

NATIONAL TEACHER'S DAY

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of National Teacher's Day, which is taking place today. This week (May 1–May 7) is Teacher Appreciation Week, and as we continually work to improve the American education system, we should take time to honor the hardworking, patient, passionate and understanding people who are the backbone of this system.

National Teacher's Day began due to the persistence of Arkansas teacher Mattye Whyte who wrote to politicians and education leaders starting in 1944 pushing for a national day to honor teachers. Eleanor Roosevelt persuaded the 81st Congress to proclaim such a day in 1953. In March 1985, the National Education Association, NEA, and the National Parent-Teacher Association, PTA, established Teacher Appreciation Week as the first full week of May, with the first Tuesday remaining as National Teacher's Day.

As a former educator, I can attest to the great responsibility that falls on the shoulders of teachers. This responsibility is accepted with aplomb by energetic, passionate and caring teachers who are dedicated to bettering the lives of their students. Teachers are a guiding force in the lives of our youth, just as they were for us when we were children. As Dan Rather once explained, "The dream begins with a teacher who believes in you, who tugs and pushes and leads you to the next plateau. . . ."

Children are the key to the future of the United States, and we entrust them to the incredible corps of teachers who give everything they have, each day they enter the classroom. Today, let us remember the teacher's who pushed us to greatness and let us show our appreciation for these teachers and the teacher's of today's children, who through their intense dedication leave lasting contributions on our society as a whole.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Speaker, due to official congressional business, I missed Rollcall vote No. 150 on H. Res. 210, a resolution supporting the goals of World Intellectual Property Day. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

HONORING MARLA RUZICKA

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and work of human rights activist Marla Ruzicka. Marla devoted her life to fighting for peace and justice, spending

much of her adult life either abroad working to provide relief to victims of violent conflict, or in Washington, D.C. lobbying for the foreign aid those victims so desperately need. Most recently, Marla founded a non-profit organization called Campaign for Innocent Victims In Conflict (CIVIC), the objective of which is to accurately count the number of Iraqi civilian deaths in the war. While working to gather first-hand accounts of civilian casualties in Iraq, Marla was killed when a car bomb exploded in Baghdad on April 16, 2005.

At the time of her death, Marla had been working to advance human rights and social justice for more than ten years. After hearing a talk given at her high school in Lakeport, California by a staff member of the international non-profit group Global Exchange, she went to the Global Exchange office to see what she could do to help. Marla's energy and passion for helping those in need was an inspiration to other activists in the group, and she learned quickly as she became more involved in human rights efforts. In college, Marla chose an institution and course of study that allowed her to travel the world, learning from diverse cultures and helping to facilitate relief efforts underway in a number of countries. In the course of her travels, Marla worked with people impacted by the AIDS epidemic in Zimbabwe, with refugees in Palestine and rural farming communities in Nicaragua.

Following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, Marla traveled to that country with a Global Exchange delegation. She was so moved by the plight of the civilian victims of this conflict that she met there that she decided to devote her life to providing relief to people in those circumstances. Until the summer of 2002, Marla remained in Afghanistan, where she conducted a survey on the military campaign's effects on Afghan civilians and used that information to get assistance to the families that were harmed. Immediately following her return from Afghanistan, Marla moved to Washington, D.C. to lobby for U.S. assistance for civilian victims of armed conflict. Working with USAID and the Senate Appropriations Committee, Marla advocated the allocation of money to rebuild homes for families that suffered as a result of U.S. military actions.

In 2003, Marla once again heeded the call of duty and went abroad, this time traveling to Iraq before the U.S.-led invasion. In the months that followed, she founded CIVIC and formed survey teams to fan out across the country to gather first-hand accounts of civilian casualties. Marla was instrumental in securing millions in aid money from the federal government for distribution in Iraq, and by the time of her death she had interviewed and routed assistance to thousands of Iraqis.

Today we come together in sadness over the loss of someone who was such a bright light during such a dark time in our world. However, we are also here to celebrate the help and hope Marla devoted her life to giving to people who needed it. Whether pushing the federal government to increase aid to victims of violent conflict, traveling the world to provide direct relief, or inspiring those around her simply by being the vibrant and giving person that she was, Marla never ceased to work for what was right and improve the lives of those around her.

And though the scope and impact of her work in providing aid to those in need is truly

beyond compare, what she has given to us is greater than the measurable sum of her actions. Marla's passion for defending human rights and advocating for those who have no voice led her to challenge convention, and to do so without concern for herself. The conviction and compassion that drove Marla to do everything in her power to help others leaves a bright legacy from which we can all draw inspiration, and that we must all strive to emulate. On behalf of the 9th Congressional District, I salute Marla Ruzicka for all that she gave of herself to our community, our country and our world.

