

on the Media and the U.S. Ambassador to Kazakhstan. It is hoped that President Nazarbaev will not sign this problematic bill into law.

Mr. Speaker, in light of these circumstances, Kazakhstan's bid to chair the OSCE in 2009 cannot be supported. I strongly believe that backing Kazakhstan's candidacy would cause more difficulties than will result from Astana's disappointment over not winning this prize.

None of this means that we should not strive to develop the best possible relations with Kazakhstan, on a mutually beneficial basis. There are many areas of current and potential cooperation between our countries, including Kazakhstan's entry into the WTO, energy, military security and anti-terrorism. Nor does my inability to support Kazakhstan's candidacy for the OSCE Chairmanship in 2009 mean that I do not hope to be able to back a future bid. Nothing would please me more than to report to this Chamber that Kazakhstan has met its commitments on democratization and human rights and richly deserves to lead the OSCE. A Kazakh chairmanship would also move the Organization eastward in the symbolic sense, bridging what has become an uncomfortable gap between the former Soviet republics and Europe.

But that moment has not yet come, Mr. Speaker. I would encourage the Kazakh leaders to avail themselves of the opportunity of additional time to constructively engage the OSCE. Working to ensure that the Organization succeeds would aid Kazakhstan's bid for a future chairmanship, while expressing sour grapes over a denial can only add to the impression that Kazakhstan is not ready for a leadership role.

The OSCE Chairmanship represents acknowledgement of progress already made, not a stimulus to future, unproven progress. Urging the Kazakhs to defer their bid would leave the door open for Astana, should demonstrable reforms on human rights and democratization be forthcoming. That progress was promised by President Nazarbaev, when he signed the Helsinki Accords as his country joined the OSCE in 1992.

INTRODUCTION OF BIRTHDAY RESOLUTION FOR WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today, along with my friend and colleague from New York, Representative NITA LOWEY, I am introducing a resolution to recognize President Clinton's 60th birthday which will occur this August 19th. President Clinton has had a long and distinguished career in public service including serving as Governor of Arkansas and President of the United States. During Clinton's two terms in the White House, this country experienced unprecedented economic expansion including the creation of 22 million jobs. He worked with our NATO allies to end the ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, and he played a major role in bringing peace to Northern Ireland. Since leaving office in 2001, President Clinton has continued to devote himself to helping people around the world through the

Clinton Foundation. It is because of his commitment to not only the American people, but to the people of the world that I am honored today to recognize President Clinton's birthday and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4890, LEGISLATIVE LINE ITEM VETO ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. I rise in strong opposition to this sham budget proposal offered by Republican Leadership. This legislation will not reduce the deficit or spending through earmarks and will grant unprecedented power to the Executive Branch.

The line-item veto proposed today will expand Presidential power and challenge the separation of powers critical to the function of our government. It is an extreme dilution of the authority of the legislative branch if the President can hold a member's priorities hostage in order to garner votes for other initiatives. We have already seen an increase in abuse of power by the leadership in this House in order to force members to vote with the President, particularly during the debate on Medicare Part D, CAFTA, and last year's budget reconciliation bill.

Republicans today are decrying the practice of earmarking projects. However, since 1996, under the Republican watch, the number of earmarks has grown from 3,023 to 13,012 last year. As the Majority party, Republicans have had the power for the last 12 years to reduce earmarks and to add oversight to this process. But as former Reagan official Bruce Bartlett stated, "George W. Bush has turned out to be one of the most free-spending presidents on records . . . Apparently there is no pork barrel program so egregiously unjustified that he won't sign it into law".

This Republican Majority has lost all credibility on fiscal responsibility. Since President Bush took office, the Administration and Republicans in Congress have turned a \$5.6 trillion surplus into a \$3.2 trillion deficit. Our federal debt is \$8.3 trillion—much of which is borrowed from foreign countries. In fact, this Administration has borrowed more money from foreign nations than all 42 previous U.S. Presidents combined. And under Republican rule this Congress has had to raise the debt limit four times.

A line-item veto will not solve this problem. In fact, the way this bill is written, it could actually increase spending. According to the Congressional Budget Office, giving the President this extraordinary new authority will allow the Chief Executive to pressure Members to support Administration priorities in return for promises not to cancel projects. Studies of states that have a line-item veto have documented this effect in state legislatures.

