

Madam Speaker, today I have the privilege in joining my colleagues in honoring this distinguished gentleman and good friend by designating the U.S. courthouse located on 131 East 4th Street in Davenport, Iowa, as the "James A. Leach United States Courthouse".

A TRIBUTE TO DIXON OSBURN

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to C. Dixon Osburn, who, as co-founder and Executive Director of Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN), led the national movement to repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" for the past fourteen years. Under his leadership, SLDN has moved our nation many miles closer to its goal of freedom to serve in our Nation's Armed Forces without regard to sexual orientation.

It has been my honor to work with Dixon for many years to improve the lives of lesbian, gay and bisexual service members. Our work is not done, but one day "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" will take its place among the relics of history and be replaced by a fairer, better policy that truly honors the patriotism of all Americans. And we will remember Dixon and the foundation he built with Servicemembers Legal Defense Network.

I wish Dixon all the best in his future endeavors, and I thank him for his significant contribution to improving our Nation's Armed Forces.

HONORING ACACIA MASONIC LODGE #163

HON. TIM MAHONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to congratulate the Acacia Masonic Lodge of Martin County, Florida on their 100th anniversary and commend them for all the good work they do throughout the community.

This very special anniversary in Florida's 16th District makes the Acacia Masonic Lodge, #163 of Free and Accepted Masons, the oldest organization in Martin County. Knowing what good work they do in the area, I wanted to honor them by highlighting some of their achievements.

Graduating seniors from all of Martin County's high schools, sick children in local hospitals and senior citizens residing in local residential homes are just a few of the beneficiaries of the Acacia Masons' charity. Over the years, they have donated over \$100,000 to worthy causes throughout Martin County.

Not only have the Acacia Masons given financial support to Martin County, they have also been a visible bastion of good work in our community. Since 1964, the Acacia Masons have laid the cornerstone of every Martin County public school, symbolizing the value they place on education for all the children in the area.

The Masons' motto is, "Take a good man and make him a better man." Having met

many of them personally, I can confirm that the Free Masons in Martin County are certainly practicing what they preach; and judging by the strength of their organization, I am certain they will still be supporting the Martin County community a hundred years from now.

Madam Speaker, please join me in commending the Acacia Masonic Lodge for a century of unwavering commitment and support of Martin County and all who reside there.

HONORING BURGESS (B.J.) ETZEL

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a life-long Texan, a personal friend, and a great leader in our community. Burgess Etzel, or B.J. as most of us know him, was born in Roundtop, Texas. After finishing high school there, he went on to attend Blinn College, and then to my alma mater, the University of Houston.

After graduation, B.J. began his work in the communications industry. Hired as a cable splicing helper in 1957 in what was then the Plant Department in Houston, he continued this work until 1969. At that time he was transferred to Network Operations as a Communications Technician.

In 1987, after serving as Job, Chief, and District Stewards for over two decades, B.J. was elected President of the Communications Workers of America Local 6222. In this position, he represented over 7,000 bargaining unit employees working for SWB Telephone, SWB Yellow Pages, SWB Wireless, AT&T, Lucent Technologies, and printing sector in metro Houston and surrounding areas in the Southeast Texas region.

Despite his busy schedule as President of the CWA Local 6222, B.J. also found time to serve on the board of trustees of the United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast, and raise four children with his wife Frances.

B.J. has served as a leader in all phases of local organizing drives, and all legislative and community service work. I would like to thank B.J. for his service to the CWA and its members, and congratulate him for having the flag pole dedicated to him on May 19, 2007.

BREAST CANCER AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH ACT

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the over 3 million women living with breast cancer, in strong support of the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act. Breast cancer remains the leading cause of death among women between the ages of 40 and 55. My sister-in-law was among them, having died at the age of only 41. While important advances have been made, we still do not know what causes this disease, or how to prevent it.

Scientific evidence as to the role the environment plays in the development of breast

cancer is scarce. There is a clear need for research on the relationship between environmental factors and breast cancer. The Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act would facilitate such research by establishing a national strategy to study the link between the environment and breast cancer by creating multi-institutional, multi-disciplinary centers that study the environmental factors that contribute to the disease.