HONORING MR. ANTWAN DEON ODOM ON THE OCCASION OF HIS BEING HONORED ON "ANTWAN ODOM DAY" IN BAYOU LA BATRE, ALABAMA

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor Mr. Antwan Deon Odom of Bayou La Batre, Alabama, on the occasion of his being honored by his community on "Antwan Odom Day."

Antwan was born on September 24, 1981, in Mobile, Alabama. During his early years, he worked in Bayou La Batre's seafood industry and during high school worked part-time after class unloading both shrimp boats and crab trucks. Early in life, he became an active football player and played in the Zirlott Park youth football league and, later, at Alba Middle and Alba High schools. Following the merger of Alma and Bryant High schools, Antwan played on the new school's varsity team. His talent and accomplishments on the field drew national attention, and he was named by Parade Magazine to their All-American Team and was also honored as both the Class 6A "Lineman of the Year" and the Super Prep Player of the Year. Antwan graduated from Alma-Bryant High School in 2000 and received a full football scholarship to the University of Alabama.

Antwan's outstanding success on the Crimson Tide football team earned him further accolades throughout Alabama and across the country. Following his freshman year, he was named an honorable mention Freshman All-American by Rivals.com. By the end of his collegiate career, Antwan ranked fifth on the university's all time sack leader list with 21 and had registered 98 tackles, 40 quarterback pressures, four forced fumbles, one fumble recovery, five pass deflections, and two blocked kicks. Rather than finish his senior year at Alabama, he opted to declare his eligibility for the 2004 National Football League draft. In the second round of the draft, Antwan was made the 57th pick by the Tennessee Titans.

Mr. Speaker, Antwan Odom is certainly very deserving of being honored with his own hometown celebration. Although he is a youngman who has progressed quite far in just a few short years and who has developed into one of the leading stars in professional football today, he has not forgotten his roots. To this day, he continues to split time between his hometown and his new home in Tennessee, and the fame he has achieved has done little to diminish his love for his family,

his community, and his state. I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating Antwan Odom for both the great success he has enjoyed in his life and his outstanding representation of the First District of Alabama. I know his family—his wife Brooke, and his sons, Antwan, Jr., and Baylor—and many friends are also proud of him, and I wish his entire family much health and success in the time ahead.

IN RECOGNITION OF COLONEL
MARC E. FREITAS, UNITED
STATES MARINE CORPS (RET.)

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Colonel Marc E. Freitas on the occasion of his retirement from the United States Marine Corps. Colonel Freitas has honorably served our great Nation for more than 33 years.

A native of Oakland, California, Colonel Freitas first enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1971, earning the title of Marine at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, in San Diego California. Within a year, Colonel Freitas was selected to become a Marine Officer, and was subsequently commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant of Marines in June 1974. Following completion of The Basic School at Quantico, Virginia, Colonel Freitas attended and completed Naval Flight Training at Pensacola, Florida, and was designated a Naval Flight Officer.

Colonel Freitas has served with distinction throughout his career. His unselfish sacrifice has taken him throughout the globe in the service of our Nation. He has flown RF-4B reconnaissance aircraft off the deck of the U.S.S. *Midway* during the Iranian Hostage crisis, flown missions from Guantanamo Naval Base, Cuba, and served with the United States Air Force, flying reconnaissance aircraft at Shaw Air Force Base, in Sumter, South Carolina. He has also held several commands, to include a squadron detachment of Phantom aircraft deployed to the Republic of Korea, Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 2 at Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Pt., North Carolina, and the Marine Aviation Detachment located at Naval Air Station, China Lake, California.

In 1992, Colonel Freitas deployed to Mogadishu, Somalia, as the Plans Officer for the Joint Force Air Component Commander. His efforts there helped provide relief to millions of Somalis during Operation Restore Hope.

Perhaps Colonel Freitas' proudest accomplishments occurred while assigned as the Deputy Commander of Joint Task Force-Full Accounting. As the Task Force's Deputy Commander, his efforts were instrumental in resolving the fates of hundreds of American servicemen missing as a result of the war in Southeast Asia. Deploying to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, from the Task Force Headquarters in Hawaii, Colonel Freitas helped to provide answers to the families of these missing Americans, and in turn contributed to our national healing from this tumultuous period of history.

