

SUPPORTING THE HOUSE DEMOCRACY ASSISTANCE COMMISSION RESOLUTION

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 135, the House Democracy Assistance Commission Resolution. This Resolution forms a commission within the House of Representatives to assist emerging democracies around the world. As the standard-bearer for a modern democratic nation, it is only fitting that Congress lend its expertise to all countries attempting to follow our example.

In the previous decade, Congress formed a task force to provide equipment and technical assistance to emerging democracies in Eastern and Central Europe. The results of that task force, known as the "Frost-Solomon Task Force," can be seen in the strengthening of the democratic institutions in these countries. The recent elections in Ukraine are a perfect example of how democracy is beginning to take hold in these nations. One of the hallmarks of a truly democratic nation is the smooth transition of power from one political party to another. While democracy eventually prevailed in Ukraine, the political turmoil during its elections serves as a reminder of how new and fragile these democracies are. It is crucial that we, as a nation, continue to support all countries in their progress towards maintaining a stable democracy.

The establishment of a commission to lend assistance to these emerging democracies is an important and common-sense action Congress can take to support and foster the global spread of democracy. This commission will lend experience and expertise to nations around the world. It will further allow members and staff of parliaments of selected countries to visit the House of Representatives and its support agencies in order to gain first hand knowledge. This commission is a valuable and cost-effective diplomatic tool our nation can employ to assist in spreading the freedom of democracy around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support the formation of a commission to assist emerging democracies. I urge my colleagues' support for this important legislation.

RECOGNITION OF BATON ROUGE MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL AS A WINNER OF THE KENNEDY CENTER CREATIVE TICKET NATIONAL SCHOOL OF DISTINCTION AWARD

HON. WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a valued educational institution—Baton Rouge Magnet High School—a 2003–04 school year Winner of the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network Creative Ticket National School of Distinction Award. This school is an institution that combines academic excellence with tradition, achieving excellence in the arts.

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts has recognized five schools as recipients for the 2003–04 award. The Creative Ticket National School of Distinction Award recognizes schools that have done an outstanding job of making the arts an essential part of the education of their students.

In addition to their recognition of excellence in the Performing Arts by the Kennedy Center, Baton Rouge Magnet High School held its Blue Ribbon award ceremony on Thursday, October 23, 2003. The Blue Ribbon Schools Programs honors public and private K–12 schools which are academically superior in their states or that demonstrate dramatic gains in student achievement. BRMHS is one of only two public high schools, and five total schools in Louisiana, and one of 248 nationally recognized as Blue Ribbon schools. It is the second time Baton Rouge Magnet High has been recognized with the honor. It is an award colleges look favorably in when reviewing students' resumes.

Thank you, Baton Rouge Magnet High School for your many years of dedication to quality education, arts programs and your outstanding representation of Louisiana.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE FARM LABOR ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to honor the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) and their historic achievements.

For more than 35 years, FLOC has represented the guest workers who labor in our fields and farms bringing food to our tables. They are striving to achieve the American dream, a good-paying job in a safe workplace and the ability to provide for their families. Something that everyone in America can understand.

Under the leadership of FLOC's president, Baldemar Velasquez, the organization has achieved historic gains—including the first labor agreement in U.S. history to cover guest workers. Other significant achievements include increasing workers wages, improving worker housing, and protection against harmful pesticides. FLOC's actions will provide a safer working environment for its members and a better product for the consumer.

Today, FLOC will open an office in Monterrey, Mexico, its first outside the U.S. The office will help oversee the recruitment and transportation of guest workers. All of us have heard the nightmarish stories of coyotes smuggling workers across the border only to have the workers trapped in de-facto indentured servitude or perish in the unsafe crossing. FLOC has worked to bring workers to the U.S. legally, informing them of their rights as guest workers.

Without FLOC's assistance, so many workers would fall through the cracks. Today I celebrate FLOC's accomplishments and success. Their legacy is greater than the agreements signed. Their legacy is a workforce that is paid a living wage and laboring in a safe environment. Their legacy is hope.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ATASCOSA COUNTY COMMISSIONER DAVID CABALLERO

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Atascosa County Commissioner David Caballero for undertaking a lifetime of distinguished public service.

Commissioner Caballero has followed in the footsteps of his father, who was once a long-serving Atascosa Constable, in seeking an elected position of leadership. After serving his first term, his tireless devotion to ensuring that Atascosa County continues to develop economically, creating more jobs for the constituents he serves, led him to pursue and win term of service as County Commissioner.

