Filipino Americans over the past century.

Immigration from the Philippines to the United States began in 1906 when the first significant numbers of Filipino immigrants arrived in Hawaii to work on the island’s sugar plantations. Today, a century later, the Filipino-American community’s numbers increase by nearly 60,000 new immigrants per year, making Filipinos the largest immigrant group from the Asia-Pacific region.

The Filipino-American community has added so much to the vibrant culture of Chicago and our country. The 9th Congressional District boasts about 17,000 Filipino residents, which makes it home to the 36th largest number of Filipino-Americans among Congressional districts.

I am particularly proud of the achievements by my constituents like Ms. Aurora Abella-Austriaco, a lawyer, who immigrated here from the Philippines. She was just appointed a member of the Committee on Character and Fitness, First District, by the State of Illinois Supreme Court on October 26, 2005. In addition to being partner of a Chicago law firm, she served as a member of the Filipino American Voters League from 1996–98. She is the current Chair of the Cook County States Attorney’s Asian Advisory Council and member of the Attorney General’s Asian Advisory Council and Clerk of the Circuit Court’s Asian Advisory Council. She is the past Treasurer of the League of Women Voters of Chicago and past Chair of the Chicago Bar Association. She also is Vice President of the Asian American Institute’s 2005 Board of Directors.

The history of America’s Filipino-American community is the quintessential American immigrant story of early struggle, pain and sacrifice, leading to success in overcoming ethnic, social, economic, political, and legal barriers to win a well-deserved place in our national fabric. Filipino-Americans, like Ms. Abella-Austriaco, have made incredible contributions in all parts of our society, including business, labor, politics, medicine, media and the arts. Filipino-Americans have served and are serving with special distinction in our Armed Forces, from World Wars I and II through the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and today in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Smithsonian Institution will be conducting the Filipino-American Centennial Com-

memoration 2006 with five public programs and at least six more in cities including the city of Chicago, which I represent. The programs will range from scholarly discussions and film showings to cultural performances providing historical overviews of Filipino-Americans in the United States.

This centennial celebration will provide every American an opportunity to celebrate a century of Filipino immigration to the United States.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN TUCKER

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of the National Park Service’s (NPS) great treasures, John Tucker. A 35-year employee with NPS John is retiring January 3, 2006 after serving as Superintendent of the Fort Sumter National Monument for more than 15 years. I commend Mr. Tucker for his years of exemplary service and dedication to preserving and protecting our nation’s treasures.

I came to know Mr. Tucker after being elected to Congress in 1992. Because of my love of history and preservation, he and I immediately found common ground. We have partnered on a number of initiatives during my tenure in Congress with the crowning achievement being the Fort Sumter Visitor Education Center. This magnificent \$15 million structure educates visitors about the causes of the Civil War, and it doesn’t flinch from the issue of slavery. Mr. Tucker’s vision and its implementation at this site are visually stunning and historically significant.

The Fort Sumter Visitor Education Center complex is also a great example of Mr. Tucker’s innovative partnership with the City of Charleston. The City built the South Carolina Aquarium adjacent to the Fort Sumter Visitor Education Center, and the NPS and the City jointly created Liberty Square, a wonderful park setting that accommodates public events and provides a respite for weary visitors to the Center complex. Mr. Tucker’s creativity and willingness to bring a variety of entities to the table have resulted in a destination that visitors to the Charleston area do not want to miss.

Mr. Tucker’s career with the NPS began the day after his college graduation on June 1, 1970. His first assignment was at Cades Cove in the Great Smokey Mountains National Park. The following January, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves and received his training at Parris Island. However, by July 1971, Mr. Tucker was back on the job with the NPS.

He received additional training by the NPS to become a ranger, and these skills served Mr. Tucker well as he traversed the United States serving at various parks: The Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Cades Cove sub-district; National Capital Park-East, Washington, D.C.; Ocmulgee National Monument, Macon, Georgia; and Cabrillo National Monument, San Diego, CA. From October 1977 until November 1980, Mr. Tucker served as the Chief Ranger at Fort Sumter National Monument, where he eventually became Superintendent.

Mr. Tucker’s first Superintendent assignment, however, was at the Andersonville National Historic Site from 1980 to August 1989. His work there included building relationships with the American ex-prisoners of war and restoring historic prison camps. He also had the privilege of serving as Superintendent of the Jimmy Carter National Historic Site when it was established in 1988. That same year he was granted NPS’s Superior Service Award.

