

the loss, or loss of use, of both arms at or above both elbows.

An inadvertent error occurred in the drafting of the Veterans Benefits Improvement Act of 2004, which the Committee discovered too late to be corrected without jeopardizing passage of the same bill in both the House and Senate before adjournment. The error resulted in the omission of the change made by Public Law 108-183 for catastrophically disabled servicemembers. H.R. 1292 serves to correct that oversight.

Mr. Speaker, this is a necessary correction to ensure the Department of Veterans Affairs continues to assist those severely disabled servicemembers who require their homes be adapted to their disability. I urge my colleagues to support it.

HOUSE DEMOCRACY ASSISTANCE  
COMMISSION RESOLUTION

**HON. RUSH D. HOLT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005*

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was pleased to vote in support of the resolution (H. Res. 135) sponsored by U.S. Representative DAVID DREIER from California. Adoption of this measure will establish the House Democracy Assistance Commission.

This new internal commission of House members will work closely with our legislative counterparts in other fledgling democracies to encourage the development of democratic processes and institutions. In addition, it will expand information exchanges and the sharing of first-hand knowledge of the inner workings of functioning democracies. Finally, this new commission will provide recommendations to the Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development on what types of material assistance, such as modern automation, information technology, and library systems will most help our counterpart parliamentarians to more effectively perform their vital tasks of representation and democratic participation.

The work that this commission will perform has already been validated in prior similar efforts. Between 1990 and 1996, the informal "Frost-Solomon Task Force" provided invaluable technical assistance and equipment to Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Russia. The creation of this new commission will build upon that solid precedent in enhancing democratic institution-building where democratic engagement and republican government are new to what had previously been undemocratic societies.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION  
TO AWARD THE CONGRESSIONAL  
GOLD MEDAL TO THE TUSKEGEE  
AIRMEN

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce my recent introduction of legislation to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the

Tuskegee Airmen. The Congressional Gold Medal was first awarded over 200 years ago to Americans whose courage and determination in battle exemplified the spirit of our nation.

In keeping with this tradition, I am honored to join with Senator LEVIN in concurrently introducing this legislation to bestow Congress' highest honor to this deserving group of individuals.

The Tuskegee Airmen overcame segregation and prejudice to become one of the most highly respected fighter groups of World War II. In so doing, they helped to destroy the racist conceptions of their time, and set in motion the eventual desegregation of the Armed Services.

Before 1940, African Americans were barred from flying for the U.S. military. However, the great threat posed by the Nazis, and the demands of Black Americans for full citizenship, including the right to fight for their country as patriots, persuaded the American government to provide an opportunity for African Americans to serve, even though in segregated units.

The Airmen completed 15,500 missions, destroyed 260 enemy aircraft, sank one enemy destroyer, and demolished numerous enemy installations. They also would have the WWII distinction of never losing a bomber under their escort, despite flying in some of the enemies' most heavily defended areas.

During their World War II service, the Airmen would earn 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 744 Air Medals, 8 Purple Hearts, and 14 Bronze Stars. At the war's end they had not only helped to defeat the Germans, they helped to set in motion the eventual desegregation of the Armed Services a few years later.

The Tuskegee Airmen were patriots in the truest sense of the word. Their belief in themselves, and in the promise of America, gave them the strength to overcome incredible obstacles, and accomplish what was then considered impossible. Their courage inspired a generation, and their determination strengthened a nation.

The Tuskegee Airmen deserve an honor befitting their contribution to our country, so I respectfully urge my fellow colleagues to support this legislation.

IN CELEBRATION OF ARTS  
ADVOCACY DAY 2005

**HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 15, 2005*

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Arts Advocacy Day. As Congress considers the budget and appropriations bills for fiscal year 2006, the importance of the arts should be recognized for a number of reasons.

First, the arts contribute significantly to local economic development. As of January 2005 in the Eleventh Congressional District of Ohio there were 1,212 arts-related businesses that employed 10,174 people. This data, from Dun & Bradstreet, indicates that between 2004 and 2005, arts-related businesses grew at a faster rate than total U.S. business growth. At the same time, as total U.S. jobs shrank by 1.9

percent, the decline in arts-related businesses was 0.8 percent, in other words less than half that rate. Arts-related businesses are clearly good for business and good for the economy. But the arts have greater effects than these.