Most importantly, Commissioner Caballero has continued to hold the values of community, faith and family in the highest regard. Nothing exemplifies this more than his committed participation with the Pleasanton Little League, St. Andrews Catholic Church of Pleasanton, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church of Leming, and the Verdi Community Center.

He has spearheaded and now hosts an Annual Easter Egg Hunt that serves as an excellent opportunity to draw the entire community of families together in his precinct. Commissioner Caballero most deserves recognition for choosing to be an agent for real change, focusing on making government smarter and serving his constituency while saving his County money.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand in recognition of the dedication of Atascosa County Commissioner David Caballero.

A TRIBUTE TO FLORA DUNAIANS, 29TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR—2005

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the contributions and sacrifices made by our Nation's women during the month of March. It is an honor to pay homage to outstanding women who are making a difference in my Congressional District.

I would like to recognize an outstanding woman in my Congressional District, Ms. Flora Dunaians. For many years, Flora has brought an abounding spirit and energy to her service in the community. Those fortunate enough to meet and work with Flora instantly recognize her enthusiasm and passion for helping others, especially on behalf of the Armenian American community and the arts.

Born and raised in Pasadena, Flora Jane Calusdian married George Dunaians in 1958 and they had 2 daughters, Gigi and Suzie. In 1968 the Dunaians formed their own business, Western Medical Supply, Inc., where Flora is currently the Vice President and Secretary.

Flora is devoted to her church and community. For over 40 years, Flora has been active at St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Apostolic Church, serving as Trustee and member

of the St. Gregory Auxiliary. On the occasion of the visit of His Holiness Vasken I, Catholicos of All Armenians to the United States in 1987, Flora and George donated to the new cathedral fund for the Diocese. In 1988 following the devastating earthquake in Armenia, the Dunaians arranged for donated emergency goods to be flown to Yerevan on Armand Hammer's private plane. She has been involved in many church-related projects throughout the Diocese, such as the Operation Karabakh Fund, Operation Winter Rescue and Operation Fuel, and continues to support various projects throughout the Diocese and the Holy See of Etchmiadzin.

Constantly finding ways to improve the social condition for children in Armenia, Flora co-founded Developmental Services for Armenia, a non-profit organization that helps schools, orphanages and short term projects. She also established and continues to support a dental clinic at the Nork Military Academy in Yerevan.

Flora and George are both founding members of the Consulate of the Republic of Armenia in Los Angeles. Flora is also a board member of the Armenian Assembly of America, the National Board of Team Armenia, and the Armenian Professional Society, where she and her husband have opened their home to raise funds for student scholarships for the last 25 years.

In addition to her extensive community service, Flora is a supporter of the Arpa Foundation for Film, Music and Art, the Pasadena Playhouse, and the New York Foundation for the Arts.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an outstanding woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Flora Dunaians. The entire community joins me in thanking Flora for her success and continued efforts toward making the 29th Congressional District a more enjoyable place in which to live and work.

RECOGNIZING THE 1000TH VICTORY
OF COACH RON POLK

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker; on February 25, Coach Ron Polk achieved another impressive milestone at Mississippi State University. With the Bulldogs defeat of the Eastern Illinois Panthers in a 3-1 game, Coach Polk marked his 1000th win in 26 seasons at Mississippi State University.

Before a crowd of about 2,400 fans in the Polk-DeMent Stadium—which honors Coach Polk—the Bulldogs won their season opener and then celebrated this Mississippi State icon at a post game ceremony. Coach Polk, in his usual humble and humorous manner told reporters on scene, "It's just a number. All 1,000 wins means is that you haven't died yet and you've coached a long time. We have some really great players here but I haven't had time to reflect back on that success yet." Bulldog pitcher Alan Johnson said, "We didn't feel any added pressure. Coach Polk didn't mention it to us one time. However, we knew we were at 999, going for the big win. It feels good to win the first game but it also feels really good to be a part of Coach Polk's 1000th win."

Coach Polk is the all-time most winning coach in Southeastern Conference history and began the 2004 season as Number 12 among Division I's all-time coaching ranks. His record now stands at 1234-602-2 in 32 seasons as a collegiate head coach and 1000-490-2 in 26 seasons at Mississippi State. He has twice been honored as the National Coach of the Year (1973 and 1985) and was also honored by his peers as the recipient of the ABCA's Lefty Gomez Award. Coach Polk has earned his place in the American Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame (1995), the State of Mississippi and the Mississippi State University Sports Hall of Fame (1998), and the Georgia Southern University Hall of Fame (1990). He also rates as one of only three head coaches in the history of college baseball to guide three different schools to the NCAA College World Series.

