

about the great job that the educators of San Mateo County are doing.”

Nine San Mateo County middle and high schools were among the California schools selected as 2007 Distinguished Schools. This annual award recognizes these schools as among the state’s most exemplary public schools.

Madam Speaker, I am extremely proud of the work done by the educators in California. The nine distinguished schools from San Mateo County include Ralston Middle School in Belmont, Crocker-Middle School in Hillsborough, La Entrada Middle School in Menlo Park, Corte Madera Elementary School in Portola Valley, Aragon High School in San Mateo, Carlmont High School in Belmont, Menlo-Atherton High School in Atherton and Sequoia High School in Redwood City.

I would like to add praise for two schools in San Francisco, also partly within my home district. Gateway High School and KIPP San Francisco Bay Academy Middle School were likewise selected as Distinguished Schools for 2007.

To be designated a Distinguished School requires a comprehensive review and evaluation. Of California’s 2,400 middle and high schools, approximately 478 schools were eligible for consideration. Ultimately, 279 schools submitted the formal application for consideration. And finally, 76 schools were selected for the list.

Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to share with my colleagues this information and ask them to join me in recognizing the success of these fine California schools.

TRIBUTE TO JENNIFER KNOPKE,  
KANSAS OUTSTANDING JUNIOR  
MEMBER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF  
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

**HON. DENNIS MOORE**

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding young community leader from my congressional district, Jennifer Knopke, who was named Kansas Outstanding Junior Member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and will be so recognized at the DAR’s August convention.

Jennifer is a dedicated teacher of at-risk students in the Shawnee Mission School District, and is an active volunteer in American Cancer Society Relay for Life, as well as her DAR volunteer activities.

To be considered for this award, young women must be between 18 and 35, and must be active in furthering the ideals of “God, Home, and Country” of the Daughters of the American Revolution, as well as other community service activities. State winners will compete in the national contest. I know Jennifer will represent the Kansas DAR well.

The Outstanding Junior Member Contest began in 1963 to honor young women active in their chapter and community activities, and to encourage young members to become involved in DAR activities and programs.

Outstanding young leaders like Jennifer are the backbone of every community. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Jennifer for this well-deserved award.

HONORING THE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today in praise of the School District of Palm Beach County, Florida, home to three high schools ranked among the best in the nation by Newsweek magazine. Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Arthur Johnson, is doing an outstanding job, for which we are all very grateful. The School District of Palm Beach County currently includes 166 public schools and over 170,000 students. The efficient operation of so many institutions of learning is a considerable undertaking, and Dr. Johnson, his administrators and the faculties of the various schools deserve great praise for their hard work and huge success.

I want to offer particular praise for Suncoast High School, rated fifth best high school in America by Newsweek and Dreyfoos School of the Arts, also in the top 20, both of which are in my district. Suncoast, an international studies magnet school, has been recognized before for the high quality of its programs. Additionally, at least five Suncoast teachers have been singled out for excellence, and both schools have seen many awards go to their students.

On this occasion, I also want to recognize Jessica Su, a junior at Suncoast High School, one of 81 students in America to receive the 2006–07 Siemens Award for Advanced Placement. This prestigious distinction is given to students who demonstrate the highest proficiency in mathematics and science. Ms. Su is one of only seven juniors to win this award. A brilliant young lady, her remarkable accomplishment can be credited in part to the education she is getting at Suncoast.

I am delighted to be able to stand here today praising these fine accomplishments, and it is with great pride that I congratulate both schools, their administrators, faculty and students and Dr. Johnson for the fine work they are all doing.

IN HONOR OF SPECIALIST LANCE  
C. SPRINGER, U.S. ARMY

**HON. KAY GRANGER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I Rise today to honor the courage of a brave and dedicated hero of the Fort Worth community and of our Nation.

Specialist Lance C. Springer II was a United States Army soldier and a true American hero who gallantly and selflessly gave his life for his country on March 23, 2007, during combat operations in Baghdad, Iraq.

Lance—or Craig as his family and friends called him, enlisted during time of war, which speaks volumes about his character and patriotism.

Assigned to the 25th Infantry Division, Craig’s service as a field medic, placing the well-being of others ahead of his own, exem-

plifies the type of selfless and caring man that he was.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Craig’s parents and all of his family and friends.

Our community and Nation honor Specialist Springer’s memory and we are grateful for his faithful and distinguished service to America.

