

But it should not take an emergency for us to recognize those who risk their lives for our protection. It should not take a tragedy for us to say thank you.

Mr. Speaker, 415 names will be added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial this week. I'd like to speak to you about one of the names that will be written on the Memorial, a name that many from my hometown of Baltimore hold in our hearts.

Almost exactly a year ago, Officer Brian D. Winder was killed in the line of duty as he responded to a 911 call. He was only 36. Mr. Speaker, you need only read the postings on Officer Winder's memorial website to know how much he meant to his wife, children, and fellow officers. In fact, if I may, I would like to read the posting written by Officer Winder's partner, LeTanye.

Hey B., today starts a tough time for me and a lot of others who miss you. I have that task of making sure that your family makes it through all of the ceremonies that are upcoming in honor of Police Memorial Week. There have been so many times, recently, that I just wanted to give up being a peace officer because it has gotten so much more dangerous for us on the streets. The department is falling apart one by one. These are things that you and I spent countless times discussing. But now you are gone and it's hard. My sister was attacked the other day by an unknown male and I told myself that I had to continue this job. I have to continue to see that my family and yours are safe. I know that you would want me to do so. I just ask that you stay by my side and help me continue the fight, even when I feel that I can't do it anymore.

Mr. Speaker, LeTanye has reason to feel lonely and overwhelmed. The President, and yes, this Congress, have abandoned her. The President's budget slashed billions of dollars from essential law enforcement programs like COPS, a program that had added thousands of police officers to our most dangerous neighborhoods. Now law enforcement officers like LeTanye will have to shoulder even more of the burden of our collective safety.

So, I ask you, how many more partners will LeTanye lose as a result of these cutbacks? Deep cuts to the COPS, Byrne grants and HIDTA programs endanger their lives and hinder their ability to protect our communities. How can we say to her, we know it's hard, and it's going to get harder because we aren't willing to give you the support you need? How can we look Capitol Police Officers in the face, knowing they are willing to give their lives for our protection, while we pass legislation that endangers theirs.

Mr. Speaker, we should honor all of our law enforcement officers by giving them the resources they need to do their jobs well and safely. We must do more than etch one more name onto a memorial wall. We must speak truth to power by etching a legacy of respect, gratitude and priority funding into our fiscal policies for our nation's law enforcement forces.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF MR.
HUGH THOMAS PRAYTOR, JR.

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, Mobile County and indeed the entire state of Alabama re-

cently lost a dear friend, and I rise today to honor him and pay tribute to his memory. Mr. Hugh Thomas Praytor, Jr., known as Tommy to his many friends, was a devoted family man and dedicated community leader throughout his life.

A native and lifelong resident of Mobile, Alabama, Tommy Praytor was a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi and worked as a banker for 48 years. His first job, as a part-time counter at the old Merchants National Bank in Mobile, began during summer breaks during his time in college. Following his graduation, he took a full-time position at Merchants and worked in the bank's computer department. He continued his career with the bank after it became Regions Bank, and spent many years at the end of his career specializing in private lending and in bond issues for municipalities seeking infrastructure and other community improvements.

Even with his numerous professional obligations, Tommy also found time to involve himself in several Mobile community organizations. During his lifetime, he served as a group chairman for Alabama Young Bankers and was treasurer of the Mobile Big Game Fishing Club. Additionally, he served on or was affiliated with the Senior Bowl Committee, the Mobile Sports Hall of Fame, the Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo, the Mobile Bass Master Club, and several Mardi Gras mystic organizations. He was also a longtime member of All Saints Episcopal Church in Mobile and spent several years as both a Sunday school teacher and a member of the church vestry.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering a dedicated community leader and friend to many throughout south Alabama. Tommy Praytor, Jr., loved life and lived it to the fullest, and his passing marks both a loss for all of south Alabama and a personal loss for me. I was fortunate to call him my friend, and he will be deeply missed by one and all, most especially his family—his wonderful wife of 46 years, Jamie Catlin Praytor, his sons, Hugh Thomas Praytor, III, and Wilson Wrath Praytor, his daughter, Ellen Praytor Wingard, his sister, Carolyn Praytor Smith, and four grandchildren—as well as the countless friends he leaves behind. Our thoughts and prayers are with them all at this difficult time.

