

Daniel Figueroa for his dedication, honorable service and his daily commitment to making western New York a safer place, and guaranteeing a better tomorrow.

COLLEGE ACCESS AND
OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 30, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 609) to amend and extend the Higher Education Act of 1965:

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the amendment offered by my colleagues Representatives KIRK and LARSEN. They are to be commended for drawing attention to the importance of student exchange and language education programs, particularly related to Chinese and Arabic. In the 21st century world, China and the Middle East are critically important.

I share their support for language and culture education programs to help equip today's young people for the global marketplace. I was pleased to be able to help bring Japanese and Chinese language programs to the Fairfax County Public School system in northern Virginia. During the early 1980s Japan was the primary United States competitor. In an effort to understand how to help United States businesses remain competitive in an expanding global economy, especially with Japan, I wrote to the top 500 U.S. companies asking for their feedback.

The overwhelming response was that U.S. businesses were having difficulty finding qualified people who spoke Japanese and understood that culture. It became clear that the younger generation of Americans who would be the business leaders of tomorrow needed the training to compete with Japan. To help enlarge the pool of fluent Japanese speakers and broaden understanding of the Japanese culture, I worked with the U.S. Department of Education to establish language immersion programs in northern Virginia in 1988.

As a result, Floris, Fox Mill and Great Falls Elementary schools, all in the Fairfax County Public School system, began offering Japanese immersion programs. In these programs, students spend half the school day in their subjects learning to converse in Japanese and the other half in English. I insert for the RECORD excerpts from my congressional newsletters from 1988 announcing the launch of the Japanese language immersion program.

Today, the United States' main global competitor is no longer Japan. China has assumed that position. As we did in the 1980s with Japanese language immersion, we need to replicate today with the Chinese language. The Chinese program will expand and build upon the success of the Japanese immersion program, which helped America counter the serious competition it faced from Japan. In addition to having the opportunity to improve academic performance, students also will have the chance to learn a language that will equip them to compete in the global economy. With one-quarter of the world's population living in China, it is imperative that America's rising

business leaders learn the Chinese language and culture.

Studies have shown that students who participate in language immersion programs do well academically. This amendment highlights a critical area in preparing our young people—as Tom Friedman so aptly put it in his best-selling book "The World is Flat"—to develop language skills to help our country meet the challenge being posed by China and India.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Kirk/Larsen amendment and thank the gentlemen for their good work on highlighting this important issue.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY KEY TO
COMPETITIVENESS

Our national trade deficit has caused deserved concern. We must not only make sure that American companies are on a level playing field with their foreign competitors, but also provide that American companies are equipped to compete in the international marketplace. The key to this is the education and training of our young people.

We must educate our young people in the languages and cultures of other nations, so that in the future American businesses are able to market products abroad and negotiate with foreign counterparts.

I have been pleased to work with our local school systems to expand the foreign language courses offered. The language of Japan, which has the largest trade surplus with the United States of any of our trading partners, is now offered at many of our area high schools. In addition, if a recently submitted grant application to the Department of Education is approved, Japanese, Spanish, and French may soon be taught to kindergarten students in some local schools.

These youngsters who are able to study the languages and cultures of other peoples of the world will be the business leaders of tomorrow, negotiating and devising strategies to sell American products all over the world.

EDUCATION GRANT FOCUSES ON FUTURE
LEADERS

The U.S. Department of Education recently awarded a \$175,000 grant to George Mason University to begin a foreign language immersion program in Fairfax and Arlington counties public elementary schools.

I was pleased to have worked with local school and GMU officials in support of this program which would be one of the first of its kind in the country to focus on kindergarten students for intensive training in Japanese, Spanish and French.

Under the program, six kindergarten teachers and six first grade teachers would be trained in language instruction and assigned to selected classes in participating schools.

Students participating in the program would spend up to one half of each school day being taught the target language.

I sought funding for this program because of my concern about U.S. competitiveness abroad and the need to prepare our future business leaders on how to deal with an increasingly international marketplace.

I have corresponded with leaders in the U.S. business community including the chief executive officers of many of the top U.S. companies doing business in Japan and business school deans. Most agree that American students must be exposed to the language and culture of other countries from the earliest possible age in order to remain competitive in the international marketplace.

In addition, training in foreign languages helps students to improve their verbal and intellectual capacities and encourages interest in other cultures.

While Fairfax and Arlington counties schools have expressed interest in implementing this innovative effort, a firm commitment has not been made as yet. I am hopeful, however, that the local schools will take advantage of this opportunity to assist our area's young people.