Specialist Craig Springer will not be forgotten. His memory lives on through his family and the legacy of selfless service that he so bravely imprinted on our hearts.

INTRODUCTION OF “THE SAFETY,  
EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
ON TRANSPORTATION  
PROJECTS THROUGH PUBLIC INSPECTION  
ACT OF 2007”

**HON. BOB FILNER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Safety, Efficiency and Accountability in Transportation Projects through Public Inspection Act of 2007 (H.R. 2485).

This bill would require public employees to perform the inspection and related essential public functions on all state and local transportation projects. My bill is intended to ensure that public safety is protected, transportation funds are not wasted and projects are delivered in a timely manner.

On transportation projects, the construction inspector is the eyes, ears and voice of the public. Inspectors ensure that construction and seismic standards are met, that projects meet safety requirements and that the materials used will stand the test of time. In short, inspectors are there to ensure that the motoring public gets what they pay for and public safety and the public interest are protected.

When the construction inspection function is outsourced to a private company, there is no longer a representative of the public on the job site. In this circumstance, one private company is charged with the task of inspecting the work of another private company. This creates multiple conflicts for the private inspector. First, the private inspectors’ primary obligation and responsibility is not to the public, but to the success and profitability of his company. Because the private construction company whose work they are inspecting on one project may be a business partner on a future project, private inspectors may also feel pressure from the private contractor to take steps that ensure larger profits for both firms. I am concerned that these conflicts have led private inspectors to cut corners and overlook problems that threaten public safety, increase costs and delay projects.

There are many examples in which public safety has been threatened by the use of private inspectors, including Boston’s “Big Dig” (where a concrete slab from a tunnel ceiling fell and killed a woman), the L.A. Redline subway (Hollywood Blvd. collapsed), the 8–805 Interchange in San Diego (10,000 defective welds on a seismic retrofit), the Connecticut I–84 project (hundreds of drains that lead nowhere).

Contracting out public inspection work also does not save money. Defective work requires extensive repairs, and inevitably, the taxpayer gets stuck with the bill. Comparative studies

have also found that contracting-out engineering, design, and inspection costs more than to do this work in-house, and none of these studies found that consultant engineers were less expensive. Factors that contribute to consultants' excessive costs include the lack of competitive bidding, cost-plus provisions in contracts, salary differentials between the private and public sectors, profit margins of from 10 percent to 15 percent, and additional costs connected with selecting and supervising consultants.

Failure to have public construction inspectors has also delayed projects in the past and will undoubtedly do so in the future. One such example is the privately inspected \$12 million carpool bridge connecting the San Diego (405) and the Costa Mesa (55) Freeways. The project was to have been completed in April 2003. However, work was halted in August 2002 when chunks of concrete were falling from the structure and many cracks were noticed. Contractor and private inspector errors were later discovered and the carpool ramp did not open until January 2005.

The public and the Federal Government understand what's at stake. In a 2006 California public opinion poll, 71 percent of those surveyed said they want State engineers to inspect the construction of State highways; only 20 percent found private firms acceptable for the task. David M. Walker, the Comptroller General of the United States, said in a recent interview: "There's something civil servants have that the private sector doesn't, and that is the duty of loyalty to the greater good—the duty of loyalty to the collective best interest of all rather than the interest of a few. Companies have duties of loyalty to their shareholders, not to the country."

HONORING THE TOWN OF SARALAND, ALABAMA, ON THE OCCASION OF ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the town of Saraland, Alabama, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of its founding.

Saraland was founded in 1957. Don Diago Alvarez first acquired the land through a Spanish land grant. His descendants later named the community Alvarez Station. In the 1800s, land squatters relocated to the area and began purchasing property. The Cleveland family moved to the area and renamed the town Cleveland Station. However, the name by which we now know this historic town was given by the retired minister, C.J. Dewitt, who reportedly named it after his beloved wife, Sara.

The industrial and population boom in neighboring Mobile brought the northward expansion into Saraland during the 1940s and 50s. When Saraland was incorporated in 1957, it had a reported 125 residents. The 1960s U.S. Census reported a growing town at nearly 5,000. By 1980, that number had risen to nearly 10,000, and today, Saraland is home to over 12,000 residents with the promise of continued growth.

Many prominent businesses have a presence in Saraland including Marshall Biscuits,

Mitchell Container, G. A. West & Co., and J&J Furniture. Saraland is also home to the University of Mobile. Set in the woods, the university's 1,500 students distinguish themselves through academics and a strong religious tradition.

