

Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse's actions have not gone without recognition in the community. In 2005, the Friends of New York City Assemblyman, Nick Perry, honored Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse for her outstanding service to the community. Ms. Patricia Trim and her "Trim for Tots" organization also honored Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse for her continuing work in the community and continuing to "work in making life easier for underprivileged kids."

Mercedes Desormeaux Narcisse has played the role of loving mother, caring nurse, successful businesswoman and compassionate community member. Her vivacious and affectionate character has won the hearts of many. Today, we applaud Ms. Desormeaux Narcisse for her devoted and unselfish character. Her commitment and empathy for our community is above and beyond and for that I ask that we recognize this phenomenal woman today.

Mr. Speaker, please join our community in honoring Mercedes Desormeaux Narcisse for her dedication and outstanding service to our community.

**EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION SHOULD FULLY PROTECT THE FREEDOMS OF ALL RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES WITHOUT DISTINCTION**

SPEECH OF

**HON. MIKE MCINTYRE**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 14, 2006*

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the House is considering H. Con. Res. 190 today, that urges the Russian Federation to protect fully the freedoms of all religious communities without distinction, whether registered and unregistered, as stipulated by the Russian Constitution and international standards. As stated in the resolution, the United States throughout its history has sought to protect the fundamental and inalienable human right to seek, know, and serve God according to the dictates of one's own conscience. I completely agree. The "first right" of religious freedom must be respected, and so this resolution is of critical importance.

The Russian Federation is an OSCE participating State and has freely committed to protect this right, so that all may freely profess and practice the religion or belief, either alone or in community with others. Russia has promised to do this through numerous OSCE documents, but also in its own constitution. Article 28 of the Russian constitution declares "everyone shall be guaranteed the right to freedom of conscience, to freedom of religious worship, including the right to profess, individually or jointly with others, any religion."

Unfortunately, this fundamental right is not always observed, especially for groups that are not registered with the government. For groups denied registration, who have had their registration stripped, or refuse registration on religious grounds, the lack of registration means they experience significant difficulties in enjoying their religious liberties. Registration is critical for religious groups to enjoy fully their religious freedoms, as many rights and privileges afforded to religious communities are contingent on obtaining registration.

In addition to discrimination by local authorities, in the last two years there have been more than ten arson attacks estimated on unregistered Protestant churches. At a Helsinki Commission hearing that I attended last year on problems facing unregistered religious groups in Russia, I was troubled to learn of the lack of effective action by law enforcement to bring the criminals to justice. The perpetrators of these hateful acts have gone unpunished, with police and other officials turning a blind eye. In the worst cases, law enforcement personnel have actually been the persecutors, carrying out violent actions against individuals from unregistered communities who are only wishing to practice peacefully their faith.

In closing, the Russian Federation is urged to do more, to ensure that all may fully enjoy their religious liberties. I therefore urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 190.

**A TRIBUTE TO DR. MANANA PETROV**

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 15, 2006*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Dr. Manana Petrov, a distinguished member of the Brooklyn community. I am honored to pay tribute to this outstanding leader and I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing her impressive accomplishments.

Dr. Manana Petrov was born in the former Soviet Union during the height of the Cold War. Upon graduation from high school, Dr. Petrov enrolled in Rostov Medical Institute. When Dr. Petrov's family was forced to move to the Georgia Republic, she transferred and graduated from the Tbilisi Medical Institute. Dr. Petrov worked as a physician in the former Soviet Union until she, her husband and her daughter immigrated to the United States. Driven by the need to put food on the table, Dr. Petrov passed all of her medical exams within a year of immigrating to the U.S. Following the completion of her medical exams, Dr. Petrov began her residency at the Brooklyn Hospital working tirelessly to support her family.

In 1997, Dr. Petrov successfully passed her licensing exam and is currently Double-Board Certified in Internal Medicine and Hospice and Palliative Care. She has been serving as the attending physician at Brooklyn Hospital for the last 9 years. During her time at Brooklyn Hospital, Dr. Petrov has served as an outstanding role model for aspiring doctors and was nominated as the "Best Teaching Attending." Additionally, in 2000, she was appointed Medical Director of Hospice of New York and in 2003, she was named the Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine at the Brooklyn Hospice Center. Also in 2003, Dr. Petrov opened her own practice in Brooklyn, NY and is faithfully serving her patients to this day. Dr. Petrov has also worked for the last 5 years as an Associate Program Director in an Internal Medicine Program and boasts two publications in medical journals.

Dr. Manana Petrov is an inspiration to not only those in the medical profession, but to our entire community. She has overcome nu-

merous obstacles to realize her dream of becoming a doctor. Dr. Manana Petrov encompasses the true identity of a role model in today's society and for that I ask that we applaud her accomplishments and contribution to our community.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the accomplishments of Dr. Manana Petrov, as she offers her talents and community services for the good of our local communities.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Manana Petrov's selfless service has continuously demonstrated a level of altruistic dedication that makes her most worthy of our recognition today.

Mr. Speaker, please join our community in honoring Dr. Manana Petrov for her dedication and outstanding service to our community.

**HONORING THE LIFE OF BRIAN J. SCHOFF**

**HON. LINCOLN DAVIS**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 15, 2006*

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay my respects to Corporal Brian J. Schoff for his service to a grateful nation. Corporal Schoff may have given his life in defense of his country, but his soul and spirit will live on to the many who knew him. During a funeral procession in Manchester, Tennessee hundreds of people stood outside their homes and along the road to honor their fallen soldier.

Corporal Schoff, a member of 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, was awarded a posthumous promotion from Private First Class to Corporal, a Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, and Good Conduct Medal for his service.

