

the United States. Their independence and creativity have been an essential component of the American success story, adding immeasurably to our economic strength. Greek American cultural values have enriched our communities and added to the diversity we cherish as Americans. I hope that you will join me in saluting Greece and Greek Americans in this 185th anniversary of Greek Independence Day.

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TRIBUTE TO BEA WATSON

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**HON. JOE BACA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today in tribute to a most distinguished member of the Fontana community and my dear friend, Bea Watson.

In recognition of Bea's outstanding achievements and contributions to our community, I am pleased to share with you a few of her numerous recognitions, including the honor of over twenty-two prestigious awards. These include two esteemed Congressional Awards, the Fontana PTA Council Award, the Chamber of Commerce Outstanding Volunteer Award, the California Parks and Recreation Award, the Community Spirit Award, and the title of California Legislature Woman of the Year. Bea is held in high esteem by all who have been touched by her tireless devotion to others, and deserves every accolade we may present her in thanks for her service.

I am endlessly grateful for Bea's involvement on behalf of the citizens of her community. As a member of the California League of Cities, the Fontana Unified School District, the Fontana Chamber of Commerce, the Fontana Women's Club, the Fontana Teen Center, and the Fontana Historical Society, Bea has profoundly influenced the impacts of these organizations and has directed efforts to improve the community. As City Clerk of Fontana, Bea has proudly represented the city, serving as the keeper of the City Seal and of the official city documents.

Bea's commendable dedication to the City of Fontana has nurtured a sense of pride among her fellow citizens. Her efforts have touched the lives of her neighbors and her exceptional impact upon our community will create a lasting legacy for generations to come. Bea's enduring commitment, enthusiasm, and concern for others' wellbeing have advanced women's rights, education, the arts, and the spirit of the Fontana community. As a volunteer, public servant, and friend to her community, Bea has proven herself as an exemplary American. Bea continues to serve as an inspiration to us all.

I thank Bea for dedicating her life to serving on the behalf of the Fontana community. I am honored to consider Bea my friend and I truly appreciate all she has given to our community and our country.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

**HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday, March 25th, the people of Greece celebrated the 185th anniversary of their independence from the Ottoman Empire.

As the brilliant Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote in the preface to *Hellas* in 1821, "We are all Greeks. Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts, have their root in Greece." Nowhere is this more true than in America, a country crafted to embody the vision and ideals of the ancient Greeks, and home to more than three million citizens of Greek descent.

The building in which we now stand, along with many prominent structures in our Nation's Capital, draws heavily on the architecture of ancient Greece, and is a fitting tribute to the civilization that provided the model for our own democratic experiment. America's founders were deeply inspired by the heroic individualism of Homer's epic poetry, the search for truth embodied by Socrates, and the passion for justice that guided Greek political theory.

The American Revolution was driven by the Greek idea that the authority to govern derives directly from the people, and this successful assertion of autonomy in turn inspired Greece to declare its independence on March 25, 1821, after nearly 400 years of rule by the Ottomans. Weeks later, the Messinian Congress sent a letter to then Secretary of State John Quincy Adams asking for moral support, asserting: "Your virtues, Americans, are close to ours, although a broad sea separates us." In response, stirring speeches by President James Monroe and Daniel Webster led the Congress to send funds and supplies to aid the Greeks and motivated many Americans to fight alongside the Greeks in their struggle for freedom.

Today, history, mutual respect, and shared values continue to strengthen the alliance between Greece and the United States. After fighting side-by-side in every major war of the 20th century, we are now united in the war against terror that poses a threat to liberty and justice everywhere. Together we have stood up to the forces of oppression in conflicts from World War II to the Persian Gulf, we have joined as strategic partners in NATO, and are working to build peace, stability, and democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Unfortunately, not all Greeks are celebrating their independence this week. In one of the most militarized regions in the world, members of the Greek Cypriot community continue to live under conditions of oppression, harassment, and deprivation imposed by some 35,000 Turkish soldiers. I am disturbed that Turkey continues to defy the international community and the U.N. resolutions with its policies towards Cyprus.

If a solution to Cyprus can be finalized it would reshape the eastern Mediterranean and could lead to an improvement in relations between Greece and Turkey. I am saddened by the persistence of tensions between these two neighbors, both of which are strong friends of the United States and vital partners in NATO and the war on terror. I hope that a negotiated agreement will soon be reached, so that

Greeks everywhere can realize the inherently human desire for freedom.