RECOGNIZING DAMION DEROBBO

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Damion DeRobbio, whose heroics in the face of a neighbor's house fire saved the life of a 6-year-old girl.

On April 22 of last year, Mr. DeRobbio rushed to the aid of a frantic mother, whose daughter, Mackenzie, was trapped in her bed, blinded and suffocated by smoke. After several attempts to get into the burning house failed, Mr. DeRobbio persevered, smashing the little girl's bedroom window and squeezing through the tiny opening. Mr. DeRobbio crawled over the shards of broken glass, sustaining cuts on his knees and shoulders, and seized Mackenzie from her bed. He then passed her through the window to a waiting police officer before climbing out himself.

For his actions, Mr. DeRobbio was awarded the Carnegie Medal by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, and deservedly so. However, recognition was certainly not what motivated this hero on that night more than a year ago. Were it not for Mr. DeRobbio's selfless bravery, this inspiring story could have easily been one of tragedy and loss.

So today, on behalf of all of his neighbors in Ohio's 17th District, I honor Mr. DeRobbio for his valor.

IN MEMORY AND HONOR OF
MIGUEL CONTRERAS

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the death and celebrate the life of Miguel Contreras, who died last Friday at the age of 52.

As the leader of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor AFL-CIO, Miguel was a powerful figure in the labor movement.

Miguel spearheaded the effort to get a new contract for janitors in 2000. In the same year, he negotiated a key deal for Metropolitan Transit workers.

He was deeply involved in politics at many levels. There are few politicians in Los Angeles who didn't have to work with him.

And yet, Miguel was a workers' leader, with his focus keenly on the workers he represented and their best interest.

Maybe that's because Miguel had been there himself. He was the son of farmworkers, and he himself started working in the fields at the age of 5. In a way, Miguel never left the field. He carried the struggle with him from the fields of the grape boycott, working with Cesar Chavez, to the streets, rails and hotels of Los Angeles.

The labor movement has lost one of its great leaders. We have lost a great American. And we have lost one of our great friends.

Our hearts go out to Miguel's family, to his wife Maria Elena, and his sons Michael and Mario.

RURAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE
FAIRNESS ACT OF 2005

HON. BARBARA CUBIN

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, in the dark of night on August 27, 2002, the town of Kaycee, Wyoming was overwhelmed by a 4-foot surge of water from the Powder River caused by a severe rainstorm—pouring down 2/3 of the town's annual rainfall within a 6-hour period. The damage was disastrous, over 80 percent of Kaycee's businesses and one-third of their residences were damaged or destroyed. But despite Kaycee's massive loss—one that would have cost billions had Manhattan, Los Angeles or Chicago lost 80 percent of their businesses—there was no disaster declaration.

This flood effectively erased the community of Kaycee, and it's absolutely preposterous

that damage of this magnitude does not qualify as a disaster. A comparable disaster in Washington, D.C. would have destroyed 96,196 homes and 15,575 businesses. Washington, D.C. would not function after such a catastrophe and neither can Kaycee, Wyoming. In fact, under today's criteria, a majority of Wyoming's communities could be destroyed without receiving a disaster designation, as Kaycee has shown. Rural America needs help and that's why I am introducing the Rural Disaster Assistance Fairness Act of 2005.

My bill will create a Small State Advocate who will participate in the disaster declaration process, assist small States in disaster declaration requests, and ensure the needs of rural communities are being addressed. Additionally, it would require the Department of Homeland Security to report to Congress regarding whether current regulations addressing small state disaster declarations are meeting the needs of states with populations of less than one million, and whether current disaster regulations are in compliance with statutory restrictions regarding arithmetic formulas and sliding scales.

This is an important bill and I urge my colleagues to join me in updating the laws and regulations that treat many rural States unfairly compared to their larger neighbors.

ON THE OCCASION OF ISRAEL
INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Israel Independence Day, the anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel. Forged from the fire of conflict that raged through 3 continents in the mid-twentieth century, the State of Israel has survived and endured the cauldron of the Middle East to emerge as a strong and vibrant democracy—the only one of its kind in the region—with the resilient strength of tempered steel.

