

AIDS in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties are Black.

As we celebrate National World AIDS Day in light of these agonizing facts, we must put forth a much more aggressive and concerted effort to reach out to our communities, teaching our residents about this disease, insure proper treatment for AIDS victims and continue the research needed to bring this epidemic under control. This infectious disease should not be a partisan issue, but should be a commitment for all Americans. We can and we must address the HIV/AIDS epidemic aggressively, both at home and abroad.

I encourage everyone in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties and beyond to get tested; get informed about prevention and get treatment if you need it. Let's all renew our efforts to stop the spread of this dreaded disease and, as a caring community, reach out to those of our fellow residents who are already living with HIV/AIDS. I commend the Miami-Dade County Public Schools for their leadership role in raising the awareness level about HIV/AIDS and encourage school administrators, faculty, staff and students to continue with this most laudable effort.

RECOGNIZING CHARLES C. CROWE,
IV FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK
OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Charles C. Crowe, IV, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 395, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Charles has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Charles has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Charles C. Crowe, IV for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent Charles in the United States House of Representatives.

COMMENDING LEE BANDY

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, last month, the dean of South Carolina political reporters, Lee Bandy, announced his retirement from The State newspaper. Bandy joined The State in 1966, serving as Washington correspondent and bureau chief before relocating to Columbia. I well remember him giving me a tour of Congressional offices when I was a Senate intern in 1967.

I have known and worked with Lee extensively during my years in South Carolina poli-

tics. While his departure marks the end of an era, I know Lee will continue to exert tremendous influence on the South Carolina political scene.

At a recent meeting of Midlands First Tuesday Club, I presented Lee a Certificate of Achievement on behalf of Congress.

On December 14, 2006, The State's Aaron Gould Sheinin penned the following article marking Bandy's retirement:

AFTER 40 YEARS AND 3,000 COLUMNS, THE
STATE'S LEE BANDY IS RETIRING

Hailed as a legend by colleagues and a mover and shaker by sources, reporter has kept finger on pulse of S.C. politics

Legendary political reporter and columnist Lee Bandy will retire at the end of the year after 40 years with The State newspaper.

Bandy, 71, has been with the newspaper since 1966. He started as Washington correspondent, then served as Washington bureau chief. He moved to Columbia in January 1992.

While Bandy will retire from day-to-day reporting, he will continue writing his weekly Sunday column at least through 2007.

During a luncheon in his honor Wednesday at the newspaper, Bandy told his colleagues, "I've met a lot of fascinating people, and I might add I've worked with some wonderful people. You've been a source of inspiration to me."

As the top political reporter in South Carolina, Bandy often is sought out by politicians looking for a positive mention in his Sunday column. During Wednesday's lunch, in fact, potential 2008 presidential candidate John Edwards left a phone message for Bandy congratulating him on his coming retirement.

During 40 years of writing his column, Bandy never missed a week. He said he estimates he's written 3,000 columns. Each column is about 800 words. That's more than 2 million words, "and that's more than enough for anybody," Bandy said.

David Broder, longtime political reporter for The Washington Post, said Bandy was a legend in the Senate Press Gallery in Washington. Broder still occasionally calls Bandy to get the pulse of South Carolina politics.

"He's enormously generous and helpful and tells you stories you would never hear from any other source," Broder said.

Former S.C. Gov. David Beasley, a Republican, called Bandy his friend and said, "No one has become president of the United States without crossing his path in 40 years, and no one has had an impact on South Carolina government that hasn't dealt with Lee Bandy."

A native of Asheville, Bandy is a graduate of Bob Jones University. He is a member of the exclusive Gridiron Club of Washington journalists. He and his wife, Mary, have two sons, Ryan and Michael, a daughter, Alexa, and two grandchildren, Sophia and Nathaniel. They are members of First Presbyterian Church in Columbia and live in Forest Acres.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BALANCED
BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL
AMENDMENT

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce legislation that will amend the United States Constitution to force Congress to rein in spending by balancing the federal budget.

It is common sense to American families that they cannot spend more than they have—yet far too frequently, this fundamental principle has been lost on a Congress that is too busy spending to pay attention to the bottom line.

Our federal government must be lean, efficient and responsible with the dollars that our nation's citizens worked so hard to earn. We must work to both eliminate every cent of waste and squeeze every cent of value out of each dollar our citizens entrust to us. Families all across our nation understand what it means to make tough decisions each day about what they can and cannot afford, corporate officers are required to act in the best interests of their shareholders when using company resources, and government officials should be held to similar standards when spending the hard-earned dollars of our nation's citizens.

Congress took a dramatic step forward last year when it passed the Deficit Reduction Act. This new law found savings of approximately \$40 billion over the next five years by eliminating wasteful spending and programs. This legislation was an important first step, but it was just that—a first step. Furthermore, the legislation was passed by the Senate by a margin of just one vote and was passed by the House by a margin of two votes, which shows exactly how difficult the task of balancing the budget is—and how important it is to force Congress to do so.

In the 109th Congress, we were fortunate to have a majority in the House and Senate that had an appetite for reining in spending but we still have to make considerable strides to achieve a balanced budget. Only time will tell whether future Congresses will have this appetite as well. However, one thing is certain—if we pass an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that requires a balanced budget, Congress will have to act accordingly regardless of which party is in control in Washington, D.C. This is exactly why I am introducing this legislation today.

My legislation would amend the Constitution to require that total spending for any fiscal year not exceed total receipts and require the president to propose budgets to Congress that are balanced each year. It would also provide an exception in times of military conflicts that pose imminent and serious military threats to national security.

