

dyslexia early, learning strategies and proper treatment can help them to succeed academically and to develop a positive self-image.

I firmly believe that this legislation represents a step in the right direction toward ensuring that our nation's children are adequately prepared for lifelong reading success. I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort by co-sponsoring the Reading Failure Prevention Act of 2005.

FREEDOM FOR LUIS ENRIQUE
FERRER GARCÍA

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 21, 2005

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about Luis Enrique Ferrer García, a prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Ferrer García is a peaceful pro-democracy activist who desires to bring freedom, democracy, and human rights to Cuba. He is also a member of the Christian Liberation Movement. Because he believes that freedom is the birthright of every person, he has been repeatedly harassed and detained by the nightmare that is the Castro regime. According to Amnesty International, in December 1999 he was sentenced to 6 months "restricted freedom."

In March 2003, as part of Castro's heinous island wide crackdown on peaceful prodemocracy activists, Mr. Ferrer García was arrested by the dictatorship. In a sham trial he was sentenced to 28 years in the totalitarian gulag.

According to reports, Mr. Ferrer García was transferred to a "punishment cell" for having refused a military salute to a prison official. These punishment cells are the very depths of depravity. According to the Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004: "punishment cells, were located in the basement of a prison, with continuous semi dark conditions, no available water, and a hole for a toilet. Reading materials, including Bibles, were not allowed . . . Prisoners in punishment cells had no access to lawyers."

Mr. Ferrer García was eventually released from this "punishment cell" because of a hunger strike carried out on his behalf. However, he is in constant danger of being returned to this version of hell within a gulag.

Mr. Luis Ferrer García is not the only member of his family sentenced to the totalitarian gulag. His brother, José Daniel Ferrer García been sentenced to 25 years in the gulag for his belief in freedom, democracy and basic human rights. These two brothers are brilliant examples of the heroism of the Cuban people. No matter how intense the repression, no matter how horrifically brutal the consequences of a dignified struggle for liberty, the totalitarian gulags are full of men and women of all backgrounds and ages who represent the best of the Cuban nation.

Mr. Speaker, it is as inconceivable as it is unacceptable that, while the world stands by in silence and acquiescence, these two brothers are systematically tortured because of their belief in freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. My Colleagues, we must demand the immediate and unconditional

release of Luis Enrique Ferrer García, Jose Daniel Ferrer García and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

HONORING COACH TERI MARIANI
OF THE PORTLAND STATE VIKINGS AS SHE COACHES HER
FINAL GAME

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 21, 2005

Ms. HOOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the long and successful career of Portland State University softball coach Teri Mariani, which will come to a close on Sunday, April 24, 2005, as she coaches her final games at PSU.

It's been a long time, but I remember Teri from her days as an outstanding student and a fine athlete when I had the privilege to coach her in high school at St. Mary's Academy in the late '60s and early '70s. Back then, without the opportunities afforded by Title IX that are available today, the chance for young women to compete at any level were limited.

Still, Teri managed to shine. I remember taking a team, including a then-sophomore Teri, to play basketball in the Portland Recreational League. Teri, always serious in the classroom, was just as driven to succeed on the court. But that's the sort of dedication to excellence that Teri maintained as during her years at Portland State.

Since the 1970s, Teri has been a fixture on the Portland State campus—first as a stellar three-sport student-athlete, then as an administrator and, since 1977, as coach of the softball team.

Teri will leave Portland State with the school record for the most victories in any sport, 631, and a winning record in 10 of her last 16 seasons. Ranked 15th overall among all Division II coaches with 646 wins, Coach Mariani also successfully led the Vikings during their transition to the Division I level in the 1998 season.

During her career, the Vikings went to the NCAA playoffs nine times, and placed nationally four times, with a best finish of third in the nation in 1991. For her accomplishments, Teri was inducted into the Portland Metropolitan Softball Association Hall of Fame in 1986 and the Oregon Sports Hall of Fame in 2003.

In addition to coaching softball, Teri has been Associate Athletic Director, Interim Athletic Director, and twice the department's Senior Woman Administrator. She has not only coached young women and helped them succeed on the field, but has been a mentor to them as they pursued their education. Hundreds of young women have had their lives impacted in a positive way by Teri Mariani, and while I am sad to see her long tenure as coach come to an end, her contributions to the sport and the university will be felt far into the future.

HONORING THE LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF MR. ERNEST R. MALER, SR.