Mr. SPRATT offered a substitute measure in the Rules Committee that would have taken a real step in addressing our budget deficit. This bill would restore pay as you go rules, forcing Congress to face our spiraling deficit. It would also reduce earmarks by mandating public dis-

closure, and prevent reconciliation from increasing the deficit. Unfortunately, as is too often the case, the Rules Committee denied the House the opportunity to vote on this alternative. Mr. Chair, if Republicans were serious about restoring fiscal discipline we would be having a real discussion today about the Democratic substitute.

I believe strongly that it is our moral responsibility to reduce the deficit and to relieve our children and grandchildren of this reckless legacy. However, the bill on the floor today is another attempt to ask the American people to believe the Republicans are the party of fiscal responsibility, while actually making our budget situation worse. I urge my colleagues to reject this bill.

IN HONOR OF THE ASILOMAR CONFERENCE CENTER

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the California State Parks Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, CA. Ordinarily, one would not expect a Member to rise on the floor to acknowledge the birthday of a conference grounds, but Asilomar is no ordinary place. For starters, Asilomar is nestled in the coastal dunes of the Monterey Peninsula. The name itself is Spanish for refuge by the sea.

Asilomar also boasts an extraordinary history. It began life in 1912 as the western regional conference grounds for the YWCA on 30 acres of beach front property donated by the precursor of the Pebble Beach Company. Within a year, the YWCA hired the pioneering San Francisco architect Julia Morgan. By 1921, additional land had been donated and many buildings were completed, including the centerpiece Phoebe Hearst grand meeting hall. The center could by then accommodate up to 500 people at a time. Over the course of the 20s, Asilomar grew not only as a site for YWCA activities but also as a center for religious retreats, Scouting events, and very popular summer camps. All of that ended with the Depression. Unable to pay its bills, the YWCA decided in 1934 to cease operating Asilomar. For almost 20 years Asilomar floundered along under various concession or cooperative agreements until the YWCA finally decided to sell the property in 1951.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, Asilomar is part of my own family's story. In 1955, my father Fred Farr entered the California State Senate. And while it is true that my father cared deeply about the future of Asilomar, it is also true that my mother Janet would have never let him ignore the question of its future. That year my father authored legislation along with his Assembly counterpart, Alan Patee, directing the State Parks Department to purchase Asilomar for the now unbelievably low amount of \$350,000. The bill, SB 2007, passed both houses of the legislature without opposition. Unfortunately, Governor Knight then vetoed every park bill before him that summer. Needless to say, that act did not make the Governor a very popular man on the Monterey Peninsula. The uproar over the veto forced the administration to rethink its position. In December 1955, the Governor reversed his opposition to Asilomar's purchase. In the ensuing

months, my father helped to broker a purchase and operating agreement between the YWCA, Pacific Grove, and the State. Those efforts culminated in the July 1, 1956 transfer of Asilomar to the State of California.

Asilomar has since grown into one of the most unique public interest conference grounds in the world. It hosts conference groups as diverse as the annual Eco Farm conference, the Nation's largest annual organic farming gathering and an annual national gathering of electronic intelligence specialists. Last year, Asilomar saw over 175,000 guests from 1,000 different groups who netted the State over \$3 million in fee revenues.

It is a legacy that my father remained supremely proud of throughout the remainder of his life. When he passed away in 1997, he had spent over 20 years on the park's official advisory commission and had spent countless hours offering formal and informal advice on the management and future of Asilomar. So while this anniversary is a celebration of a unique public park, it is also the celebration of one of my father's most cherished personal achievements.

HONORING JO MERRILL ON HER
RETIREMENT

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Jo Merrill, a tireless public health advocate for healthy babies, on the occasion of her retirement from the March of Dimes after 22 years.

Today is a bittersweet day for all of us in Congress who have been involved in the effort to improve the health of babies in this country. For many Members, Jo Merrill has become the face of the March of Dimes. She educated us with the facts, challenged us to take action, and supported our efforts to improve the lives of infants through public health policy. The legacy that she leaves behind is one of healthier babies across this country, and we here in Washington will miss her wisdom and her dedication.

Jo joined the March of Dimes National Office of Government Affairs in 1984, after 10 years working for several members of Congress. The first twelve years of her tenure with the March of Dimes she focused on state based advocacy, working closely with their Chapters and Regional offices. In 1996 she moved to her current position as Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs.

Jo has played a key role in gaining enactment of a number of bills important to the March of Dimes and the health of babies. Jo made an important contribution to the creation of the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), an effort that has resulted in the expansion of health insurance for countless uninsured children across our country. She also gave guidance for the Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1998, which authorized a comprehensive birth defects surveillance, research and prevention program at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). She was instrumental in the development and implementation of the Children's Health Act of 2000, which established the National Center on Birth Defects

and Developmental Disabilities at CDC, expanded the National Folic Acid Education Campaign, and authorized a Federal newborn screening program. And finally, Jo was a strong advocate for the reauthorization of the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities in 2003.