Although there are currently 221 cosponsors, this legislation has yet to have a hearing in committee. If we are going to make a serious commitment to preventing and curing breast cancer we must pass this legislation so that one day we can announce that our mothers, daughters, sisters, and friends are free of this disease.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill and pass the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE PASSING OF SERGEANT TIMOTHY PADGETT, UNITED STATES ARMY

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor SGT Timothy Padgett, United States Army. Sergeant Padgett, known as Timmy, gave his life in defense of our Nation while serving in Tarin Kwot, Afghanistan, on May 8, 2007. Sergeant Padgett was serving as a Green Beret with the 1st Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group based in Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Timmy was raised in DeFuniak Springs, Florida, and graduated from Walton High School in 1997. A former firefighter paramedic with the South Walton Fire District, our local paper, the Northwest Florida Daily News, reported "A lot of firefighters knew him well, and the close-knit group is taking the news of his death real hard, said Deputy Fire Chief Sean Hughes. 'He was a great guy,' Hughes said. Most people knew Padgett by his big smile, which he almost always wore. His fellow firefighters often called him 'smiling Tim,' Hughes said."

Timmy's mother, Glenda Penton, resides in DeFuniak Springs and has been remarkably steady since her son's passing. I spoke with Glenda two days after the horrible news and she was gracious and proud of her son. I was so impressed and inspired by her. I don't know if I could have been the same way so soon after learning of the loss of a loved one.

I am always reminded of the greatness of our country due to the resiliency of people like Glenda Penton and the bravery of people like her son Timmy. We have an all volunteer military and continue to ask our sons and daughters to travel to faraway lands to fight for our freedom and these sons and daughters continue to answer the call.

The people of DeFuniak Springs have reason to be proud of Sergeant Padgett, and I am humbled to be able to represent those people, as well as the memory of Sergeant Padgett, for am I equally proud. Vicki and I will keep Timmy's entire family, especially his 8 year-old daughter, Summer Lynn, in our

thoughts and prayers. I hope all the people of Northwest Florida and our Nation do the same.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. CRENSHAW. Madam Speaker, on Monday, May 14, 2007, I was unable to cast several votes because I was meeting with Forest Service and fire fighting personnel to assess the hazardous situation and current evacuation of several areas in the Fourth Congressional District threatened by wildfires.

Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on rollcall 342, the D.C. Tuition Assistance Grant Program Reauthorization; "yea" on rollcall 343, Supporting National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims; and "yea" on rollcall 344, Recognizing National AmeriCorps Week.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. GALLEGLY. Madam Speaker, I was unable to make the following rollcall votes on May 14, 2007:

H.R. 1124, To extend the District of Columbia College Access Act of 1999, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, I would have voted "nay."

H. Res. 223, Supporting the goals and ideals of a National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, I would have voted "aye."

H. Res. 385, Recognizing National AmeriCorps Week, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, I would have voted "aye."

INTRODUCING THE NATIONAL AMUSEMENT PARK RIDE SAFETY ACT OF 2007

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. MARKEY. Madam Speaker, Memorial Day is the beginning of the season when American families take their children to our amusement parks for a day of fun and sun. Unfortunately, it is also the case that over 75 percent of the serious injuries suffered on these rides occur between the months of May and September. Most of America thinks that the rides at these parks are subject to oversight by the Nation's top consumer safety watchdog—the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). But this is not true. The industry was subject to federal safety regulation, but in 1981 it succeeded in carving out a special-interest political exemption in the law—the so-called Roller Coaster Loophole.

It is time to put the safety of our children first—it is time to close the Roller Coaster

Loophole. Today I am introducing the National Amusement Park Ride Act to restore safety oversight to a largely unregulated industry. I am pleased to be joined in this effort by Representatives JAN SCHAKOWSKY (D-IL), CHARLIE RANGEL (D-NY), JIM MCGOVERN (D-MA), EL-EANOR HOLMES NORTON (D-DC), CAROLYN MALONEY (D-NY) and ANNA ESHOO (D-CA).

"Fixed" or "fixed-site" rides are found predominantly in destination theme parks. When an accident occurs on such rides, the law actually prevents the CPSC from even setting foot in the park to find out what happened. In some States, an investigation may occur, but in many, there is literally no regulatory oversight at all. And no matter how diligent a particular state might be, there is no substitute for Federal oversight of an industry where park visitors often come from out-of-state; a single manufacturer will sell versions of the same ride to park operators in many different States; and no state has the jurisdiction, resources or mission to ensure that the safety lessons learned within its borders are shared systematically with every other State.