Ron Polk authored "The Baseball Playbook", the Nation's leading college textbook for baseball, and is featured in a recently published book, "6 Psychological Factors for Success: America's Most Successful Coaches Reveal the Path to Competitive Excellence."

Coach Polk has also been actively involved with coaching in international baseball. He has completed seven tours as a member of the coaching staff for the U.S.A. National Baseball Team, twice serving as the head coach (1991 and 1998) and five times as assistant coach. Two of his teams represented the United States in the Olympic Games. He was an assistant coach on the gold medal-winning U.S. team in the 1988 Olympics and on the bronze medal-winning U.S. team in the 1996 Olympics. Coach Polk has also skippered Mississippi State teams in international competition including a goodwill summer tour of West Germany in 1976 and in 1982 and competition at the World Amateur Tournament in the Netherlands.

And Mr. Speaker, these numbers and records and achievements do not include his 1997 victory as Honorary Coach of the Republicans in the Annual Congressional Baseball Game, which I will remind my colleagues, we won. I take this opportunity to salute and honor Coach Polk's achievements at this 1000 MSU win milestone. As this and other seasons continue, I know we will see the steady hand and experienced leadership of Coach Ron Polk. He is the lead spokesman for baseball at Mississippi State University, and beyond, the king of college baseball.

A TRIBUTE TO ANITA BURSON

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Anita Burson who has dedicated her life to empowering disenfranchised citizens, improving her community and strengthening her church.

The first child of a distinguished Baptist minister and church leader, Anita was born at the segregated Jubilee Hospital in Henderson, North Carolina, on the Fourth of July at the conclusion of Sunday services, to Rev. Dr. O. B. J. Burson and Katie Leak Burson, an educator and engineer. Her late parents were college sweethearts at Shaw University. Anita is a direct Native American descendant.

A child of the parsonage during the turbulent last days of de facto segregation, Anita was privileged to witness daily the planning and activities involved in the fight for desegregation. She was also privileged to meet and hear some of the great pulpits and civil rights leaders of the time, who were often guests in the family home. Anita was immersed in religious activity, as well as education and civic awareness. One of her strongest memories of the struggle for civil rights was the evening white supremacist terrorists fired bullets into the church her father pastored in Coley Springs, North Carolina, while an integrated prayer rally and training sessions for voter registration and civil demonstrations were in progress. Those bullets remain lodged in the doors of that church sanctuary today.

Anita attended public schools in North Carolina and Virginia, where she was one of the first students to integrate a Summer Enrichment Program for gifted students. Later the family moved to Brooklyn, New York where she completed high school. While still a high school student, she organized the first on-site voter registration campaign for 18-year-olds, at her high school. During her college career, she became the first Black woman to serve as an elected student officer at Finch College, and the first to earn a position on the Academic Council. Anita graduated from Finch/Marymount Manhattan College with a Bachelor's Degree in Cultural Anthropology & Sociology.

In 1977, Anita was elected to Community School Board #17, and became a member of the first Black majority in New York City's Crown Heights-Flatbush district in Brooklyn. She served as an officer on that body's executive board. Later, as a political campaign professional, she worked for President Jimmy Carter. She has served as a consultant to candidates for Federal, statewide and municipal legislative offices and other positions.

The Rev. O. B. J. Burson's role as a religious and civic leader ushered Anita into a life of community awareness and commitment. Her life has always been deeply rooted in the Baptist and AME Zion denominations. She is the great-great-granddaughter of Rev. Washington Leak and great-granddaughter of Rev. Thomas J. Leak, two prominent AME Zion leaders and educators. She is a fourth generation member of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc. (NBC,USA); her paternal great-grandfather and his brother were present at its original meetings. Continuing that legacy in 1992 and 1993, Anita became the first outside consultant (in 112 years) for The NBC, U.S.A., to coordinate convention activity for its annual board meeting and annual session held in New York City.

Professionally, Anita is best known for her unparalleled skill as an advisor to pastors, clergy, denominational organizations, and to individuals, groups and corporations seeking to relate better to them. With nearly 25 years of experience in all aspects of professional campaign management and not-for-profit organizational development, Anita's professional acumen has been enhanced by her life's experiences. She is noted for her creative concepts and approaches to building sustainable relationships and enhancing networks between the public and private sector and religious organizations. Anita is a frequent speaker at churches, and for special events within local