

In addition, Harold contributes to and advocates on behalf of a number of charitable causes including medical research, education and the Arts. He believes in the power to change the world for the better and has devoted himself to helping provide opportunity to others less fortunate than himself. Indeed, Harold has graciously helped to give hope to many facing all kinds of struggles, to give back to a world that he feels has provided him with exceptional opportunities. I am honored to call Harold Snyder my good friend.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the tremendous accomplishments of Harold Snyder and to wish him a Happy 85th Birthday.

A TRIBUTE TO DIXON OSBURN

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, for 14 years, Dixon Osburn has been the Executive Director of the Service Members Legal Defense Network, an extremely effective and principled organization that has fought against the unfair discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual people in the U.S. armed services. It is hard to combine passion and common sense in a political cause—people who feel strongly often have an understandable difficulty in controlling their strong feelings to the point where they can follow the most rational strategies, and serving as the head of an organization exacerbates this, since the head of such a group is required to preach thoughtfulness to people who are—often justifiably—far too angry to want to think about things.

Dixon Osburn as Executive Director of SLDN performed this extremely difficult task very, very well. No one ever doubted the depth of his commitment to the cause of fairness for LGBT service members, and no one could fault the analytical discipline he brought to the job. I believe that we will some day in the near future abolish this unfair “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy, which discriminates against individuals and deprives our military of personnel who would perform useful services at a time when we need that. When we do reach that goal, the important work that Dixon Osburn has done over these past 14 years will deserve a great deal of the credit.

INTRODUCTION OF QATARI-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP DAY

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, today, I am pleased to introduce a bill congratulating Qatar on the occasion of Qatari-American Friendship Day. On Monday, May 14, 2007, the United States Embassy in Doha, Qatar will observe Qatar-American Friendship Day. Over the recent years, Qatar has become an important ally of the United States. It is a major defense ally in the Middle East, with Qatari and American forces both benefitting from close cooperation.

I first visited Doha, Qatar in 1999 for the historic municipal elections where women were first granted the right to vote. It is important to note that Qatari women have always enjoyed the same political rights as men. I am most impressed by the work of His Highness the Emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani and Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Nasser al-Misnad and their commitment to the education of the young women and men of the Middle East. With their vision, Education City Qatar now hosts five major American universities, including Virginia Commonwealth University of the Arts in Qatar, Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, Texas A&M University at Qatar, Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, and Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar.

I would like to highlight one of those programs, the Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar. Nearly 10 years ago, Qatar, the Qatar Foundation, the people of Qatar, and the leadership of Weill Cornell Medical College entered into a partnership to establish a branch in Doha, Qatar—the first American medical school to succeed at such an endeavor.

The Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar (WCMC-Q) celebrated its official opening on October 12, 2003 and will soon be celebrating its first graduating class. WCMC-Q aims to further Cornell University’s commitment to education, research, patient care and the advancement of the art and science of medicine while supporting the Qatar Foundation’s efforts to serve the local community. The College offers a complete medical education, leading to a Cornell University Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) degree, with teaching by Cornell faculty. It is the first American university to offer its M.D. degree overseas, and the first higher education institution in Qatar to be co-educational. Prospective students will be subject to the same entrance requirements as in the United States, with no geographical restrictions, and will be the first school of medicine established by an American university to award the same degree abroad that it bestows upon students in the U.S. While the State of Qatar underwrites the educational costs of Qatari students, it also offers a loan forgiveness program for foreign students if they commit to practicing medicine in Qatar for a specified period after graduation. Since 70 percent of the inaugural class are women for the Pre-medical Program, WCMC-Q is already demonstrating its ability to have an extraordinary impact in a region with few higher education options for women.

In addition to providing a superb medical education, WCMC-Q serves as a model for strong partnership and cultural understanding in the Middle East. It has served as an anchor that in turn has inspired other leading institutions of higher education, that I mentioned previously, to establish similar programs in Education City.

The leadership and the people of Qatar have clearly demonstrated their commitment to putting education and tolerance above hate and misunderstanding, one that fosters mutual respect, understanding, and peace in a very real and practical application. I am pleased to congratulate Qatar on the special occasion of Qatari-American Friendship Day and hope that our nations continue our long-lasting friendship into the future as we both strive for freedom and peace throughout the world.

