

a 2006 White House Closing the Circle Award for environmental contributions by the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive. CAAA was also honored in 2006 with the Indiana Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence. On a personal level, Colonel Smith has been awarded with many honors throughout his distinguished career in the Army. Among these awards are the Defense Superior Service Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Parachute Badge, and the Army Staff Identification Badge.

Madam Speaker, I commend Colonel Smith for his outstanding service to his country and to Crane Army. I wish him the best as he takes his new leadership position with the Joint Munitions Command.

TRIBUTE TO FLAG DAY

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, on June 14, we will once again celebrate our National Flag, Old Glory itself. In West Virginia, we love our flag. We fly it with pride, and treat it with the reverence that such a flag, which thousands of brave West Virginians have fought and died to protect, deserves.

We understand that the flag is not just a patchwork of fabric and embroidery. It is the very embodiment of our country's values, our freedom, our hopes, our dreams, and our pride. The Stars and Stripes are a sign of our nation's rich heritage. The thirteen stripes and the 50 stars are the embodiment of America itself. The twinkle in each West Virginian's eye, and the blood and sweat from our hard-working men and women are represented in the red, white, and blue that hangs over our porches, flies proudly in our ballparks, and drapes the coffins of our fallen heroes.

Harrowing events often serve to remind us of the importance of our flag. We can all recall the image of six brave soldiers raising the flag of the United States atop Mount Suribach during the Battle of Iwo Jima. And none of us will forget the tattered Stars and Stripes raised by three weary firemen over the remains of the World Trade Center to honor the thousands who perished on September 11th.

The Stars and Stripes are more than just a sign of our heritage—they represent our hopes and dreams, and the pride of our nation. The flag was the inspiration for our Star Spangled Banner, and will always be the focal point when we recite our Pledge of Allegiance.

For these reasons, and so many more, I have always fought for a Constitutional amendment to protect our flag from desecration. I believe one absolute truth of being a citizen of the United States of America is that our flag, the symbol of the sacrifices, which so many gave to preserve our freedom, must be protected from such abuse.

Perhaps the nineteenth-century writer Henry Ward Beecher described it best: "A thoughtful mind when it sees a nation's flag, sees not the flag but the Nation itself. He reads chiefly in the flag, the government, the principles, the truths, the history that belongs to the nation that sets it forth. The American flag has been the symbol of Liberty and men rejoiced in it."

May we all take heed to the wise words of Mr. Beecher as we fly the Stars and Stripes high and proud, not just today, but every day.

IN HONOR OF JOAN LUNDY—JUNE 16, 1938–JUNE 7, 2007

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. BECERRA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Joan Lundy, a passionate community activist and loving family woman, who passed away on June 7, 2007. Family and friends will gather on Saturday, June 16, in Los Angeles to honor Joan's full life which was marked by dedicated community leadership, a devoted family and tireless advocacy.

Mother Teresa is known to have said: "Do not wait for leaders; do it alone, person to person." Joan never waited for leaders to enact what she knew was right, instead she became a leader and influenced people one-by-one throughout her life. When she passed away at the age of 68 she had bestowed her strength and wisdom unto many through the years.

In the early 1980s, after raising her five children, Joan put herself through California State University of Los Angeles' geology program, and went on to practice engineering geology for many years—a career in which she thrived.

Joan possessed a passion for fairness and social justice throughout her life—she served as the president of her community parent teacher association and worked to desegregate schools in Altadena. Her community activism continued to flourish when she moved to Northeast Los Angeles in 1987. She led the Glassell Park Improvement Association for more than a decade and was president from 1996 to 1999. Joan spearheaded the effort to adorn neighborhood streets with beautiful, flowering jacaranda trees. The rows of jacarandas that were planted along San Fernando Road and Eagle Rock Boulevard have become a well-recognized symbol of Glassell Park. In the spirit of community pride and improvement, Joan negotiated the upgrading of Glassell Park's community center and the completion of many public works projects.

Joan was the best kind of constituent any elected representative could ask for: she not only committed herself to creating solutions for the community and presenting them to her representatives, she also knew how to mobilize her friends and neighbors toward civic engagement.

I extend my deepest sympathies to her beloved husband, Bill; her children: Beth Oberholtzer, John Oberholtzer, Laurie Oberholtzer, Margie Oberholtzer, and the late Tim Oberholtzer; and her 10 grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, it is with heartfelt sorrow, yet deep pride and admiration, that I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing Joan Lundy. Her influence lives on, especially in those hearts and minds she touched so deeply in Glassell Park and Northeast Los Angeles.

CLOSE "HUMMER TAX LOOPHOLE"

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to close the "Hummer Tax Loophole," which fixes a serious mistake in the Tax Code that provides an additional incentive for business purchases of luxury SUVs weighing over 6,000 pounds, such as the Hummer. This legislation is co-sponsored by my colleagues ED MARKEY, RAHM EMANUEL, and ALLISON SCHWARTZ.