Israel was indeed born in a turbulent time and place in world history. Fifty-seven years ago from Saturday, the great Zionist leader David Ben-Gurion, proclaimed the birth of the State of Israel. The very next day, a mere 11 minutes after the official expiration of the British Mandate in Palestine, President Harry S. Truman announced the official recognition by the United States of the State of Israel. The bonds between our nation and Israel have endured throughout the history of the Zionist state, and today are stronger than ever.

Nothing, however, has come easily for the State of Israel. On the very day that President Truman made his historic announcement, 5 Arab states attacked Israel. The initial public radio address by the first Israeli Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, was made from an air-raid shelter in Tel Aviv, whose skies were darkened that very day by bombs dropped from Egyptian aircraft.

Yet despite all the odds, despite a history of being outnumbered and surrounded by hostile nations, the people and the State of Israel—which, geographically speaking, is slightly smaller than my own state of New Jersey—have endured, and thrived. Although Israel still faces tremendous challenges today to the security of its citizenry and its borders, the indomitable spirit that guided the pioneers of a new nation remains a source of powerful inspiration and an enduring legacy to the Israeli people.

My distinguished colleagues, I ask that you join me in recognizing the remarkable human achievement that is the State of Israel. As the representatives of a freedom-loving nation, we are proud to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of the State of Israel and its success as a beacon of democracy to all people.

CONGRATULATING WKRG-TV FOR
FIFTY YEARS OF BROADCAST
SERVICE

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise to honor the management and staff of WKRG-TV 5 in Mobile, Alabama, on the celebration of its 50th Anniversary of broadcast service.

WKRG was founded by Kenneth R. Giddens, a Mobile-area architect, in 1955, and the station's first broadcast was sent out on September 5 of that year. The station was sold 43 years later to Spartan Communications, and in 2000 it was sold once again to Media General of Richmond, Virginia. At present, the Media General group is one of the most successful communications companies in the Southeastern United States, with holdings in over 150 newspapers, television stations, and other media.

Throughout its 50-year history, WKRG has been on the cutting edge of providing the newest in television news, educational, and informational program, and has consistently been one of the top stations on Alabama's Gulf Coast. From its early years, the station has

strived to be a leading source of news and entertainment in south Alabama, and it has demonstrated a strong capability of making rapid adjustments to keep pace with changing broadcast trends. Beginning with such program as I Love Lucy, The Andy Griffith Show, and The Ed Sullivan Show, WKRG early on set a standard for good, family-oriented programming. At one time, station management also ensured that there was programming geared for the young people in the viewing audience and aired such child-friendly shows as Rosie's Place and Small Fry News. The station has continued its quality programming through the past 50 years to the present day.

To their credit, station management has also set a priority on providing the most up to the minute news with a total of nearly 6 hours of local news each weekday, with news programs at 5:30 and 9:00 a.m. as well as 12:00, 5:00, 6:00, and 10:00 p.m. The station news team has also performed in an outstanding manner, even in the most difficult of circumstances; in fact, WKRG was able to continue broadcasting important safety and weather information during Hurricane Frederic in 1979 and Hurricane Georges in 1998. During the period of time surrounding the arrival and landfall of Hurricane Ivan on the Gulf Coast in September, 2004, the station did around-the-clock live broadcasts for an astonishing 120 hours.

WKRG has also been consistently dedicated to providing the best in public affairs programming for its viewing audience. Since 1973, the station has carried "Congressional Report," a weekly program covering important issues and news from Washington, D.C. Beginning with original hosts and former Representatives TRENT LOTT, Jack Edwards, and Bob Sikes, the program has evolved into one of the leading congressional and public affairs shows in the nation and has the distinction of being the longest continually-running program of its type in the United States. It is chiefly as a result of the hard work of the management of WKRG and their desire to provide the best in public affairs and community service programming that this program has become so successful during its three decade history.

Mr. Speaker, one of the most important services which can be provided for the American people is an effective and efficient television broadcast organization. For the past 5 decades, WKRG in Mobile has provided just such an important and invaluable service to the residents of Alabama's First District and throughout the Gulf Coast region. I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating Mr. Joe Goleniowski, Vice President and General Manager of WKRG, and his entire team on 50 years of excellence.