

consciousness by participating in a variety of interfaith endeavors, spreading understanding of Jewish heritage, and fighting to break down racial barriers in the United States. Rabbi Akselrad served as President of the Northern California Board of Rabbis, the Western Association of Reform Rabbis, and the Palo Alto Ministerial Association. When he became Rabbi Emeritus in 1987, Rabbi Richard A. Block took on his role as Senior Rabbi. For 12 years, Rabbi Block led the congregation, initiating a process of educational innovation he dubbed "life-long learning," which inspired a national partnership, the "Experiment in Congregational Education." His successor, Rabbi Janet Ross Marder, has been leading Beth Am since she became Senior Rabbi in 1999. She served as the first woman President of the Pacific Association of Reform Rabbis, and the first woman President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. She's married to Rabbi Sheldon Marder of the Jewish Home in San Francisco, and together they are raising 2 daughters, Betsy and Rachel.

Mr. Speaker, I'm exceedingly proud to honor Congregation Beth Am as it celebrates its 50th anniversary. For a half century it's been a center of worship and service and it has truly lived up to its name, Beth Am, which translates from Hebrew to "House of the People." Beth Am is a source of pride to everyone in our Congressional District and will continue to be a pillar of our community for decades to come.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROGER F. WICKER

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 20, 2005

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 90, the vote to suspend the rules and pass S. 686, a bill for the relief of the parents of Theresa Marie Schiavo, I was unavoidably absent. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

TENNESSEE CRIMINAL JUSTICE LANGUAGE ACADEMY

HON. LINCOLN DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 20, 2005

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts of individuals in Tennessee who are providing a much needed training program for the law enforcement community. Columbia State Community College under the direction of its President, Dr. Rebecca Hawkins, in partnership with the Governor's Highway Safety Office directed by the distinguished Charles Taylor, along with countless others have worked together to institute a Spanish Language Training program for police officers.

These two organizations have joined in the development of the Tennessee Criminal Justice Language Academy. The Academy is housed at Columbia State Community College and provides Spanish language training for police officers in Tennessee. The program is funded through a grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the Hispanic population is surging across our nation. A large number of Latino and Hispanic individuals have made their way into Tennessee. Both urban and rural communities in Tennessee have seen a great influx of people with Hispanic origin. This causes new demands on the social institutions of our state and it has created a major need in the law enforcement community. Law enforcement officers must be able to communicate with the citizens in their communities or they will not be effective in carrying out their duties. In large cities, police departments sometimes have officers who can speak the diverse languages of the citizens, but this is not the case in most areas of Tennessee due to the rural composition of our state. Most law enforcement in Tennessee are English speaking only, which causes many disadvantages for both the officers and the Hispanic citizens in the community.

Verbal communication is crucial for police officers in traffic stop situations. The officer and driver must have a common understanding and way to communicate. If not, a barrier develops leaving both the officer and the Hispanic citizen with few options to resolve the issue. Officer safety becomes a problem in these type cases as well.

In traffic stops where the driver is suspect of being impaired, it is extremely important for the officer to be able to communicate with the individual. The commands for the NHTSA approved Standardized Field Sobriety Test (SFST) must be given by the officer and understood by the suspect to be effective. If the officer cannot speak and understand Spanish and the suspect cannot speak and understand English then the SFST is not effective in assisting the officer in making the decision to arrest or not. This leaves two scenarios: the officer allows the impaired driver to leave without arrest, or an innocent driver is arrested. The breach of communication causes both actions.

Tennessee has not overlooked these problems. The Hispanic population is already in our communities, and we have started providing training to law enforcement agencies so that a bridge of communication can be built. The Spanish for Law Enforcement Program has trained over 1000 officers thus far. This joint program by the Tennessee Governor's Highway Safety Office and Columbia State Community College serves as a model for other states that are experiencing the same need. Simply put, this program provides officers in Tennessee with a necessary new tool to better serve their communities.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF FRED AND ROSEMARIE GORTLER

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 20, 2005

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to draw attention to the 50th wedding anniversary of Fred and Rosemarie Gortler of Fredericksburg, Virginia. I first became acquainted with the Gortlers during Fred's two decades of serving here as a Democratic floor assistant in the House of Representatives and it is an honor to celebrate this loving couple's marital milestone.

Fifty-one years ago, Fred Gortler and Rosemarie Battista met on a blind date in their hometown of Staten Island, New York, while Fred was home on leave from the Navy. At the time, Rosemarie was a nursing student at St. Mary's Hospital in Brooklyn, New York. They were engaged only four months later and were married on May 14, 1955.