While I didn't know Corporal Schoff personally, I do know the quality of our soldiers serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the globe. They are caring, patriotic, God-fearing men and women. I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Brian Schoff for his selfless sacrifice. May he live on in eternal happiness with his Lord in heaven.

Corporal Schoff is survived by his father, Brian L. Schoff; his mother, Cathy Odle; his stepfather, Kenneth Odle; stepdaughters, Alicia Burgess and LaDawn Mauk; stepmother, Debra Schoff; and his half-sister, Brianna Schoff.

**A TRIBUTE TO ROBIN KELLY SHEARES**

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 15, 2006*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Robin Kelly Sheares, Esq., a distinguished member of the Brooklyn community. Robin Sheares was born in Harlem to the late Gloria and Herman Sheares. At the tender age of 6, her family moved to Bedford-Stuyvesant and ever since she has been a member of the Brooklyn community.

A proud graduate of the public school system, Robin has been an attorney for nearly 20

years. She is experienced in housing, criminal and civil law. In her nearly 20 years as an attorney, she has been an administrative law judge, an instructor, as well as an arbitrator. She is active in Brooklyn, working with community-based organizations, religious institutions, and youth mentoring groups.

Robin Kelly Sheares is an active member of the Wayside Baptist Church and her Block Association. At Wayside, she works closely with the Sunday School and Youth Ministry. Robin's other memberships include, but are not limited to, the Metropolitan Black Bar Association, the Brooklyn Women's Bar Association and the Brownstoners of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Inc.

Robin has been dedicated to the Noel Pointer Foundation and the New York Road Runner's Club. Robin is often called upon as a guest lecturer and career day speaker. She has even addressed students at her alma maters, Public School 309 and Junior High School 57. Although, Robin has no biological children, she has nurtured a number of youth and is a strong advocate for children and parents rights as evident by her work with the Brownstoners's Education Task Force and her alma maters: Brooklyn Technical High School and Ithaca College.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is incumbent on this body to recognize the accomplishments of Robin Kelly Sheares, as she offers her talents and community services for the good of our local communities.

Mr. Speaker, Robin Kelly Sheares' selfless service has continuously demonstrated a level of altruistic dedication that makes her most worthy of our recognition today.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HATCH ACT REFORM ACT OF 2006

##### HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 15, 2006*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, with Government Reform Committee Chairman TOM DAVIS, I am introducing the District of Columbia Hatch Act Reform Act of 2006 to eliminate the discriminatory treatment of the District of

Columbia under the federal Hatch Act. This bill would retain federal Hatch Act authority concerning prohibited partisan and political activity that applies to every state because of the receipt of federal funds and importantly, would require the District to enact its own local version of the Hatch Act barring similar local violations, to become effective. Such a bill would, of course, automatically be held over for Congressional review for 30 legislative days as required by the Home Rule Act, typically affording several months before a District law may become effective, more than ample time for review and compliance with this bill. The House recognized that the present federal Hatch Act jurisdiction over D.C. was obsolete by removing this federal responsibility several years ago, but the Senate failed to act accordingly. Local Hatch Act violations in the District are rare, but the District needs its own Hatch Act to fully account and be responsible for local violations, with which a local objective body would be most familiar and should bear the cost of alleged violations.

This bill will leave in place the federal Hatch Act restrictions on the use of official authority as it relates to elections; the solicitation, acceptance, or receiving of political campaign contributions; and the prohibitions on running for public office in partisan elections and the use of on-duty time and resources to engage in partisan campaign activity. My bill would remove only the federal Hatch Act jurisdiction that applies solely to the District of Columbia and would require the District to have its own local Hatch Act, like every other jurisdiction, instead of requiring the Office of Personnel Management and its Special Counsel to spend time on investigation, fact-finding and judgment of unfamiliar local matters. The District will bear this local responsibility and a dual inequity—denigration of local government at the expense of the federal government—would end.

#### A TRIBUTE TO KIM BEST SIMMS

##### HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 15, 2006*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Kim Best Simms.

Kim Best Simms, the eldest child of Albert and the late Martha Best, has actively served our community for many years. She began serving the community via the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation. While serving at the Corporation, she worked in the community outreach centers where she conducted blood pressure checks and audio screenings, provided housing assistance and employment referrals and helped coordinate community outreach projects. She has received numerous awards including the Special Congressional Award, City Council Citation Award, State Senator Velmanette Montgomery Outstanding Community Service Award, Appreciation Award, NYC Sanitation Achievement Award, and the 79th Precinct Council Outstanding Community Service Award:

Kim Best Simms has been employed with the Department of Sanitation for many years. She is currently a Staff Analyst with the Department of Sanitation and has served in various capacities. In addition, she has also worked for the New York State Department of Mental Health for 13 years. She is a very talented individual with expertise in mortgage financing underwriting, real estate, and secretarial/computer technology, mental health, purchasing procurement, analytical, loan auditing, and management. She has certifications/licenses/degrees in the following areas: Contract Administration, Information Technology, Computer Technology, Specification Writing, Price & Cost Analysis, Real Estate, Guardian and Court Evaluation, AMAP, Foster Parenting, Royal Business College, OES, Amaranth, Citizens Police Academy, Procurement Planning and Management, and National Mortgage Underwriting.

As a Community Advocate, she loves working with people and serving her community. She especially enjoys mentoring teenagers as well as nurturing children. A devoted parishioner of St. Gregory's Church in Brooklyn, Kim is devoted to her church family and excellently serves the community via the church.

Mr. Speaker, Kim Best Simms is an outstanding leader and pillar of our community and most deserving of this tribute.