

This legislation is specifically targeted to extremely low and low-income families, meaning those who most need help will receive that assistance and improve upon their current living conditions. The National Affordable Housing Trust Fund also targets funds to the local jurisdictions that have the experience in providing and administering affordable housing, and who work within the community with the actual residents.

While Iowa may not have many “urban” areas in which poverty issues are traditionally highlighted; many rural areas of Iowa have seen good-paying jobs leave our towns at an astonishing rate, devastating our communities. It is estimated there are 305,000 Iowan’s living in poverty. Of that 305,000, almost 90,000 are children under the age of 18.

In 1949, The U.S. Housing Act established the admirable goal of “a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American Family.” The National Affordable Housing Trust Fund is another step this Congress has taken to ensure we adhere to this goal. I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on this important legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEAN HELLER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. HELLER of Nevada. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 866—H. Res. 643, which commemorated the 9/11 attacks, I was with my constituents in Nevada’s Second District. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea”.

TRIBUTE TO ABBEY MEYERS

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. WAXMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a selfless and a truly great American. For more than 20 years Abbey Meyers has been the voice of people in this country with rare diseases. She has helped establish national policy that has improved the lives of countless patients. Before Abbey Meyers began this important work, these patients had no advocate in Washington. Today no one is more effective in advocating on their behalf.

The patients for whom Abbey Meyers works have one of more than 1,000 diseases, diseases that are not known to most people. Because the populations are so small, before 1980 drug companies did virtually no research to find cures for rare diseases, even though these diseases are devastating for afflicted patients and their families.

In 1983 Congress enacted the Orphan Drug Act, which provided incentives to drug companies to invest in drugs for rare diseases. Since that time the Food and Drug Administration has approved approximately 200 orphan drugs; another 1000 drugs have been designated for orphan drug research. I believe that most of this work would never have been done without Abbey Meyers and the organization that she established in 1983, the National Organization of Rare Disorders (NORD).

Abbey Meyers’s success is due to her enormous skills in assisting patients in navigating the political world in Washington and in mastering complex scientific issues. Abbey Meyers and NORD support more than 2,000 patient organizations. She is a frequent witness on Capitol Hill on health policy issues. And she has had a significant influence on research into pharmaceuticals for rare disease.

Recently Abbey Meyers has announced that she will retire as President of NORD. It is hard to imagine resolving major public health issues without her input. While we wish Abbey a joyful retirement, we know with near certainty that she will never stop thinking about what policies will best benefit patients in this country, and we will continue to benefit from her commitment and knowledge.

SENSE OF THE HOUSE REGARDING ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL CANCER RESEARCH MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID LOEBSACK

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 15, 2007

Mr. LOEBSACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this important bill to establish a National Cancer Research Month.

Sadly, cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States. This disease will claim the lives of almost 560,000 Americans and over 6,500 Iowans this year. However, the more we know about this deadly disease the more we can do to eradicate it. Research is the key to saving lives.

I’m proud to represent the University of Iowa and commend them on their commitment to cutting edge research. The University just broke ground for the Iowa Institute for Biomedical Diversity, and the College of Public Health. Both facilities will work to research, develop and advance treatments for a wide array of human diseases, including cancer.

We must encourage and support cutting edge cancer research so that lives are no longer lost to this disease. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEAN HELLER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. HELLER of Nevada. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 865—H. Res. 257, which supports the goals and ideals of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month, I was with my constituents in Nevada’s Second District. Had I been present, I would have voted “yea.”

HONORING THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LATE RICHARD D. GIDRON

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in tribute to a pioneering entrepreneur, a nat-

ural-born salesman, a trailblazer in the African-American and business communities, and a dear friend, the late Richard Daniel Gidron. Dick Gidron overcame the many obstacles to success that faced Black entrepreneurs of his generation to become a successful car dealer who opened doors of opportunity for the current generation of successful Black businessmen. A man of firsts, Mr. Gidron rose from car jockey at a Cadillac dealership in his native Chicago to become the company’s first Black salesman, and later, the second African-American Cadillac dealer nationwide and the first in New York. In honor of that stellar legacy, I want to recognize his achievements on the floor of the House so that his contributions can be appreciated. I introduce for the information of my colleagues his New York Times obituary, “Richard D. Gidron Is Dead at 68; Ran an Empire of Car Dealerships,” published October 15, 2007, and written by Robert D. McFadden.