The couple remained in Staten Island for over 20 years before moving to their current home in Fredericksburg in 1977. Both Fred and Rosemarie have committed their careers to serving the public and their communities. Fred worked for 21 years in the New York City police force, in positions ranging from administrative to mounted police officer in Central Park. Shortly after relocating to Fredericksburg, he began his service in the U.S. House of Representatives where he stayed for over 20 years.

Rosemarie was a practicing nurse at Saint Vincent's Hospital in Staten Island where she was also a member of the faculty, teaching psychiatric nursing. She returned to school to obtain her Masters in Counseling and currently works as a private counselor, specializing in individual, family, and substance abuse counseling. She has also co-authored several children's books including Little Acts of Grace, Just Like Mary, and A Very Scary Time, written numerous newspaper and magazine articles, and contributed regularly to a mental health column in a local newspaper, titled Minding the Mind.

The couple has been blessed with five children and 18 grandchildren, the newest addition to the family coming all the way from China. The Gortler family extends out from Virginia to Connecticut, Illinois, and Florida.

The couple's 50 years of dedication to each other reflects that of their own parents, as both Fred and Rosemarie's parents also enjoyed 50 years of marriage. In late April, the couple will be joined by many friends and family at the Chapel and the Officers' Club in Fort Belvoir, Virginia to toast their half-century of marriage. Their children and grandchildren will be proudly hosting the couple's anniversary celebration, where Fred and Rosemarie will renew their wedding vows. The celebration is being held early due to grandparent obligations—six grandchildren in three different states will be graduating in May.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring and celebrating 50 years of marriage between Fred and Rosemarie Gortler, a union built on devotion and love for family. I have had the privilege of knowing this loving couple for many years, and have witnessed the strong sense of family values, self-sacrifice, and commitment to public service that defined their lives together. It is with great joy that I extend my congratulations to Fred and Rosemarie Gortler and their beloved family, and I wish them many more years of wedded happiness.

HONORING SCOTT TOWNSLEY CHASE

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 20, 2005

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, they say the sinew of our representative democracy is its citizens.

We lost one of our model citizens—Mr. Scott Townsley Chase—on Easter Sunday, March 27, 2005. I have known the Chase family for several years, and I was saddened to hear of Scott's passing as a result of cancer at the young age of 46 years. He loved his family dearly and will be sorely missed by those he touched and impacted within the Elmhurst community.

Upon graduation from York High School, Scott matriculated to Valparaiso University. After completing the requirements for a Bachelor of Science degree, Scott entered the Valparaiso Law School and graduated with a law degree in 1983. He was proud to be an attorney and thought it was the noblest profession a person could pursue. His family indicated that Scott liked solving people's problems and took pride in providing the best representation for all his clients.

Scott was married to Michelle Chase—an attorney as well—and was the proud father of three wonderful children—Austin, Kelsey, and Morgan. Though Scott's family and friends will dearly miss him, they will always take solace in knowing that Scott has provided a foundation from which all can build upon while living life to the fullest.

ADMINISTRATION'S AMTRAK
REFORM LEGISLATION

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 20, 2005

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I join Chairman YOUNG in introducing, by request, the Administration's Amtrak "reform" legislation. It is a common practice for the Chairman and Ranking Member of a Committee to jointly introduce an Administration's bill, regardless of which political party controls the White House or Congress or the specifics of proposed legislation, and I do this as a courtesy to the Administration. However, introducing a bill "by request" should not be interpreted to imply endorsement. In fact, in this instance, I am strongly opposed to the Administration's legislative proposal for Amtrak and the direction this Administration has chosen for intercity passenger rail service in our Nation.

The Administration's proposal is nothing new. It is the same flawed bill that the Administration sent to Congress in 2003. The bill establishes two private for-profit corporations to separately manage and maintain infrastructure and operations, eliminates our Nation's intercity passenger rail network and shifts the cost burden of continuing rail service to the States, separates the Northeast Corridor from the rest of the rail network, divides Amtrak into three separate entities, and eliminates Federal operating support for all intercity passenger trains over a four-year period. As a practical matter, within three years, all long-distance train service is likely to be eliminated. Soon thereafter, the United States entire intercity passenger system could consist of skeletal service along the East and West coasts.

The Administration's trust in the magic of privatization and decentralization to solve Amtrak's problems is astonishing. It shows this Administration's ignorance of the disastrous consequences of privatization and underinvestment in rail. Great Britain's experience

with privatization is a perfect example. In 1994, government-owned British Rail was dissolved and the British government separated intercity passenger rail infrastructure from operations. A private corporation called Railtrack took over ownership of all track, signaling, and stations. Passenger train operators competed with each other to provide service. Unfortunately, the new approach assumed that private sector innovation and discipline would drive down the railway's public funding requirement and drive up quality of service, overcoming recent trends of falling demand. It didn't work, and it led to tragic consequences.