I also support the reunification of the remains of one of the most magnificent and best-known monuments in the world: the Parthenon. I welcome the announcement last month that the British and Greek governments have engaged the Director General of UNESCO to lead a cooperative approach to resolving the issue of the Parthenon Marbles. I congratulate both parties for the shift in focus from contentious restitution to cooperative reunification and look forward to the opening of the New Acropolis Museum, where all the Sculptures will be displayed as close to their original position as possible.

The United States' kinship with the Greek people was reflected in the enthusiasm with which America embraced modern Greece's fight for independence 179 years ago. Similarly, the American ideal of freedom has drawn generations of Greek men and women to America's shores. Today we celebrate and give thanks for the contributions Greek Americans and their devotion to family, faith, community, and country that has enriched our Nation.

Through decades of challenge and change, the shared admiration, cooperation, and friendship between Greece and the United States has endured and deepened, and together we have proved the fundamental truth of the Greek proverb, "The passion for freedom never dies." Today we reaffirm that sentiment and our commitment to promoting liberty, democracy, and justice in America, in Greece, and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great joy and admiration that I wish the people of Greece a happy Independence Day and continued freedom and prosperity.

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185 YEARS OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

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**HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 185th anniversary of Greek Independence. I would also like to make a special honor of Congressman BILIRAKIS, who is celebrating his last Greek Independence Day as a Member of the House of Representatives. I commend him for his service not only to our country but his indefatigable support of Hellenic issues. I know he will be missed not only by his constituents in Florida, his colleagues here and by all Hellenic Americans.

March 25th is a date that will live in the hearts and minds of Greeks all around the world. After close to 400 years of Ottoman rule, on March 25, 1821, the people of Greece rose up against the Turks and won their independence.

The Greeks have a history dating back almost 4,000 years, Greece is the cradle of democracy and its great philosophers were an invaluable inspiration for our founding fathers. In ancient Athens they found a model for the new democracy that our forefathers used to establish our democracy in America.

We are joined by blood, culture, and a profound commitment to shared values. Greek ideals of democracy and freedom inspired our

Nation's founders and breathed life into America's experiment with democratic self-government.

Mr. Speaker, I have the great honor of representing a number of Greek-Americans in the Seventh District of New York. Their influence and active participation in the life of their communities has fostered economic, political and social growth throughout New York City.

Generations of Greek Americans have enriched every aspect of our national life, in the arts, sciences, business, politics and sports. Through hard work, love of family and community, they have contributed greatly to the prosperity and peace that we all enjoy as Americans today.

But as we celebrate Greek independence, we must keep in mind the ongoing struggle for freedom and demand for human rights on the island of Cyprus. I believe the United States and the international community must remain steadfast in our resolve to bring peace and unity to an island that has been home to violence and division for far, far too long.

Mr. Speaker, let me reiterate my strong commitment to Greek communities in my district, the country, and throughout the world. Their strength and dedication to democracy and peace in the world has made them a shining star of modern civilization.

IN HONOR OF CURTIS RELIFORD

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the dedicated work and inspiring courage of Curtis Reliford. Mr. Reliford's life story reflects the best of the American Spirit and reveals the incredible generosity to our nation's people.

Mr. Reliford experienced a troubled youth in his native Louisiana. In his early years, he was lured down the self destructive, illusionary path of drugs, alcohol, and money, all resulting in dead ends and unhappiness. Twenty one years ago, after much contemplation and perseverance, Curtis decided to move to California, with the hope of creating a better life for himself. In Santa Cruz, CA Curtis has found himself by aiding those who need a hand. He is an active member of the NAACP, and created his own business as a landscaper, a skill he used, and will continue to use, in Hurricane destroyed New Orleans. Through strong determination, great self-sacrifice, and enduring dedication, Mr. Reliford began his long healing process. He believes, and has proven, his calling to aid those who require and ask for assistance.

The fruits of Mr. Reliford's life transformation have been truly spectacular, not only benefiting our local community, but touching people's lives on a national level. Mr. Reliford is a small business owner and has started a non-profit community support group "Brothers teaching Brother." Most recently, Mr. Reliford has turned his sights back on his native Louisiana. Due to his selflessness, Curtis has been awarded the Jefferson Award from the County of Santa Cruz. His commitment to the assistance of others is inspiring. He also shows no signs of stopping.