RECOGNIZING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHERNOBYL NUCLEAR DISASTER

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 4, 2006

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I rise this afternoon to join Chairmen HYDE and GALLEGLY, Mr. LANTOS and others in commemorating the Chernobyl disaster, a tragic event that has left a legacy of pain and suffering felt by the people of Ukraine and Belarus to this day. I welcome this resolution and especially its emphasis on encouraging national and international health organizations to focus their research on the public health consequences of Chernobyl.

As Co-Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I can recall the Commission hearing I chaired on the 10th anniversary of Chernobyl, at which witnesses, including then Ukrainian Ambassador Yuri Shcherbak offered compelling testimony addressing the health and demographic consequences of the world's worst nuclear disaster. I am pleased to inform colleagues that on the 25th of this month the Helsinki Commission will hold a hearing commemorating Chernobyl. I am pleased that Ukrainian Ambassador Shamshur has accepted my invitation to testify along with health experts and others.

Madam Speaker, as a strong advocate of the health of all children, including the unborn, Chernobyl is of special concern.

In Ukraine and Belarus, there is growing evidence of a steep increase in birth defects, especially an alarming 4-fold increase in spina bifida that has been documented by the Ukrainian-American Association for the Prevention of Birth Defects. Many other forms of birth defects have doubled since Chernobyl, including cataracts, deformed limbs and fingers, and cleft palates. Recent Israeli-Ukrainian studies have shown that children born to Chernobyl liquidators have a 7-fold increase in chromosome damage as compared to their siblings born prior to the Chernobyl disaster.

Last year, I authored language that was included in the State Department Authorization Act authorizing funding for assistance to improve maternal and prenatal care, especially for the purpose of helping prevent birth defects and pregnancy complications. The monies would be for individuals in the Republic of Belarus and Ukraine involved in the cleanup of the region affected by the Chernobyl disaster. We need to make sure that Chernobyl health studies and efforts to prevent birth defects through the distribution of folic acid and better prenatal care receive sufficient funding. These are funding priorities that I will continue to pursue.

Madam Speaker, the public health research community was caught off guard by the massive 80-fold increase in thyroid cancer among Chernobyl children in Belarus in 1993, and the

world community needs to remain vigilant for other forms of cancer that may begin to emerge now that the 20-year latency period has ended.

We need to remember that the half-life of radioactive cesium is 30 years. Thousands of children are still being exposed to dangerously high levels of radionuclides in contaminated areas of southern Belarus and northern Ukraine, as well as far-flung areas in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe that also suffered from radioactive fallout. There is still much that remains to be done to overcome the devastating effects of Chernobyl, and it is important for the international community—both governments and nongovernmental organizations—to remember that Chernobyl is not just a Ukrainian, Belarusian or Russian problem. The fallout will require continued international attention and commitment.

I also want to take this opportunity to commend the work of nongovernmental organizations that devote considerable time and effort in helping the victims of Chernobyl. One such organization is the Children of Chernobyl Relief and Development Fund, which has worked tirelessly to provide state-of-the-art medical technology, physician training and humanitarian aid to give Ukrainian children a fighting chance to overcome cancer and leukemia.

Finally, I welcome the resolution's support for continued U.S. assistance to the Chernobyl Shelter Fund, the Shelter Implementation Plan, and other efforts to mitigate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. We need to do everything possible to protect people and the environment from the large quantity of radioactive remains of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant even as we work to assist the victims of the world's worst nuclear disaster.

IN RECOGNITION OF AVONDALE
CUB SCOUT PACK 67

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the young men of Avondale Pack 67 in Alexander City, Alabama, and also to den leader Laurie Carter for their work to preserve the memory of the crew of an Air Force aircraft which was lost in their community over a decade ago.

April 17 marks the 11th anniversary of the crash of an Air Force C-21 jet which was en route from Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland to Randolph Air Force Base in Texas. The C-21 was transporting eight personnel including Air Force Assistant Secretary for Acquisition, the Honorable Clark G. Fiester, and Major General Glenn A. Proffitt, II, when it suffered mechanical problems. The plane attempted to land at T.C. Russell Field in Alexander City.

Tragically, the aircraft lost altitude and went down in a wooded area south of the airport, taking the lives of all aboard. A statement released from the Secretary of the Air Force at the time noted that, "Two of the Air Force's senior leaders were on board the plane."

