

years, after being handpicked by the administration as a student teacher.

Mrs. Kolb is a dedicated practitioner of bilingual education. She aims to make her students into enthusiastic readers and writers, in both English and Spanish. Her methods have produced consistent results: every year her students meet or exceed the state requirements in math and reading.

In addition to her distinguished career in education, Mrs. Kolb is also a military veteran. She enlisted in the United States Navy after high school, and worked as a dental technician. She is a consistent innovator in education. Mrs. Kolb eagerly applies new computer technology and teaching techniques in her classroom, using new information to reinforce time-tested procedures. She has been recognized for her achievements many times, receiving the 2004 Outstanding Teacher Award from the VFW as well as Teacher of the Year from her own Crockett Elementary School.

Mary Anne Kolb is one of our state's outstanding educators. Her tireless work has contributed to a brighter future for hundreds of Texan children, and her energy serves as an example to us all. I am proud to have the opportunity to recognize her here today.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EMPLOYEE
FREE CHOICE ACT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2005

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the right of working men and women to freely organize and bargain collectively is a fundamental human right. It is a long-time American value, a principle recognized by international agreement, and a standard by which our government measures adherence to democratic principles.

And yet, disregard for the right of free association is rampant right here. In its report entitled, "Unfair Advantage," Human Rights Watch (2000) declared—

Many workers who try to form and join trade unions to bargain with their employers are spied on, harassed, pressured, threatened, suspended, fired, deported or otherwise victimized in reprisal for their exercise of the right to freedom of association.

Labor law enforcement efforts often fail to deter unlawful conduct. When the law is applied, enervating delays and weak remedies invite continued violations.

This is not a report on human rights abuses in Iran, or Honduras, or China. This subject is the United States of America.

When the National Labor Relations Act was enacted 70 years ago, it represented the hope of millions of Americans who sought to gain the right to bargain with their employer. Today, however, that law has become so weakened and so easily manipulated that it is one of the greatest hindrances to the right of Americans to form and join unions.

Today, I am honored to be joined by the Hon. PETER T. KING and 121 of our colleagues in introducing the Employee Free Choice Act. We commit ourselves to a new effort to strengthen and protect a human right and an American principle: the right of men and women to band together to improve their working conditions.

The Employee Free Choice Act is a bipartisan bill designed to provide a realistic ability for working men and women to form and join unions.

The Employee Free Choice Act provides: A simple, fair, direct method for workers to form unions by signing cards or petitions; three times the amount of lost pay when a worker is fired during an organizing campaign or first-contract negotiations; and impartial mediation or arbitration to resolve disputes over first-time labor contracts.

Employees and the nation benefit from a strong union movement. Median weekly wages of union workers are 28% higher than nonunion workers. Almost 70% of union workers have a guaranteed retirement benefit, five times the likelihood for a nonunion worker. Eighty percent of union workers have health insurance compared to 50% of nonunion workers.

The ten States with the highest percentage of organized workers have higher household incomes, greater medical insurance coverage, higher education spending per pupil, lower violent crime rates, fewer people living in poverty, and a greater electoral participation than the ten States with lowest percentage of organized workers. This issue is not just about human rights—it's about economic security for us all.

Workers should be able to make the decision about union representation without intimidation, indoctrination or misinformation. When we undercut the ability of working men and women to join unions, we are abandoning our own history and ideals, and sending a terrible message to the rest of the world. I commend this legislation to the attention of my colleagues and urge those who yet to do so, to join me in sponsoring this important legislation.

RECOGNIZING EQUAL PAY DAY

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2005

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Equal Pay Day. On this day, thousands of advocates across the country will participate in events to bring attention to the continued gender wage gap.

The Equal Pay Act, enacted in 1963, established pay equity for women in the United States. Nonetheless, 40 years after the enactment, women are still paid less than men—despite similar education, skills and experience. In fact, women still only earn 76 cents to each dollar paid to their male counterparts.

Although we have made progress since 1963, women have not yet achieved pay equity. Women, particularly single mothers, continue to face financial burdens, including the cost of rent, groceries and utilities. Compounding this situation is the reality that the wage gap inevitably leaves women with less money for retirement, smaller pensions and will also disproportionately depend on social security.