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 21, 2005

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and congratulate my neighbor and constituent Mr. Ernest Maler, Sr. on the occasion of his 100th birthday. Mr. Maler was born on April 24, 1905 and raised in East Patchogue, New York. The upcoming century milestone is a time to celebrate the numerous achievements of a great American.

Mr. Maler earned his Juris Doctor at New York University School of Law and returned to Long Island so that he could provide exemplary legal service to the people of his hometown. His passion for law is matched only by a love for his family and an affinity for the game of golf.

The 100th birthday is slowly becoming an attainable goal by many Americans as medical science, better living conditions, and more knowledge about fitness and health increase our life expectancy. Today more than 70,000 Americans are 100 years old, and that number is expected to grow dramatically during the next century.

Mr. Maler lived through the great depression, two world wars, and 18 presidential administrations. His first hand experiences are invaluable sources of wisdom and his life accomplishments are inspirational to all Americans. Mr. Speaker I appreciate the opportunity to honor such a noteworthy individual.

REGARDING WASHINGTON STATE
TEACHER OF THE YEAR TAMARA
STEEN

HON. DOC HASTINGS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 21, 2005

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to 2005 Washington State Teacher of the Year and one of four national finalists for 2005 Teacher of the Year—Ms. Tamara Steen.

Since 1963, Washington state has honored one outstanding classroom teacher each year who is then eligible for the national honor. I am extremely proud that out of over 2.8 million elementary and secondary teachers nationwide, Ms. Steen was recognized as one of four finalists for the national honor announced by President Bush.

Ms. Steen is an innovative and compassionate teacher who has taught in the small rural town of Mabton, Washington for over two decades. In her years of teaching she has motivated students to achieve a higher standard. Ms. Steen is a teacher who is willing to work hard for her students, and expects her students to work hard for her in return.

Ms. Steen currently teaches English at Mabton Junior/Senior High School where she uses innovative teaching strategies to actively engage her students in learning. Despite the many challenges she is faced with each day, Ms. Steen's enthusiasm for her profession and her devotion to her students continues to grow.

In a society where teachers do not always receive the appreciation they deserve, I am pleased to honor and commend Ms. Steen for her decades of dedication to students in Central Washington. Ms. Steen exemplifies the best of America.

To Ms. Steen and the teachers across America that are educating tomorrow's leaders, thank you.

IN OBSERVANCE OF THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 21, 2005

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, this Sunday, April 24, 2005 is the 90th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, the systematic and planned extermination of an entire ethnic group by the Ottoman Empire, and the first act of genocide in the 20th Century. I join my colleagues and the Armenian-American community in my district, the 9th Congressional District of New Jersey, and with people of goodwill throughout the world, in solemn observance and acknowledgement of the deaths of 1.5 million Armenians during the years 1915–1923.

Countless Armenian families were torn apart forever by these gruesome acts of violence—acts that have been seared into the memories of the courageous individuals who survived. Survivors have vowed to never let their children, grand-children, and great-grandchildren, or others in the world, forget this past. Unfortunately, there is still a denial on the part of many people around the world about the actual occurrence of a genocide in Armenia. I stand steadfast with my Armenian friends in support of an acknowledgement of the horrors that were inflicted upon their families, and I continue to urge the recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

This year, the number “ninety” serves as a reminder that too many years have passed without proper recognition, and it serves as a motivational tool to continue to educate the world about the Armenian Genocide. In past years on the day of the anniversary, my Armenian-American constituents from St. Leon Armenian Apostolic Church in Fair Lawn, St. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church in Ridgefield, and St. Thomas Armenian Apostolic Church in Tenafly would participate in solemn services held in memory of the martyrs of the Armenian Genocide at their individual churches. This year, however, the number “ninety” will unify Armenian-Americans as all members of the Armenian Apostolic churches on the East Coast will convene in Times Square in New York City to stand together and have their voices heard.

This anniversary also provides us with an opportunity to pledge that such a slaughter should never take place again. I am sickened and dismayed by the atrocities that we continue to see today in the Sudan, as well as others that we have seen in the 20th century, such as the Holocaust and the ethnic cleansing campaigns in Cambodia, Kosovo and Rwanda. All of these events should be recognized for what they are: Genocide.