It has been my privilege to have worked with Jo to improve the health of infants through two of these major public health efforts. The first was policy aimed at increasing folic acid consumption by women in order to reduce the incidence of neural tube defects in babies. Jo was instrumental in helping my staff and I draft the Folic Acid Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1999, which was successfully passed into law as part of the Children's Health Act of 2000. Since that time, Jo has been an effective advocate in pushing for increased funding for the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention to carry out a national folic acid education campaign, and we have been successful in making incremental progress each year in preventing these unnecessary birth defects.

My staff and I have also worked closely with Jo on the Newborn Screening Saves Lives Act. My bill will educate parents and health care providers about newborn screening, improve follow-up care for infants with an illness detected through newborn screening, and help states expand and improve their newborn screening programs, in order to help save thousands of babies each year from unnecessary disability and death. It is our hope that this legislation will pass the House and Senate in the very near future, and when it does, it will become yet another piece of the legacy that Jo leaves here in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to personally congratulate Jo Merrill on her retirement from the March of Dimes. I wish her the very best in her new life on the South Carolina coast. Charleston is inheriting a woman of great wisdom, charm and commitment, and I am sure that she will continue to make significant contributions in her efforts as a Public Affairs volunteer.

It is my hope that this accomplished and deserving woman will find much happiness and fulfillment in this new phase of her life. Godspeed, Jo.

COMMENDING ALFREDO GONZALEZ
KAME

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Alfredo Gonzales Kame.

Mr. Kame was a great father, grandfather, and soldier. He served this country with honor, even though his family was the victim of discrimination. His father and brother were interned at the Poston Internment Camp in Poston, Arizona. He fought for his country and against the prejudice impacting his family and was courageous in both fights.

Mr. Kame, of Japanese and Hispanic heritage, was always proud of his heritage and his service to his country. A World War II veteran from Hayden, Arizona, he proudly served with Company C of the 100th Infantry Battalion.

Alfredo enlisted in June 1942 and eventually wound up in Camp Shelby with the 100th. He

was deployed to North Africa and was involved in a number of campaigns including Monte Cassino, Anzio-Rome, Belvedere, Rome-Amo, Bruyeres-Biffontaine, German Gothic Line, Po Valley, and Rhineland. He was wounded in battle in Vosges Mountains at Bruyeres, France on October 15, 1944.

He was awarded a Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Presidential Unit Citation with an Oak Leaf Cluster, Combat Infantryman Badge, American Campaign Medal, European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, Victory Medal, and Good Conduct Medal.

After his service in the Army, he returned to Hayden in 1948, where he lived until his death. He worked for 30 years as a mill foreman for Kennecott Copper Corporation and retired in 1983.

Mr. Kame leaves a great legacy for his family and his community. He lived his entire life with honor and courage. He fought valiantly in World War II while overcoming prejudice within his country. I rise today to thank Mr. Kame and his family for their sacrifice and to ask that this Congress recognize his selflessness and service to our country.

CELEBRATION OF INDEPENDENCE
DAY

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, 230 years ago today, a small and rebellious colony did an extraordinary, but simple thing. It stood up to its powerful and mighty oppressors, exploded the shackles of their tyranny and declared itself an independent nation. I rise on this Fourth of July to remember the people who gave us our present freedom, and honor them for their ability to recognize that there will always be more to unite us than divide us.

It seems obvious today that our country would be united, but in 1776, the thirteen colonies had less in common with each other than they did with their arch enemy. It is a tribute to the phenomenal leadership of our Founding Fathers that they had the vision to see past these differences, and to forge a common bond, founded on the principles that "all men are created equal," and that no government has the authority to restrict the rights of the people to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

These shared values are the essence of our Union. If the signers of the Declaration of Independence were the architects of the nation, the foundations they built for us were made of the strongest stone. Even during our darkest hours, we look back on the document that launched the ship of this Republic into the rough seas of the nations of the world, and we take solace in its good words.

Mr. Speaker, the celebration of our independence is a celebration of the beliefs we hold together as a nation; it is a celebration of why we are a nation; and it is, above all, a reminder to us all that our country was founded in hope, and in the desire by the good people of the thirteen colonies to build a new nation where freedom would reign forever.