An examination of SAT scores from the College Board in the period 2002 through 2004 reflects a startling effect. Data from Ohio students that studied Art History, Dance, Drama, Music, Photography/Film, or Studio Art reflected higher Verbal and Math SAT scores than students that didn't study any of these subjects. To further quantify this effect, let me provide an example: Ohio students in music performance reflected a Mean Verbal SAT score of 554 in 2004 and a Mean Math score of 552. In contrast, Ohio students not exposed to arts courses demonstrated a 2004 Mean Verbal SAT score of 497 and a Mean Math score of 511. This forty point differential benefit is very easy to understand. Nationally, similar effects were reflected in the test scores of students that studied a variety of arts disciplines: Art History, Dance, Drama, Photography/Film, or Studio Art.

As schools focus on raising test scores, the importance of arts cannot be overstated. But conflicting attitudes and practices exist in Ohio's schools. A 2000 survey by the Ohio Alliance For Arts Education reflected that more than 70 percent of those surveyed in Ohio's public schools believed that music and visual arts are as important as other academic subjects. Yet, in practice over 11 years, public schools demonstrated overall reductions in arts and music education. Fewer private schools (than public schools) required achievement in the arts as a graduation requirement. But a higher percentage of private schools believed that creative writing, music, visual arts, and drama are as important as other academic subjects. Here, theory and practice don't match.

It is clear that the arts enhance student ability. During this time of enhanced accountability and high stakes academic testing, it would make sense to ensure that every child, kindergarten through twelfth grade, is provided an opportunity to participate in the arts. Many school districts are experiencing financial difficulty. To that end, instead of punishing schools for failing test scores, we should provide them with the resources needed to implement quality arts education programs—which correlate with increased test scores. Arts education enhances literacy. And we should go further than haphazardly sticking in a few programs here and there. Quality matters. We must be concerned about the quality of subject matter as well as teacher training and development.

The No Child Left Behind Act, NCLB, has recognized the arts as a core academic subject, making arts programs eligible for inclusion in broad funding categories such as teacher training, school reform, and technology. In spite of this designation, NCLB has led to the erosion of arts education. Economically disadvantaged schools don't have sufficient resources to cover enhanced intensive math and English studies, and quality arts education programs. A 2004 report by the Council for Basic Education found that "the greatest erosion of the curriculum is occurring in schools with high minority populations—the very populations whose access to such a curriculum has been historically most limited." We

must do better. The arts impart discipline, improve literacy, and enhance cultural understanding. If we have determined that students and teachers need to be held accountable, we must also ensure that schools, particularly schools that serve disadvantaged students, have adequate resources to provide strong instruction in math and English, as well as the arts. Complex problems like student achievement require varied solutions and rich curricula.

Finally, as Congress considers the fiscal year 2006 appropriations bills, we should support increases in public funding. Each dollar of funding to the National Endowment for the Arts leverages at least \$7 from other sources to support full time jobs. This returns revenue to the Federal Government in income taxes at a rate of nearly eight to one. That's not a bad investment. Public spending on the humanities through programs such as the National Endowment for the Humanities initiative We The People, advances understanding of American history, culture, and values. Increasingly, we live in an interdependent world in which cultural understanding is a key aspect of cooperative efforts ranging from economic development to security cooperation.

I salute the arts industries and cultural organizations of the Eleventh District of Ohio as well as the individual artists, educators, and advocates. I thank the arts community for effectively conveying its importance on Arts Advocacy Day, and hope that we as a Congress continue to demonstrate a level of support that will enable the arts to thrive.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2005 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 4

2 p.m.  
Armed Services  
Strategic Forces Subcommittee  
To hold hearings to examine strategic forces and nuclear weapons issues in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2006; to be followed by a closed hearing in SR-232A.  
SR-222

APRIL 6

10 a.m.  
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry  
To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Charles F. Conner, of Indiana, to be Deputy Secretary of Agriculture.  
SR-328A

APRIL 14

10 a.m.  
Veterans' Affairs  
To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans Affairs to examine the legislative presentations of the Military Officers Association of America, the National Association of State Director of Veterans Affairs, AMVETS, the American Ex-Prisoners of War, and Vietnam Veterans of America.  
345 CHOB

APRIL 21

10 a.m.  
Veterans' Affairs  
To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans Affairs to examine the legislative presentations of the Fleet Reserve Association, the Air Force Sergeants Association, the Retired Enlisted Association, and the Gold Star Wives of America.  
345 CHOB

SEPTEMBER 20

10 a.m.  
Veterans' Affairs  
To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans Affairs to examine the legislative presentation of the American Legion.  
345 CHOB