Colonel Freitas has completed Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Amphib-

ious Warfare School, and the Armed Forces Staff College, and in 1993 he was selected to become the first Marine Corps Fellow at the RAND Corporation, where he worked to find solutions to the issues facing both the Marine Corps and the Nation in the decades ahead. Marc was promoted to the rank of Colonel in October 1996, and his personal awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, two Legions of Merit, two Meritorious Service Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

In October 2001, Colonel Freitas began his assignment as the Deputy Legislative Assistant to the Commandant of the Marine Corps. In the 3 years he served in this important position, his support to Members of Congress has played a vital role in allowing this body to readily address issues of national importance. Further, his complete grasp of all facets of naval warfare and his ability to provide this Congress with accurate and timely response to congressional inquiries has helped to ensure a bright future for our Marine Corps.

Throughout his career, Colonel Marc Freitas has demonstrated those values that we as a Nation expect from our Marines. His impeccable integrity, exceptional moral character, skilled leadership, and absolute professionalism have helped to make the Marine Corps the honorable institution it is today. On behalf of the Congress and the nation, I wish Marc, his wife Linda, and their children Jenny and Matthew, fair winds and following seas, as they enter this new chapter of their lives.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 2046, THE
SERVICEMEMBERS' HEALTH IN-
SURANCE PROTECTION ACT OF
2005

HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing H.R. 2046, the Servicemembers' Health Insurance Protection Act of 2005, to strengthen the rights of men and women serving in the Reserve components of our armed forces when they seek to have their health insurance reinstated upon release from active military duty. As Chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I am pleased that Mr. EVANS, Ranking Minority Member of our Committee; Mr. BOOZMAN, Chairman of the Committee's Economic Opportunity Subcommittee; and Ms. HERSETH, the Subcommittee's Ranking Minority Member, have joined me as original cosponsors in introducing this legislation.

Frequently, members of the National Guard and Reserve drop their health insurance coverage upon their mobilization, because they and their families have become eligible for the Department of Defense TRICARE health care system. Under the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA), a servicemember ordered to active duty who terminates health insurance coverage is entitled to reinstatement of coverage after returning to civilian life, but the SCRA does not currently expressly protect the servicemember against a premium increase upon reinstatement. This measure would prohibit a premium increase upon reinstatement if

it affects only the individual servicemember, but it would allow general increases in premiums if they apply to other persons with similar coverage.

Also, under a change to TRICARE eligibility in 2003, members of the National Guard and Reserve are allowed to begin their TRICARE coverage in advance of actually reporting for active duty. However, under existing provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), if reservists elect TRICARE coverage prior to departing for active duty and do not continue their employer-sponsored health care insurance until they have begun active duty, they may lose their right to reinstatement of coverage. This measure would conform the USERRA health care insurance reinstatement right to the change in TRICARE eligibility and ensure no loss of coverage.

Mr. Speaker, these improvements in our laws would further protect members of the National Guard and Reserve who so willingly make great personal sacrifices in the defense of our Nation. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2046, the Servicemembers' Health Insurance Protection Act of 2005, to provide new health insurance protections for these guardians of freedom.

TRIBUTE TO KAHUKU HIGH AND
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my deepest congratulations to the incredible students of Kahuku High and Intermediate School for their great achievement in winning 4th place at the national finals of the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution program, held in Washington, DC from April 30 to May 2, 2005. These outstanding students from my Oahu's North Shore underwent months of intensive study and hard-won victories to earn the right to represent Hawaii in the finals, where they competed against a class from every state in the country and demonstrated a remarkable understanding of the fundamental ideas and values of American constitutional government.

This is the second consecutive year in Hawaii's 9-year history at this rigorous competition that Kahuku has competed in the final 10. This is truly a wonderful accomplishment that our whole state is deeply proud of!

I want to again commend Kahuku's great teacher, Sandra Cashman, for her unending commitment to her students and for producing new generations of responsible citizens. Commendations are also in order for State Coordinator (and State Representative) Lyla Berg and District Coordinator Carolina Kaanehe for fostering development of what will surely be our leaders of tomorrow.

However, ultimately this competition is by and about our outstanding students. So I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to each and all of them by entering their names for posterity into our CONGRESSIONAL RECORD: Genevieve Allen, Yesenia Arevalo, Amanda Baize, Bonnie Cameron, Meri Ching, Dannah Christensen, Krystle Corpuz, Oliver Howells, Lorna Kekua, Jokke Kokkonen, Jacquelyn Lautaha, William Law, Catalina