

working with low-income families from 1966 to 1968, and then as a public health nurse until 1984, and during that time, founded the Yancey County Hospice Agency in Burnsville, North Carolina in 1982;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill earned a B.S. in professional arts, psychology emphasis, from St. Joseph's College, North Windham, Massachusetts in 1984, graduated from Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1988, was ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1989, and earned a doctorate of ministry from Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 2005;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill has held the positions of Assistant Pastor, Associate Pastor, and Pastor at the Lutheran Church of Reformation in Washington, DC, since 1990 and has served our Capitol Hill neighborhood faithfully for 17 years;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill co-founded a non-profit social justice ministry named Southeast Ministry in the Anacostia neighborhood of southeast Washington, DC, in 1990 in response to expressed community needs for educational, cultural, and employment programs that lead those in need to self-sufficiency;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill through Southeast Ministry has reached thousands of men and women with education and job-related information services, increased their basic education skills and assisted them in passing the GED, prepared them to secure jobs through a curriculum of African-American culture, history, parenting, health and vocational assessment and in placement in training, employment and education;

Whereas Pastor Wanda McNeill's personal decorations include the Community Service Award from Anacostia-Congress Heights Partnership in 1991, Women of Achievement Award from the Zonta Club of Washington, DC, in 2000, and the Bob Woodson Award for special accomplishments from the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise in 2005;

*Resolved*, That the United States House of Representatives recognizes Pastor Wanda McNeill for her commitment to a life of service to the citizens of the United States, especially the poor and underprivileged who society has passed by, for her continued dedication to this life-long calling, and for touching the lives of thousands with her work in the poorest neighborhoods of the District of Columbia, our Nation's Capitol.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 18, 2007*

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, because I was out of the country last week on an important diplomatic and constituent services mission, I was unable to vote on rollcall Nos. 607 through 629. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall Nos. 607–610, 613–615, 617–624, and 628–629. I would have voted "no" on rollcall Nos. 611–612, 616, and 625–627.

#### CONGRATULATING THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

#### HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 18, 2007*

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 294, which commends the Kingdom of Lesotho for the enactment of a law to improve the status of married women and ensure the access of married women to property rights. Lesotho has made incredible progress towards gender equality, and I hope this Congress will recognize these steps forward.

This landlocked country of about 12,000 square miles has achieved a significant milestone towards gender equality by legally eliminating any deprivation of property rights for women. It gives me great pride to recognize not only the Kingdom of Lesotho, but also the idea that gender equality can be achieved in developing countries. Through the diligent efforts of many women's rights organizations, as well as the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the women of Lesotho now can turn to their court to protect their rights.

I am especially proud that this resolution includes continued support for International Women's Day, which we celebrate annually on March 8. Earlier this year the House passed House Resolution 149, legislation I introduced that supports the goals of International Women's Day. International Women's Day recognizes and honors the women around the world who have fought and continue to struggle for equality in the face of adversity. What is happening in Lesotho is a manifestation of the actions of those persistent women.

I want to again congratulate the Kingdom of Lesotho for enacting this crucial legislation and proving again that gender discrimination is simply unacceptable. I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the achievements of Lesotho.

#### IN MEMORY OF STEPHEN R. DEMBSKI

#### HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 18, 2007*

Mr. ROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, words can hardly express our admiration and gratitude as we note the tragic passing of an awe-inspiring civil servant. On Sunday, July 15, 2007 the community of Ridgfield Park, the County of Bergen, and the State of New Jersey lost a great hero upon the passing of Stephen R. Dembski, 41, after battling a major fire in neighboring Bogota. I join Steve's family, friends, and the entire community in mourning the loss of such a dedicated public servant.

A devoted husband and father to his wife Nancy and two children Kyle and Raymond, Steve was a pillar of our community. Steve came from a long line of firefighters, starting off as a junior firefighter when he was 16, becoming a full-fledged firefighter at the Ridgfield Park Hook and Ladder Company 2 at age 18, and later serving as chief for 2 years. His more than two decades of public

service and his commitment to his duties as a firefighter reveal his extraordinary dedication to the safety and security of his family, friends, and community.

Firefighters like Steve are willing to give their lives to protect the safety of American citizens and willfully advance to the front lines of danger to provide assistance to those around them. Each time firefighters courageously rush into burning buildings and willingly lay their lives on the line for their fellow citizens, their unshakeable devotion to others leads us to place our lives and priorities in perspective and also helps reaffirm in the hearts of all Americans what is really important in life. Firefighters like Steve are essential to our communities and help to ensure the safety and security of our great nation. Each firefighter is a testament to the indomitable and caring spirit that drives our nation and makes America the incredible country it is today. This nation owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to Steve Dembski for his service to our community. May God bless the Dembski family.

#### HONORING DALE D. PETERSON UPON HIS RETIREMENT

#### HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 18, 2007*

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, my colleague, Mrs. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER, and I rise in honor of Dale D. Peterson who is retiring after more than 40 years of service to his country, our community, and the educational system of Contra Costa County.

After earning a degree from Contra Costa College, Dale Peterson began his long career of public service by enlisting in the United States Marine Corps, serving from 1965 to 1969. Having completed this service to his country, Dale achieved his journeyman status after completing a 4-year electrical apprenticeship.

From 1973 to 1993, Dale worked as general electric contractor, a foreman, and a superintendent. His service during these years involved the responsibilities of managing commercial, residential and industrial electrical construction jobs in Contra Costa County. During this time Dale also served as the Assistant Business Manager of the IBEW Local 302 and on several committees of that same labor union.

For over 20 years, Dale Peterson has continued to share his time and talent with our community by serving on a number of Boards and Councils. His work as a Trustee of the Contra Costa Building Trade Council and as a member of the Contra Costa Central Labor Council reflect Dale Peterson's continued dedication to his fellow tradesmen and the labor movement in this county. Dale's work as a Contra Costa County Library Commissioner and as a member of the Board of Directors for both the East County Business Education Alliance and the Delta Advocacy Foundation demonstrates his enduring commitment to education and educational reform.

In 1991, Dale Peterson became a Parent Education Facilitator at the Family Stress Center where he served for 8 years. In 2000 he

enrolled in a Cornell University Course on Mutual Gains Bargaining. Over a period of 2 years, Dale completed three courses on land use planning, urban redevelopment, and environmental and planning law at a UC Berkeley Extension Campus.

Since 2004 Dale Peterson has mobilized the construction industry to support high quality school reform in Contra Costa County and was instrumental in the creation of two high school career academies.

Throughout his illustrious career, Dale Peterson has been a strong and steady voice for labor and education in Contra Costa County. He has always been a champion of youth and community programs and of preparing our children for higher education and the workforce. This continued commitment to labor and education in Contra Costa County have set Dale Peterson apart as a leader in our community.

Today we recognize Dale Peterson's enduring strength, visionary leadership, and his lasting commitment to the workers, students and families of Contra Costa County and our Nation.

Madam Speaker, please join me and my colleague, Mrs. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER, in recognizing Dale D. Peterson as he retires from a long and honorable career.