After witnessing the devastating destruction wrought by Hurricane Katrina, Mr. Reliford, in-

spired by his daughter's proclamation of "Daddy, you can do anything!" decided to focus his nurturing spirit on the people devastated by Katrina. He began taking donations in Downtown Santa Cruz, in order to raise funds for those who lost their homes. Enough was collected to make a life altering trip down to Louisiana. Mr. Reliford has now completed three relief trips to the Gulf Coast, but he believes his work will not be complete until every person who lost their home receives full assistance. Mr. Reliford is setting up a new organization, "Follow Your Heart Action Network", dedicated to bringing continued help to people in the South.

Mr. Speaker, it is people like Curtis Reliford that make the United States the great country that it is, and it's truly an honor for me to represent individuals like Mr. Reliford. The service of local members of the community is an asset to this nation, and I applaud Mr. Reliford's contributions. Curtis Reliford's dedication to advancing the condition of human welfare throughout our nation has had a positive impact on countless individuals, and for that reason I rise in honoring him.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN H. STROGER,  
JR.

**HON. BOBBY L. RUSH**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great public servant: John H. Stroger, Jr., President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners.

John Stroger is the first African-American to have been elected as Cook County Board President after serving Cook County for many years in other capacities, including as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners Finance Committee. During his lifetime of public service, President Stroger has always served with distinction and with an unwavering dedication to improving the lives and well being of all of the residents of Cook County.

As Chairman, he was instrumental in the development and construction of a new hospital facility, which bears his name, John H. Stroger Hospital. The facility, which is state-of-the-art, serves the health needs of all of Cook county's residents, including the indigent and uninsured. John Stroger is the past President of the National Association of Counties and in that capacity, he provided leadership on public policy issues affecting local governments across the Nation. He was particularly concerned with the need of county governments to ensure health care access for all county residents.

Mr. Speaker, I know that you will join me in wishing President Stroger a full and speedy recovery from his recent illness and all the best to his wife and family.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. JADICK

**HON. CHARLIE NORWOOD**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, there is a physician in my district who deserves the

thanks of our Nation and this Congress for his actions in combat in Iraq.

Naval Commander Rich Jadick, MD, of the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta deployed to Iraq in the summer of 2004. He arrived just in time for the Battle of Fallujah, the heaviest urban combat American troops have endured in a generation.

Newsweek Magazine quotes Dr. Jadick's commander, Lt. Col. Mark Winn, that as a direct result of Dr. Jadick's courageous actions under fire, at least 30 U.S. Marines were saved from death.

During just 30 days of combat, Dr. Jadick treated over 600 Marines and Iraqi soldiers and civilians. He established a forward aide station well advanced beyond the safety limit prescribed for combat medical personnel. His courage in ignoring the danger to himself in order to provide life-saving treatment for wounded personnel led to his being awarded the Bronze Star with a "V" for valor.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of the Ninth Congressional District of Georgia, I commend and thank Dr. Jadick for his heroism and extraordinary service to his Nation and his fellow man.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS  
OF THE CUBAN-AMERICAN JEWISH  
COMMUNITY

**HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 28, 2006*

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I offer congratulations to members of the Cuban-American Jewish Community who have contributed greatly to our Nation. They were elementary school classmates at the Plantel del Centro Israelita de Cuba and graduated from the sixth grade on June 20, 1958. Some of them were part of the Peter-Pedro-Pan Operation, which brought over 14,000 children and teenagers from Cuba who came to this country without their parents, thanks to the generosity of the U.S. Government. These Cuban Jewish children were cared for by the Hebrew Immigration Aid Society, HIAS, which assisted them in finding housing in foster homes and orphanages.

Despite the fact that they all left Cuba after 1959, they have remained in contact since. Most of these individuals will be celebrating their 60th birthday this year and are holding a reunion in Miami. It will be their first gathering as a group since they risked their lives in search of freedom and liberty to come to this great country that warmly accepted them with open arms. They are proud citizens and are very grateful for the opportunities they have enjoyed in this country such as freedom, peace and prosperity, opportunities that our brothers and sisters in Cuba do not enjoy. I am glad to see such a wonderful group of people committed to bringing freedom and democracy to Cuba.

Many members of the Cuban-American Jewish Community have had long and successful careers that span many years of outstanding service, dedication, hard work, devotion, and love for our country. They are successful parents, professionals, businessmen, community leaders and grandparents. I am proud to recognize the Cuban-American Jewish Community for their tireless dedication to