HONORING DR. ZUHAIR MUNIR OF DAVIS, CALIFORNIA RECIPIENT OF THE UC DAVIS PRIZE FOR UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING AND SCHOLARLY ACHIEVEMENT

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Zuhair Munir, the 2007 recipient of the UC Davis Prize for Undergraduate Teaching and Scholarly Achievement. This prize has been awarded annually since 1986 to recognize scholars who are successful not just in their research, but convey their excitement and love of scholarship to students at the university. Dr. Munir has been a leader in the field of materials science for many years, conducting research in areas which have yielded remarkable technological advances, but his hallmark at UC Davis has always been as a professor who cares deeply for students throughout their studies.

Dr. Munir was born in Baghdad, Iraq and immigrated to the United States as a teenager. He earned 3 degrees from the University of California, Berkeley: his bachelor’s degree in 1956, a masters in 1958 and then his doctorate in 1963. He joined the professorial staff at UC Davis in 1972, and has worked there ever since. In 2000 he was appointed Dean of the College of Engineering and he served there until 2002. In 2003, he was promoted to Distinguished Professor in the College.

Throughout his career, Dr. Munir has worked on the cutting edge of materials science, working to understand the properties of various materials and the ways they can interact and transform under the right conditions. This has included work studying the effects of electrical fields on crystals, and as an innovator in the field of combustion synthesis.

His proficiency as a professor and mentor have long distinguished Dr. Munir, and evaluations submitted by students consistently rave that he is among the best and most engaging of their professors. Throughout his career, he has made a point of encouraging students to venture beyond his lectures and come work in the laboratory so that they can gain a better perspective on the practice of science. By encouraging students to explore problems for themselves rather than simply providing the answers, Dr. Munir has inspired generations of students to pursue in-depth study of materials science and chemical engineering, and pursue work in related fields.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, it is appropriate at this time that we thank Dr. Munir for his years of exemplary work as a scholar and educator, and congratulate him on receiving this award. His commitment to educating young students has been unwavering, and he deserves our thanks.

MINING LAW REFORM LEGISLATION

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, 135 years to the day after President Ulysses S. Grant

signed the 1872 General Mining Law, I am introducing legislation to provide much-needed fiscal and environmental oversight for the hardrock mining industry operating on Federal lands.

This legislation would overhaul that antiquated statute penned into law by President Grant on May 10, 1872—a law that contains no environmental protection provisions governing the mining of hardrock minerals such as platinum, gold, silver, and copper on public domain lands in the western States. The 1872 Mining Law also allows extraction of these minerals from the public domain without the payment of a royalty to the American taxpayers, and it allows a mining company to purchase mineral rich public lands for no more than \$2.50 or \$5 an acre, irrespective of the land's true value.

This legislation would bring the hardrock mining law into the 21st century.

The lack of a royalty in the 1872 Mining Law and the absence of deterrents or penalties for irresponsible mining have caused enormous taxpayer giveaways and liabilities. Under the Mining Law the Federal Government has handed out over \$245 billion in mineral rich public lands.

To be sure, Congress has attempted to reform the Mining Law at various times over its history—only to be thwarted each time by powerful mining interests. Former Congressman Mo Udall came close to achieving reform of the mining law in the 1970's. During the 102nd Congress in 1991, I introduced mining reform legislation. And we came close to enacting legislation that would have reformed this archaic law in 1994. But, at the last moment, after both the House and the Senate had passed separate bills, the Conference failed to reach a compromise, and the rest, as they say, is history. Since then, I have re-introduced reform legislation in each succeeding Congress.

Many Americans support reform and question why Congress does not address this issue. These people believe that American taxpayers are being robbed every time a multinational conglomerate breaks U.S. ground and mines our valuable minerals for free.

It is time, well past time, that the Congress replace this archaic law with one that reflects our values and goals. Ensuring a fair return to the public in exchange for the disposition of public resources and properly managing our public lands are neither Republican nor Democratic issues. They are simply goals that make sense if we are to be good stewards of America's lands and meet our responsibilities to the American people.

Madam Speaker, during the years I have labored to reform the Mining Law of 1872 those who defend its privileges—and it is indeed a privilege to be deemed the highest and best use of our public domain lands—have often alleged that reform legislation fails to take into account the contribution of hardrock mining to area economies. They claim that reform would have dire consequences on the industry, that if we do not provide the industry with unfettered access to public lands and public minerals, the industry could no longer survive.