The tax code allows small businesses to get a tax break for vehicles they use in business. In 1984, a limitation was put in place to make sure businesses didn't just buy luxury vehicles and write them off. These vehicles were described as under 6,000 lbs because, at that time, luxury vehicles over 6,000 lbs were not as pervasive. Today, there are many luxury SUVs that are more than 6,000 lbs, such as the BMW X5, the Hummer H1 and H2, and the Cadillac Escalade. Buying these vehicles entitles small businesses to an extra tax break, which constitutes the loophole.

This legislation closes the Hummer Tax Loophole by applying the limitation that currently applies to vehicles under 6,000 pounds to those over 6,000 lbs. In other words, businesses will no longer have an incentive to buy the biggest, most gas guzzling SUV on the market. Legislative language and regulations would guarantee that the limitation not apply to trucks or vans used for legitimate business purposes, such as farm vehicles, fork lifts, cranes and derricks, school buses, flatbed trucks, cement mixers, and other vehicles as designated by the IRS.

This bill will make sure that U.S. tax policy no longer encourages the purchase of the heaviest, most polluting, and least fuel-efficient vehicles for business use.

IN PRAISE OF THE MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF POLISH JEWS IN WARSAW, POLAND

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, Poland.

Last month, I had the opportunity to travel to Poland, and I was deeply inspired by my meeting with Jerzy Halbersztadt, the Executive Director of the Museum, and Ewa Wierzyńska, the Deputy Director. I commend them for their extraordinary hard work and vision in bringing this museum to life. A groundbreaking ceremony for the museum, located in the heart of the pre-World War II Jewish district, will be held on June 26th. I also commend the municipality of Warsaw and the Government of Poland for supporting the establishment of this important institution.

Jews arrived in the medieval Kingdom of Poland almost one thousand years ago, as they escaped persecution in neighboring countries. Indeed, the Hebrew word for Poland is

“Polin,” which some translate as “here you shall rest.” But while everyone in Poland learns about the Holocaust, many people know little about the lives of the Jews before they met their death in the concentration camps of Nazi occupiers. This rich history spanning a thousand years must be reclaimed. Indeed, understanding the travesty of the Holocaust requires a full understanding of what was destroyed.

Accordingly, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews will commemorate the 3 million Polish Jews who died in World War II. It will also celebrate the nearly one thousand years of proud Jewish culture in Poland.

In addition, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews will enhance understanding of Jewish history and cultural roots at a time when anti-Semitism is growing throughout Europe. As a former President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and now as Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I am heartened by the educational role this museum can play in fulfilling the goals that the OSCE participating States have undertaken in the field of combating anti-Semitism.

This museum has been some years in coming. In 1996, Yeshayahu Weinberg, a founding director of Tel Aviv’s Diaspora Museum and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, created an international team of experts with the goal of establishing a museum to display and preserve artifacts which showcase the extensive culture of the Jewish people in Poland. In 1997, the Warsaw City Council donated 13,000 square meters of land for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews inside the old Jewish Quarter and opposite the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising Memorial. In 2005, an

international architectural competition selected a Finnish firm to design the building housing the Museum of the History of Polish Jews. The astounding architecture remarkably represents the parting of the Red Sea through ingenious use of mortar, steel and space.

Approximately 500,000 visitors are anticipated to visit the museum each year. Visitors will take a virtual journey through a world where Jews experienced not only persecution and poverty but perseverance and success. If all goes as planned, the museum will open in 2009 with initial costs funded primarily by the governments of Poland and Germany, and through private donations from Jewish communities around the world.

Madam Speaker, it is estimated that eighty percent of all Jews and over 9 million Americans trace some of their ancestry to the Polish Jewish community. This museum has the potential to touch the lives of our own citizens in deeply personal ways. I look forward to visiting it myself.

CONGRATULATIONS TO LARRY
HIMMELSBACH

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 14, 2007

Mr. EHLERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Larry Himmelsbach on the occasion of his retirement as Deputy Director of the Office of Emergency Planning, Preparedness, and Operations. Larry is a tireless “public servant who has dedicated his professional

life to preserving the security of our nation’s government and the American public.

After graduating from Holy Cross in 1974 with a degree in Political Science, Larry began his career at the FBI, located in what is now the Ford House Office Building. He served there for 1 year in the fingerprint division before joining the newly created Atomic Energy Commission in 1975, where he served as a security specialist and held a myriad of positions in the Division of Security. The dedication he exhibited early in his professional life to maintaining our national security would be a common thread throughout his career.

In 1985, Larry joined the U.S. Department of Energy, where he held several senior positions in emergency operations and threat assessment. In 2002, he accepted the position of Deputy Director of the Office of Emergency Planning, Preparedness, and Operations within the House. In his role with OEPPO, which was created as a result of the attack on 9/11 and the anthrax incident in October 2001, Larry has been an integral part of carrying out the agency’s mission of creating a comprehensive emergency management plan for the House.

Madam Speaker, whether protecting the public from the threat of nuclear terrorism, or ensuring the continuity of our constitutional form of government, Mr. Himmelsbach has always answered the call to serve.

On behalf of myself, my colleagues in this chamber, and the American public, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Larry Himmelsbach for his 33 years of public service, and for ensuring the safety and security of our great Nation.