As a Jewish-American, I stand united with Armenians who continue to fight for recogni-

tion of the Armenian Genocide so the world will never forget the first crime against humanity in the 20th Century. I am hopeful that this 90th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide will bring with it the recognition that is deserved, and help us in our obligations as global citizens to protect the basic human rights of all people. We owe it to our ancestors, our families, and humanity to be committed to preventing genocide in the future, no matter when, where, or to whom it occurs.

BANKRUPTCY ABUSE PREVENTION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 14, 2005

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 256, the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005. I believe passage of this important bill is long overdue, and I congratulate Chairman SENSENBRENNER and Chairman OXLEY for their leadership over the past several years in crafting meaningful bankruptcy reform.

The bill we are voting on today will help foster greater personal responsibility and make it more difficult for those who use bankruptcy as a tool for fraud to cheat their way out of debt.

Bankruptcy filings have escalated in recent years, which have had negative consequences on our economy. Yet, numerous studies have shown many bankruptcy debtors are able to repay a significant portion of their debts. If this alarming trend continues, all Americans will pay the price in the form of higher costs for goods, services and credit. These higher costs not only harm consumers, it also stymies growth for businesses.

By addressing bankruptcy abuses, S. 256 will play a role in creating a better environment to conduct business in America, which means more jobs for those who need them.

Some have expressed concerns S. 256 will limit people from filing under Chapter 7. However, estimates show only a small percent of Chapter 7 bankruptcy filers would have their petitions dismissed or forced into Chapter 13 or Chapter 11 bankruptcy. One study cited by the Committee on the Judiciary suggests as few as 3.6 percent of Chapter 7 filers would be moved into repayment plans under the new means test.

I recognize there are cases where families and individuals need to file for Chapter 7 bankruptcy for very legitimate reasons. Sometimes hardships and unforeseen circumstances happen in life, and bankruptcy is a needed last option to help families survive.

However, the United States cannot afford to continue down the path where high consumer debt is routinely directed toward bankruptcy as a first stop rather than a last resort. I am pleased S. 256 addresses common bankruptcy abuses while continuing to offer Americans who need to file for bankruptcy the means to do so.

The consumer bankruptcy provisions of S. 256 address the needs of both creditors and debtors. With respect to the interests of creditors, this legislation responds to many factors

that have contributed to the increase in consumer bankruptcy filings, such as lack of personal financial accountability.

The bill provides many debtor protections such as provisions allowing debtors to exempt certain education IRA plans, fortifying exemptions for certain retirement pension funds, and enhancing the professionalism standards for attorneys and others who assist consumer debtors with their bankruptcy cases.

S. 256 ensures debtors receive notice of alternatives to bankruptcy relief, requires debtors to participate in debt repayment programs, and institutes a pilot program to study the effectiveness of consumer financial management programs.

I am also pleased S. 256 contains several provisions that will help make American businesses more competitive. By cracking down on bankruptcy abuse, we eliminate another obstacle small businesses face as they compete in the global marketplace.

Currently, a business can be sued by a bankruptcy trustee and forced to pay back money previously paid to it by a firm that later filed for bankruptcy protection. Under the reforms of S. 256, small businesses will have an easier time successfully defending against these suits.

The reforms will promote greater certainty in the financial market place as well. S. 256 reduces systemic risk in the banking system and financial marketplace by minimizing the risk of disruption when parties to certain financial transactions become bankrupt or insolvent.

S. 256 addresses the special problems presented by small business debtors by instituting firm deadlines and enforcement mechanisms to weed out those debtors who are not likely to reorganize. It also requires the court and other designated entities to monitor these cases more actively.

Under the current law, nearly every item of information supplied by a debtor in connection with his or her bankruptcy case is made available to the public. S. 256 prohibits the disclosure of the names of the debtor's minor children and requires such information to be kept in a nonpublic record, which can be made available for inspection only by the court and certain other designated entities. In addition, if a business debtor had a policy prohibiting it from selling “personally identifiable information” about its customers and the policy was in effect at the time of the bankruptcy filing, then the sale of such information is prohibited unless certain conditions are satisfied.

These are just a few of the several provisions that make this bill good for American consumers and businesses. I urge my colleagues to join me today in voting for S. 256 so we can limit abuses within our bankruptcy system and promote a stronger America.

IN APPRECIATION OF OUR WORLD WAR II VETERANS

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 21, 2005

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the sixtieth anniversary of VE Day, we must remember and honor the men and women of America's armed forces who secured victory in World War II at a great cost.