The families of the victims of that tragedy left a small memorial on the site of the crash to remember their loved ones. But the site,

which is heavily wooded, was grown over until the scouts of Pack 67 intervened. On March 18 the scouts of Pack 67, hiked to the site of the memorial, cleared the brush and trimmed the trees that had covered it. They placed small U.S. flags for each of the eight Air Force personnel who lost their lives that day in 1995.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to personally salute the young men of Pack 67 and their leader, Laurie Carter, for not only doing a good deed, but for honoring the memory of these fallen heroes. We can all learn from the example of these community-spirited scouts.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. FRANCES
STURGIS

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a great individual and community leader, Mrs. Frances Sturgis, and to thank her for her contributions to the greater Waco Community, Texas and the country. On April 8, 2006 Mrs. Sturgis will be joined by friends and supporters to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Keep Waco Beautiful, which Mrs. Sturgis started in 1980.

Mrs. Sturgis began alone working to clean up and beautify Waco. Her vision and work has grown the small Beautification Committee of Waco into Keep Waco Beautiful, one of the most successful beautification groups in the country. From humble beginnings Mrs. Sturgis has guided Keep Waco Beautiful to where it is today, over 11,000 volunteers in an established and well recognized institution in the Waco Community. She was also instrumental in the founding of Keep McLennan County Beautiful and has served the State of Texas as President of Keep Texas Beautiful.

One cannot travel anywhere in Waco, Texas without seeing the legacy of Frances Sturgis. From Indian Springs Park and Heritage Square to Miss Nellie's Pretty Place and University Parks Drive the impact of her contributions to our community are evident. Over the past 25 years Keep Waco Beautiful has spearheaded over one hundred environmental and beautification projects in the Greater Waco community, and established numerous programs that have become an annual part of the lives of the citizens of Waco.

Mrs. Sturgis's service has reflected her deep commitment to the community and has indeed made Waco, Texas a cleaner, healthier, safer and more beautiful place to live and raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to honor Mrs. Frances Sturgis and offer my heartfelt appreciation for a life dedicated to service of the community.

TRIBUTE TO NORMAN BORLAUG

HON. MARK R. KENNEDY

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an individual whose contributions have unquestionably made the world

a far better place. Through a career in scientific research that has spanned half a century, Dr. Norman Borlaug has distinguished himself and is in a class of his own.

Dr. Borlaug grew up on a farm in Cresco, Iowa, and attended the University of Minnesota in my home state where he went on to earn his doctorate in plant pathology in 1942.

In 1944 Dr. Borlaug participated in a project to boost wheat production that began in Mexico and spread as far as India and Pakistan. This project sparked the Green Revolution that literally saved hundreds of millions of lives. In recognition of these efforts, Dr. Borlaug was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970. To this day, he is the only person to have received the Award in either the agriculture or food production fields.

Since then, Dr. Borlaug continued in his work throughout Africa, where maize, sorghum and wheat yields have experienced significant increases, helping to curb starvation and malnutrition.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all Minnesotans, I would like to congratulate Dr. Borlaug on his distinguished career and remarkable contributions. His legacy and service will continue to benefit our society for generations to come.

I would like to thank my good friend Representative TOM LATHAM of Iowa for his leadership on this matter.

A TRIBUTE TO PENNY LYNDELLA
WILLOUGHBY-PARKER

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Penny Lyndella Willoughby-Parker. I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing her accomplishments.

Penny was born in Farmville, North Carolina. However, since age 9 Penny has resided in New York City. Since childhood, Penny has been a person that has strived to live by God's golden rule of "Do Unto Others as You Would Have Them Do Unto You." Penny's genuine love and concern for people as a whole, but especially those that were less fortunate than her inspired Penny to work with people living with mental illness.

Penny worked at Manhattan Psychiatric Center for 13 years, specializing in Psychiatric Rehabilitation. In this capacity, Penny helped to prepare people to successfully return to their family, friends and society to live productive lives.

Oftentimes while reading her patients' charts, Penny would learn that their problems began when they were children. As Penny sat at her desk reading the charts she would often become filled with sadness and say, "Oh God! I wish I had met Jane or John when they were children. Perhaps I could have helped them with their various problems and prevented them from ending up in a mental institution."

God heard Penny's sighs! God saw Penny's tears! And He has Anointed and Appointed her to teach Wisdom to his children. Penny's Mission Statement from God is "to train up a child according to Proverbs 22:6 and to help all children to fully develop Spiritually, Academically, Socially and Culturally which is exceedingly, abundantly, above and beyond what is called "Average".