Although the overall risk of death on an amusement park ride is very small, it is not zero. Sixty-four deaths have occurred on amusement park rides since 1987, and over two-thirds occur on "fixed-site" rides in our theme parks. In August 1999, 4 deaths occurred on roller coasters in just one week, "one of the most calamitous weeks in the history of America's amusement parks," according to U.S. News and World Report:

Every one of these is an unspeakable horror for the families, and every one of them deserves to be investigated by a Federal safety expert with the knowledge and the power to ensure that what happened at the accident site does not get repeated in other states.

It is simply inexcusable that when a loved one dies or is seriously injured on these rides, there is no system in place to ensure that the ride is investigated, the causes determined, and the flaws fixed, not just on that ride, but on every similar ride in every other State. The reason this system does not exist is the Roller Coaster Loophole.

The industry attempts to justify its special-interest exemption by pretending that there is no risk in riding machines that carry human beings 70, 80 or 90 miles an hour. The rides are very short, and most people are not injured. But in fact, the number of fatalities per passenger mile on roller coasters is higher than on passenger trains, passenger buses, and passenger planes. The National Safety Council uses a standard method of comparing risk of injury per distance traveled. Riding on a roller coaster is generally safer than driving a car, but is not generally safer than riding a passenger bus, train or airplane:

Fatalities are just the tip of problem, however. Broken bones, gashes, and other serious injuries have been rising much faster than attendance. The CPSC is prohibited from requiring the submission of injury data directly from ride operators, so it is forced to fall back on an indirect method, the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS), which gathers information from a statistical sample of hospital emergency rooms and then estimates national numbers. Nevertheless, NEISS has been gathering these statistics systematically over many years, so that trends become clear over time.

Beginning in 1996, a sharp upward trend can be seen in hospital emergency room visits

by passengers on unregulated "fixed" rides—the category of rides exempt from CPSC regulation under the Roller Coaster Loophole. These injuries soared 96 percent over the next 5 years. Meanwhile, such emergency room visits were falling for passengers on rides that the CPSC still regulates.

The theme park industry likes to tell the public that its rides are safer than the mobile rides because they are overseen by a permanent park staff, but according to this independent government safety agency report, the mobile parks have less of an injury problem than the theme parks.

For the most part, these rides are designed, operated and ridden safely. But clearly, the margin for error is much narrower for a child on a ride traveling at 100 mph than on a ride traveling 50 mph. Children often do foolish things, and the operators themselves are often teenagers. People make mistakes. The design of these rides must anticipate that their patrons will act like children, because they often are children.

The bill we are introducing today will close the loophole that prevents effective Federal safety oversight of amusement park rides. It would, therefore, restore to the CPSC the standard safety jurisdiction over "fixed-site" amusement park rides that it used to have before the Roller Coaster Loophole was adopted. There would no longer be an artificial and unjustifiable split between unregulated "fixed-site" rides and regulated "mobile" rides. When a family traveled to a park anywhere in the United States, a mother or father would know that their children were being placed on a ride that was subject to basic safety regulation by the CPSC.

It would restore CPSC's authority to investigate accidents; develop and enforce action plans to correct defects, and act as a national clearinghouse for accident and defect data.

The bill would also authorize appropriations of \$500,000 annually to enable the CPSC to carry out the purposes of the Act.

The bill I am introducing today is supported by the Nation's leading consumer-protection advocates, including Saferparks.org, the Consumer Federation of America, the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, the National SAFE KIDS Campaign, and Kids in Danger.

I urge my colleagues to join us in this effort to make this the safest summer ever in our theme parks. Let's pass the National Amusement Park Ride Safety Act.

CONGRATULATING THE DAYTON NAACP YOUTH COUNCIL

HON. MICHAEL R. TURNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

Mr. TURNER. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize and congratulate the members of the Dayton, OH branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, NAACP, for its positive accomplishments on behalf of our young people.

On Saturday, April 14, 2007, the Dayton NAACP Youth Council, under the guidance of Youth Advisor Barbara Mack, hosted its first annual Youth Leadership Summit 100 at Sinclair Community College. The NAACP Youth Council is an organization involving some