The safety of operations and the quality of service declined steadily. More than 30 people were killed in an accident at Ladbroke Grove in 1999 and four more were killed in an accident at Hatfield in 2000. In 2001, another fatal accident occurred at Potters, just north of London. These accidents were directly traceable to privatization and Britain's long history of under-investment in rail.

Today, the British government is reeling from the legacy left behind by privatization. The government has almost doubled funding for rail, and has taken steps to improve performance and tackle the backlog of maintenance and renewal needs that exploded under privatization. British government officials have described their rail privatization as "an absolute disaster".

Despite the British experience, the Bush Administration's blind faith in the ideology of privatization leads it down the same wrong path. Let us not repeat Britain's mistake. The solution to Amtrak's problems is not privatization. Amtrak's problems have one root cause: money. Lack of adequate investment and the annual threat of elimination have conditioned Amtrak to focus on survival.

Amtrak's opponents are quick to point fingers at Amtrak management, and claim that private corporations could dramatically improve intercity passenger rail service. The truth is that a succession of hardworking and dedicated management teams at Amtrak could not do the impossible—that is, operate our Nation's intercity rail passenger service without a substantial level of investment from the Federal Government. Railroads throughout the world receive some government support to supplement the revenues paid by passengers. But the Administration continues to insist on the impossible.

Yet despite Amtrak's starvation budget, Amtrak has had its successes. Under David Gunn's leadership, Amtrak has improved operations and increased ridership to more than 25 million passengers in 2004: an increase of one million passengers from 2003 and an Amtrak record. In Southern California, Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner has had a 26.3 percent increase in ridership in the past year. In Southern California, Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner has had a 26.3 percent increase in ridership in the past year. Similarly, several Midwest trains, the Pere Marquette (up 22.1 percent), the State House (up 13 percent) and the Illini (up 11.4 percent), experienced the next largest increases in passengers. In the East, regional trains carried more passengers than any other Amtrak service in the country, increasing from 5,760,499 last year to 5,974,806—an increase of 3.7 percent.

Amtrak has also made significant progress in rebuilding infrastructure and rolling stock after years of deferred maintenance. In fiscal

years 2003 and 2004, 256,000 concrete ties were laid; 2,755 bridge ties were replaced; 266 miles of continuous welded rail were installed; 34 miles of signal cable were replaced; and 19 stations and 37 substations were improved.

Amtrak's mechanical department plowed full steam ahead. In 2004, it remanufactured 180 passenger cars, rebuilt 51 wrecked cars and locomotives, and made seven Superliner baggage modifications in passenger cars.

Amtrak sold excess equipment, eliminated unprofitable services, lowered fares on long-distance routes to increase ridership, and, in partnership with the State of California, opened a \$71 million maintenance facility.

In short, Amtrak is making great progress. All of this progress will halt under the Administration's radical Amtrak reform plan.

Therefore, while I join in introducing this bill as a traditional courtesy to the Administration, I want to be clear that I do not support its initiatives. Together with Chairman YOUNG, Subcommittee Chairman LATOURETTE, Subcommittee Ranking Member BROWN, and the other Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I strongly support both H.R. 1630, the Amtrak Reauthorization Act of 2005, and H.R. 1631, the Rail Infrastructure Development and Expansion Act for the 21st Century (RIDE 21). In the 108th Congress, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure reported similar bills with near unanimous bipartisan support. I am very hopeful that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will again soon consider this bipartisan legislation and begin to provide the necessary investment for our Nation's intercity passenger rail system—that is the "reform" that Amtrak so direly needs.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 20, 2005

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I was absent from votes in the House on Tuesday, April 19, due to a previous and unavoidable commitment. Therefore, I was unable to vote on H.R. 683 (rollcall No. 109), H.J. Res. 19 (rollcall No. 110), and H.J. Res. 20 (rollcall No. 111). Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on all three measures considered before the House.

HONORING THE DISTINGUISHED
SERVICE OF BILLY PAUL
CARNEAL

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 20, 2005

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Billy Paul Carneal, a Springfield, Tennessee, native who has dedicated his life to public service and the past 11½ years as the executive director of the Springfield-Robertson County Chamber of Commerce. Billy Paul has decided to retire from the chamber, and I want to thank him for all he has done for his community, which I have the honor of representing in this esteemed body.