Let me just say at the outset that there is no Member in the House of Representatives whose Congressional District is more dependent upon mining for employment and its economic benefits than this gentleman from West Virginia. And when we are talking about the

effects of mining, I would suggest that there is little difference between coal mining and gold mining. The effects, whether measured in terms of employment, or in terms of the environment, are the same.

With that noted, I have engaged in the effort to reform the Mining Law of 1872 these past many years not just for the apparent reasons—valuable minerals mined for free, Federal lands available almost for free, and no comprehensive Federal mining and reclamation standards. But also because I am pro-mining, because I no longer believe that we can expect a viable hard rock mining industry to exist on public domain lands in the future if we do not make corrections to the law today. I do so because there are provisions of the existing law which impede efficient and serious mineral exploration and development. And I do so because of the unsettled political climate governing this activity, with reform coming, if not in a comprehensive fashion, certainly on a piecemeal basis.

So I say to my colleagues from the Western States who resist reform, I understand your concerns. I have been in your situation. In 1977 I served on what is now called the Natural Resources Committee as a young freshman. I was confronted by legislation being advanced by my chairman, Mo Udall. And I recall that the coal industry was dragged kicking and screaming into the debate that led to the enactment of the Surface-Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977.

I voted for that legislation. It was not an easy thing for me to do. But I voted for that bill because in my region of the country we were grappling with a legacy of acidified streams, highwalls, refuse piles, open mine shafts, and other hazards associated with coal mining practices. That is a legacy, I would submit, that we are faced with today on lands administered by the Forest Service and the BLM in the western States due to hardrock mining practices.

The fact of the matter is that the gloom and doom predictions made by industry against the Federal strip mining act all those years ago did not materialize. Predictions, I would note, that are almost to the word identical to those which industry has leveled at times against this Mining law of 1872 reform legislation.

Yet, today, the coalfields of this Nation are a much better place in which to live. And today, we are producing more coal than ever before.

Certainly, coal continues to have its controversies, whether they involve mountaintop removal coal mining or the problems we are having with coal waste impoundments. But at least there are laws on the books to deal with those situations.

At least there are in place basic Federal mining and reclamation performance standards. At least when one mines coal on Federal lands a royalty is paid to the Federal Government. And at least we are making provision for the restoration of lands left abandoned by past coal mining practices.

None of this exists with respect to hardrock mining under the Mining Law of 1872.

I believe that with enough courage, and fortitude, we can continue to address the problems facing mining, and dovetail our need for energy and minerals with the necessity of protecting our environment.

For at stake here in this debate over the Mining Law of 1872 is the health, welfare, and

environmental integrity of our people and our Federal lands. At stake is the public interest of all Americans. And at stake is the ability of the hardrock mining industry to continue to operate on public domain lands in the future, to produce those minerals that are necessary to maintain our standard of living.

RESPONSIBILITY TO IRAQI
REFUGEES ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 10, 2007

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today, along with Congresswoman JAN SCHAKOWSKY and Congressman CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, I am introducing the "Responsibility to Iraqi Refugees Act." Iraq is the world's fastest growing refugee crisis, yet the U.S. response has been minimal.

For one group in particular, however, our moral responsibility is unquestionable—Iraqis who are at risk because they helped the United States. Having cooperated with the United States military, the United Nations or even with a nongovernmental organization can literally mean a death sentence at the hands of any of the many sides in this civil war.

Our legislation would admit Iraqis to the United States who are at risk because they helped coalition or reconstruction efforts in Iraq, establish a Special Coordinator for Iraqi Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons and require strategies to ensure the well-being and safety of Iraqi refugees in the region; and increase the number of persecuted Iraqis who can be admitted to the United States as refugees.

I urge every Member of the House to co-sponsor this broad, ambitious and comprehensive response to the Iraqi refugee crisis before it is too late for the people whose only crime was working with Americans.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
AUTHORIZATION ACT
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 9, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1684) to authorize appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes:

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Chairman, Representative CARDOZA will highlight the importance of communications interoperability for our Nation's first responders, and the urgent need for cost-effective and forward-looking technology solutions. Last year, Congress established an interoperability grant program at the Department of Commerce to draw upon its spectrum and telecommunications expertise. This program is distinct from efforts by DHS, which, as evidenced by a recent report of the Government Accountability Office, still need much work to achieve full interoperability across our Nation.