Still the Fort Sumter National Monument beckoned him to return, and in August 1989, Mr. Tucker made his final transfer to become Superintendent of this collection of Charleston’s historical treasures. His arrival in Charleston was marked 6 weeks later by the arrival of Hurricane Hugo, another force that left its imprint on this historic city. It took him the next 2 years to repair the damage to the NPS site wrought by the hurricane’s fury.

In 1990, Charles Pinckney National Historic Site became part of the NPS inventory and was put under the auspices of Mr. Tucker at Fort Sumter. He has had responsibility in Charleston for 42 historic structures, ten monuments and memorials, 182 acres comprised of cultural sites, a curatorial collection of over 250,000 objects, five historic archaeological sites, and 45 cannon tubes of which 25 are carriage-mounted. His outstanding contributions were recognized by the NPS in 2002 when Mr. Tucker received the Superintendent of the Year award.

I know firsthand of the extraordinary work John Tucker has done for the National Park Service on behalf of the American people. Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Tucker on his tremendous career and his dedication to the preservation of our nation’s historic and natural treasures. I know that his leadership at the NPS will be sorely missed, and I hope that he will continue to be involved with many projects in the Charleston area some of which both he and I share a deep and abiding passion. I wish him good luck and Godspeed.

TRIBUTE TO MATT POMMER

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the work of a remarkable journalist—Matt Pommer of Madison, Wisconsin.

Matt Pommer is retiring from The Capital Times newspaper where he worked for nearly 45 years. The past 35 of those years were spent covering the State Capitol beat. During that time, he covered virtually all of the major stories in the state, including the work of seven Governors.

Matt Pommer is a true journalist, who stayed focused on the facts and worked to make certain that he got the details right. He has an extraordinary knowledge of the inner workings and history of Capitol activity which was reflected in the outstanding quality of his stories. On many issues, most notably the Wisconsin retirement system, he knew as much or more than the legislators working on the issue.

In his years covering legislation Matt was steadfast in his determination to keep the public informed of the on-goings in Wisconsin

government. He devoted his energies to bringing the story to his readers without any fear or favor. He had no interest in "spin".

Mr. Speaker, over the years I have had the privilege of reading Matt Pommer's work, and interacting with him during my service as a state legislator. He is a professional in every sense of the word.

On a lighter note, Matt and I enjoyed the opportunity to work together as "extras" in the film "Chain Reaction" with Keanu Reeves and Morgan Freeman. We were told that Director Andrew Davis preferred to fill the role of "extras" with people who actually worked in the job they were portraying. When he looked for a real journalist, there is little wonder that he found Matt Pommer.

Thank you Matt, for the years of service you have provided to the citizens of the State of Wisconsin and the readers of The Capital Times.

HONORING THE SACRIFICES OF MILITARY FAMILIES

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, in the coming weeks, American families will come together to celebrate the holidays and the start of a new year. Together, they will reflect on the events of 2005, and prepare for the challenges of the year ahead.

Sadly, for many families, this season will be a difficult one, and I rise today to pay tribute to those American families whose lives have been personally impacted by ongoing military operations around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I offer my deepest gratitude to the families of the men and women who are currently serving our nation overseas. I add my prayers for their safety and well being. And, I extend my humblest sympathies to the families of those brave soldiers who have made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our country.

In particular, I would like to take this opportunity to honor four American heroes and their families who reside in the Thirteenth Congressional District of Pennsylvania.

Major Jeffrey Toczykowski, age 30, was killed during combat operations in Al Anbar Province, Iraq, on November 3, 2005. He was a dedicated soldier who had asked loved ones to remember that, if he was killed in action, that he died doing something he believed in and that he had no regrets. My thoughts and prayers are with his family in Ambler, Jenkintown, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Sergeant Francis Straub, Jr., age 24, and Specialist John Kulick, age 35, were killed when a mine detonated and their unit received small arms fire while investigating a rocket-propelled grenade incident in Bayji, Iraq on August 9, 2005. Both of these men answered the call to serve—Sergeant Straub had dreams of becoming a Philadelphia Police Officer and Specialist Kulick was the most senior member of the Whitpain Fire Department. My thoughts and prayers are with their families, who live in Philadelphia, Jenkintown, and Dillsburg, Pennsylvania.

Specialist Kurt Krout, age 43, was killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle in Anaconda, Iraq on August 6, 2005. He was a committed soldier who joined the Marines at age 17. He

had reenlisted as a member of the Pennsylvania National Guard in 1995, and volunteered for deployment to Iraq in June 2004. My thoughts and prayers are with his family in Lansdale and Spinnerstown, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, during this holiday season, I know the dedication of these soldiers will be remembered by their family, friends, loved-ones, and the nation. And, I ask my colleagues, and all Americans, to join me in honoring their service and sacrifice for our nation.