While working women in California are farther along the road to reaching equal pay in comparison to other states, the gap still exists. In 2000, women in California earned 82 cents as much per hour as men. Regrettably, at this

current rate, women in California will not have pay equity until 2044.

Women of color are at an even higher disadvantage than non-minority women. Latinas earn merely 53 cents and African American women earn 65 cents for every dollar that men earn. We must recognize workplace discrimination and barriers faced by women of color across the country.

The wage gap between men and women is unacceptable. That is why I strongly support the "Paycheck Fairness Act," introduced by Representative DELAURO. This bill will take the necessary steps to eliminate gender-based wage discrimination and ensure that women will finally earn what men earn for doing the same job. I urge Congress to pass this bill and end wage discrimination for all women.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF ROSALINDA DE LA ROSA,
BONHAM EARLY CHILDHOOD
CENTER TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Teacher of the Year Rosalinda De La Rosa for her countless contributions to the children of the Bonham Early Childhood Center.

Mrs. De La Rosa began her career at Bonham by teaching Pre-Kindergarten Bilingual Education. She has now taught at Bonham for 2 years. She has a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Texas State University and she is certified in Early Childhood Education and Bilingual Education.

Mrs. De La Rosa is a teacher who loves to shape and mold the minds of her students. She helps them understand that school is a safe and wonderful environment and encourages them to learn everything that they can. She teaches them that even though they may be young they are important to the class, and she helps them understand about classrooms and rules.

Her goal as a teacher is to make every day an enjoyable day by letting her preschoolers know that she cares about them and that she is there to listen to their concerns.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have Mrs. De La Rosa teaching the students of my district and I am honored to have had the chance to recognize her today.

HONORING THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE WOODBURY LIONS
CLUB

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2005

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 70th anniversary of the Woodbury Lions Club. The Lions Club motto is "We Serve," and for 70 years, the Woodbury Lions have been serving Cannon County well.

The Woodbury Lions Club has grown significantly from its humble beginnings in 1935 when Minor Bragg first explained Lionism to a

group of men in Lee Baker's Drug Store. Weeks later, 21 men formed the club in S.D. Wooten's Grocery Store. Now, the club has more than 100 members and meets in Lions Memorial Building.

The Lions may be best known for their outstanding work in providing vision services to the needy. When Helen Keller addressed the Lions Club's 1925 International Convention, she called upon them to become "Knights of the Blind in the crusade against darkness." The Lions answered that call. Today, more than 46,000 clubs worldwide are dedicated to providing vision screening in schools as well as eyeglasses and surgery to those in need.

Lions also are committed to building parks and working with youth in their communities. The Woodbury Lions have built Lions Field and a walking trail to provide residents with more opportunities to enjoy the natural beauty of Cannon County. In addition, the Lions work closely with organizations such as Boy Scouts and 4-H. They also have introduced Lioness and Leo Clubs at local schools to instill the value of service to our future leaders.

Woodbury is a better place because of the wonderful work of the Woodbury Lions Club. I commend the Lions for all they do, and I congratulate them on 70 years of service.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF SHERRI HARRIS STOKES,
MILLER JUNIOR HIGH TEACHER
OF THE YEAR

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 19, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the accomplishments of Sherri Harris Stokes, Miller Junior High Teacher of the Year.

Mrs. Stokes has a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from Texas A&M University. She is certified in kindergarten, mathematics, and gifted and talented education. She has taught mathematics at Miller Junior High for 6 years, and is already producing excellent results.

Mrs. Stokes knows that math can be intimidating for many students, and works constantly in her classroom to make mathematics more accessible, and to help her students build confidence in the subject. She constantly challenges her students and encourages them to try new things, an approach she learned from the mentors who were important in her own development.

She has been heavily involved in helping students grow outside her classroom, as well. She has served for 3 years as the Math Department Chair, 4 years as a National Junior Honors Society Sponsor, and 1 year as a Student Council Sponsor. She strives to make a personal connection with students, continuing to check on their progress as they move forward into high school.

Teachers of math are enormously important for getting our children ready for the jobs of the 21st century, and Mrs. Stokes has worked unfailingly toward that goal. Her commitment to education and to her students is laudable, and I am proud to have had the chance to recognize her here today.