Furthermore, the legislation would make it harder to increase taxes by requiring that legislation to increase revenue must be passed by a true majority of each chamber and not just a majority of those present and voting. Finally, the bill requires a 3/5 majority vote for any increases in the debt limit.

This concept is not new. Forty-nine out of fifty States have a balanced budget requirement.

It has become clear that it is extremely difficult for Congress to agree on a budget that is fiscally responsible. By amending the Constitution to require a balanced budget, we can force Congress to control spending, paving the way for a return to surpluses and ultimately paying down the national debt, rather than allow big spenders to lead us further down the road of chronic deficits and in doing so leave our children and grandchildren saddled with debt that is not their own.

Yesterday, President Bush also highlighted the importance of a balanced federal budget

by announcing his plan to present Congress with a budget proposal that will balance the budget by 2012. I applaud the President for his announcement and look forward to working with him to bring fiscal responsibility back to the federal government.

Our nation faces many difficult decisions in the coming years, and Congress will face great pressure to spend beyond its means rather than to make difficult decisions about spending priorities. Unless Congress is forced to make the decisions necessary to create a balanced budget, it will always have the all-too-tempting option of shirking this responsibility. The Balanced Budget Constitutional amendment is a common sense approach to ensure that Congress is bound by the same fiscal principles that America's families face each day.

I urge support of this important legislation.

RECOGNIZING CHARLES T. ORTMAN FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Charles T. Ortman, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 395, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Charles has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Charles has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Charles T. Ortman for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent Charles in the United States House of Representatives.

THE TEAM (TO ENCOURAGE ALTERNATIVELY-FUELED VEHICLE MANUFACTURING) UP FOR ENERGY INDEPENDENCE ACT

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, climate change threatens the security and stability of our planet. The temperature of the earth is increasing at a rate unseen in modern times and is starting to melt the polar ice caps and disrupt weather patterns. Unprecedented levels of carbon dioxide pumped into the atmosphere by automobiles and industries, with about one-fourth of the world's carbon dioxide emissions being produced by the United States, have led to current rates of warming.

Historically high gas prices and political instability in oil producing regions reinforce the need for the United States to secure our energy independence. We can make real progress by developing and distributing alternatively fueled vehicles. Through innovation and existing technology, we can reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and promote energy efficiency and conservation to secure a safe future for our country and the environment.

Alternatively fueled vehicles, such as those that use E85 ethanol fuel, could reduce our use of petroleum fuels by up to 40%, helping our country move towards sustainable energy independence. E85 ethanol fuel can be produced from agricultural products grown here in the United States, so that money spent on fuel supports farmers in the Midwest, not countries in the Middle East. Corn may not be the only answer to biofuels, as other sources of energy such as switchgrass or other renewable starch re-sources are also on the horizon.

Congress must do more to make alternative fueled vehicles practical and accessible to every American. There are currently only six million E85-capable vehicles on U.S. roads, compared to approximately 230 million gasoline- and diesel-fueled vehicles, according to the National Ethanol Vehicle Coalition. Only 993 fuel stations in the entire country currently provide E85 fuel, and only four of these are located in California.

That is why I am again introducing this bill to encourage consumers and manufacturers to develop the infrastructure necessary for a cleaner energy future. We must do more to make alternatively fueled vehicles practical and accessible to everyone. The cost of producing flex fuel capable vehicles is minimal at the time of manufacture, but there are currently few incentives for the production of flex fuel vehicles and a lack of infrastructure to service them.

My bill will encourage the production of more alternatively fueled vehicles by phasing in a tax penalty on the manufacture or import of new, non-flex fuel vehicles. However, since the cost to convert fleets to flex fuel is nearly nil, it will be easy for manufacturers or importers to avoid these costs completely. Any revenues generated would be used to help independent gas station owners install alternative fuel equipment.

I would like to thank Speaker PELOSI for her hard work and dedication to increase investment in renewable energy and ultimately achieving energy independence. I hope this bill can be a part of the crucial national dialogue towards securing our energy independence and helping America move towards a more secure and sustainable future.

COMMENDING JOAN COUNTRYMAN

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Joan Countryman, who recently became the head of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in South Africa.

In 2005, Ms. Countryman stepped down as head of the prestigious Lincoln School for girls in Providence, Rhode Island.

Ms. Countryman, a Quaker, began her career first as a math teacher and then as an administrator at the Germantown Friends School in Philadelphia, which she attended as a student. She received a bachelor's degree from Sarah Lawrence College in 1962, and after taking part in the civil rights movement, she received a master's degree in urban studies from Yale. In 1966, Ms. Countryman received a Fulbright fellowship to the London School of Economics. She is also a former Columbia University Klingenstein Fellow and a Woodrow Wilson Fellow. Ms. Countryman is also the author of works such as her 1992 book, *Writing to Learn Mathematics*, in which she explained how she approached the teaching of math by using such tools as journals, learning logs, and formal papers.

Before asking Ms. Countryman to head her new academy, Oprah Winfrey first asked her to lend her experience and expertise as a consultant. Oprah Winfrey founded the Leadership Academy with the goal of targeting South African girls from poor families and giving them an educational opportunity that they would otherwise not have received. Beginning with 152 girls in the seventh and eighth grades, the academy has a goal of expanding through grade 12.

I know that Joan Countryman will institute a welcoming and challenging school environment at the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy. Rhode Island was honored to have Ms. Countryman as an educator for twelve years, and the girls in South Africa will be lucky to have her there now.

Madam Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join with me in wishing Joan Countryman well in her new endeavor, as well as success to the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy.

RECOGNIZING JONATHAN VERNICKAS FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jonathan Vernickas, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 214, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jonathan has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jonathan has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jonathan Vernickas for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent Jonathan in the United States House of Representatives.