VICTORY IN IRAQ RESOLUTION

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 612 and to congratulate parliamentary election.

The citizens of Iraq who desire peace and a prosperous future have demonstrated their commitment to those goals by participating in three national Iraqi elections. Reports indicate that Iraqis turned out in unprecedented numbers to vote in yesterday's election. I congratulate them for braving the instability and violence on the streets of Iraq in order to cast their votes.

Today, instead of offering a resolution to express our congratulations and hopes for a democratic Iraq, the Republican leadership has chosen to play politics, offering a divisive resolution. H. Res. 612 does nothing more than reiterate President Bush's failed strategy for Iraq. While all of us support democracy in Iraq, the Republican leadership has rolled over democratic procedures on the House floor, denying Democrats an opportunity to amend this resolution.

In addition, rather than laying out an exit strategy, as was done by Congressman JACK MURTHA almost one month ago, the Republican leadership continues to ignore the growing chaos and violence facing our soldiers. The Majority refuses to even debate this critical issue. Staying the course is a recipe for disaster that endangers our troops and the Iraqi people.

The withdrawal of American troops should begin now. The new Iraqi government has been formed, and it must take responsibility for forging its own path toward stability and democracy. In polls, the Iraqi people have been clear: they do not believe coalition troops are providing stability and security, and they believe it is time for our troops to come home. The U.S. should provide diplomatic and financial support to an international effort to help the Iraqi government provide security and consolidate democracy.

I have been contacted by many of my constituents who understand that H. Res. 612 is nothing more than a political stunt. The Republican Congress is no longer fooling the American people. In overwhelming numbers, they think it was a mistake to go to war in Iraq; they think the Bush Administration mishandled the war; and they don't support this war. Our troops remain far from home, endangered by a growing insurgency. Now that Iraq has a democratically-elected government, it is time for our troops to come home in order to spend the holidays with the ones they love.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mrs. McCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, because of a family matter, I missed several recent votes. I would like the RECORD to reflect how I would have voted on those votes. Rollcall No. 639—Yea; Rollcall No. 640—Yea; Rollcall No. 641—Yea; Rollcall No. 642—Yea; Rollcall No. 643—Yea; Rollcall No. 644—Nay; Rollcall No. 645—No; Rollcall No. 646—Nay; Rollcall No. 647—Yea; Rollcall No. 648—No; Rollcall No. 649—Yea; Rollcall No. 650—Yea; Rollcall No. 651—Yea; Rollcall No. 652—Yea; Rollcall No. 653—No; Rollcall No. 654—Yea; Rollcall No. 655—Yes; Rollcall No. 656—No; Rollcall No. 657—No; Rollcall No. 658—No; Rollcall No. 659—No; Rollcall No. 660—Yes; Rollcall No. 661—No; Rollcall No. 662—Yea; Rollcall No. 663—No; Rollcall No. 664—Yea.

VICTORY IN IRAQ RESOLUTION

SPEECH OF

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I must oppose H. Res. 612 because of my great respect and admiration for our men and women serving in Iraq. Resolution 612 endorses an open-ended commitment of U.S. troops in Iraq and embodies President Bush's latest attempt to justify the U.S. involvement in Iraq. The President and his Congressional allies claim that the Iraqi parliamentary elections were a "crucial victory" in establishing a democracy in Iraq. Thus, through this election, is "victory" in Iraq inevitable?

America has heard this type of reasoning before from President Johnson during the Vietnam War. In 1967, as the South Vietnamese freely elected their government, President Johnson then declared the Vietnamese election had established a democracy supported by the Vietnamese people. After this Vietnamese election, 38,000 more Americans died in Southeast Asia. Since May 1, 2003 when President Bush declared our "Mission Accomplished" in Iraq, approximately 2000 more U.S. troops have died in Iraq.

Under this resolution, the call to bring our troops home hinges on a "victory". What is the victory that the President and his Congressional supporters envision for the U.S. in Iraq? This is not a war like our grandparents fought. There is no country to hoist the white flag of surrender. There is no recognized political entity which the U.S. can sign a peace agreement with. Our brave military men and women are trying to build a democracy in a country that views our U.S. troops as occupiers and almost one half of the Iraqi people believe it is justifiable to kill U.S. troops! The U.S. military has been used to prop up a government being threatened by a guerrilla insurgency. With this Iraqi insurgency, I cannot envision an event, a goal or a date where the resolution's "victory" in Iraq can indisputably be achieved.

Every Member of the United States House of Representatives would have supported this