Madam Speaker, the residents of Saraland, Alabama, have firmly rooted themselves in their proud history, but they also keep an optimistic and careful eye on the road ahead. The vision shown by their leaders over the past 50 years has led to the creation of a stable community, one of the anchors for all of Mobile County. I have no doubt that the consistent leadership and inspired vision of today's residents will lead to even greater successes in the coming years.

It is my hope the town of Saraland continues its story of success for another 50 years, and it is my distinct pleasure to represent this fine community in the United States House of Representatives.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CITY OF YERINGTON CENTENNIAL

**HON. JON C. PORTER**

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the City of Yerington Centennial Celebration.

Yerington is truly a unique city that is rich in history. Situated along the banks of the Walker River, the green fields and tree lined highways of Mason Valley are surrounded by picturesque mountains full of history such as ghost towns and mining camps. On March 14, 1907, Governor John Sparks signed into law a bill that incorporated Yerington as a city. The origins of Yerington can be traced back to the 1850s when N.H.A. "Hock" Mason settled in the valley that now bears his name and in 1871, the Mason Valley Post Office was established in the town near the Walker River.

The town was referred to by many as "Pizen Switch," which folklore traces to the inferior grade of whiskey sold in a local saloon that was constructed of willow branches, and in 1879, the town was rechristened "Greenfield." In 1880, Henry Marvin Yerington, the General Superintendent of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad, founded the Carson and Colorado Railroad that soon extended through Dayton, Fort Churchill, Wabuska in Northern Mason Valley. By 1894, the residents officially changed the names of the town and its post office to Yerington, in an unsuccessful effort to flatter Henry Yerington so that he would extend his rail line south through the town named after him. In 1911, the county seat of Lyon County was moved from Dayton to the thriving and growing City of Yerington.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the Centennial Celebrations of the City of Yerington. The City of Yerington truly has a colorful and rich history that deserves recognition and I commend the efforts of Mayor Douglas Homestead, and City Council members Bill Vicencio, Rita Evasovic, Richard Faber and George Dini in facilitating this Centennial Celebration.

HONORING AHMET ERTEGUN

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 24, 2007*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a man who, without exaggeration, was called "the greatest record man of all time" and who with great character and spirit made indelible contributions to the worldwide promotion of African-American music and American popular culture while also standing for racial equality and social justice.

Unfortunately, we lost Ahmet Ertegun, the founder of Atlantic Records and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, in 2006. His legacy will live on in the music he promoted, and the legendary careers—from Ray Charles to the Rolling Stones—he helped create and develop over 60 years.

PBS recently ran a documentary titled "Atlantic Records: The House that Ahmet Built." This 2-hour sensation chronicled the life of Ertegun from his birth in 1923 through his childhood, career, and success. We witnessed America change through his eyes, and the emergence of African-American music into popular culture with his guidance.

I urge all Members of Congress to watch this documentary if they have not had the opportunity to do so. The son of the first Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the United States, Ertegun, through music and entertainment, was instrumental in breaking down the racial barriers that so divided our country during the years of Jim Crow laws and segregation. In the 1940s at a time when Washington was segregated, he frequented African-American nightclubs and realized that "all popular music stems from black music, be it jazz or rock n' roll or rap." Ertegun is often credited for coining the phrase, "jazz is America's music."

At every turn, Ertegun and his brother, Nesuhi, challenged the prevailing racial bigotry, stereotypes and discrimination. Despite being initially denied by the National Press Club and the segregation policies of the day, they organized the first integrated jazz concert before a white and black audience in Washington, DC at the Jewish Community Center in the 1940s. They even brought hostility to themselves in hosting the now famous integrated jazz sessions at their home of the Turkish embassy residence, again, challenging the practice of segregation. While not directly following in his father's footsteps with a diplomatic career, he practiced a true diplomacy in bringing people together.

Ertegun's love of American black music led him to found Atlantic Records in 1947. For nearly five decades, Ertegun wrote and produced music, defined careers and changed the lives of household names such as Ruth Brown, Big Joe Turner, Aretha Franklin, Roberta Flack, and others and brought African American music and soul into the American mainstream.

It was a young Turk who prominently recognized, promoted and honored the contributions of black America in the entertainment and recording industries. In a February 2005 interview in *Slate Magazine*, Ertegun was asked what he considered to be his legacy. His answer: "I'd be happy if people said that I did a little bit to raise the dignity and recognition of the greatness of African-American music."