Mr. Gidron was head of a dealership empire that spanned three companies—Cadillac, Oldsmobile, and Ford—and four regions—Bronx, Yonkers, Mt. Kisco, and Mahopac—that became quite a successful enterprise. He boasted impressive numbers, eclipsing \$45 million in annual sales by 1980 to become one of the Nation’s top 10 Cadillac dealers.

The one-time president of the Bronx Chamber of Commerce and Chairman of the Bronx County Democratic Committee, Mr. Gidron maintained a slew of friends representing the fields of politics, sports, and entertainment. At a time when African Americans found themselves seldom represented in the upper echelons of the entrepreneurial world, Mr. Gidron successfully led a franchise that served as the very symbol of wealth, stardom, celebrity, and power. We should remember and praise him for the pathway he blazed for the successful Black entrepreneurs of today.

RICHARD D. GIDRON IS DEAD AT 68; RAN AN EMPIRE OF CAR DEALERSHIPS

Richard D. Gidron, a politically savvy Bronx businessman who became one of America’s earliest and most successful black owners of a Cadillac dealership before falling on hard times and going to prison for a year for fraud and tax evasion, died Thursday at a New York hospital. He was 68 and lived in Scarsdale.

Mr. Gidron died at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center, said his son, Richard Jr., who declined to disclose the cause of death.

For three decades, Dick Gidron, as he was known to a generation of car buyers as well as mayors, congressmen, star athletes and other celebrities, presided over an empire of Cadillac, Oldsmobile and Ford dealerships that began in the Bronx and moved into Yonkers, Mt. Kisco and Mahopac.

Starting as a teenage car jockey parking Caddies at a dealership in Chicago in 1957, Mr. Gidron, a born salesman, learned his trade when America’s craze with Cadillacs inspired visions of stardom and celebrity—of Elvis Presley whizzing through Memphis in a gold Cadillac and of Sugar Ray Robinson cruising the streets of Harlem in a flamingo pink convertible.

In 1972, when General Motors wanted a minority owner for its Bronx Cadillac franchise, it selected Mr. Gidron, by then one of its top salesmen, over competitors who included Sammy Davis Jr. and Henry Aaron. He thus became New York’s first African-American Cadillac dealer and the second in the nation.

By 1980, with annual sales of \$45 million, Mr. Gidron was among the top 10 Cadillac

dealers in the United States. He acquired three homes, a 36-foot yacht and a host of prominent friends and political connections. He was president of the Bronx Chamber of Commerce for more than 10 years in the 1980s and '90s, and was chairman of the Bronx County Democratic Committee for several years in the 1980s.

On his showroom walls were photos of Mr. Gidron with President Ronald Reagan, Gov. Mario M. Cuomo, Mother Teresa and Muhammad Ali. Super Bowl parties at his home drew a pantheon of judges, politicians and celebrities. Friends included George Steinbrenner, the principal owner of the Yankees; Stanley M. Friedman, the former Bronx Democratic leader; Mayor David N. Dinkins; State Senator Guy J. Vellella; Representatives Mario Biaggi and Charles B. Rangel; and Dave Winfield, the Yankees slugger.

But by the 1990s, as the nation's love affair with Cadillacs waned, America's most prestigious car had become an outsize relic, overtaken by fuel-efficient imports and other luxury brands. As Mr. Gidron's sales plummeted, he fell behind in his corporate taxes. General Motors terminated his franchise, and revenue agents seized parts of his business.

In 2002, Mr. Gidron was indicted on charges of evading more than \$1.5 million in state and federal taxes from the sale and leasing of cars from 1995 to 2000. In 2003, he pleaded guilty to two counts of grand larceny and one of offering a false instrument for filing—admitting that he kept car payments meant for lending institutions—and was ordered to pay \$1.6 million in restitution and sentenced to three years of home confinement and five years of probation.

In 2005, state tax agents shut down Gidron Cadillac-Oldsmobile in Yonkers, seizing assets for what they said was his failure to pay more than \$800,000 in sales taxes. Three other Gidron dealerships were also closed. Mr. Gidron was arrested after a monitor appointed to oversee his business charged that he had again kept car payments intended for lending institutions. He pleaded guilty to violating probation and defrauding nine victims of up to \$100,000, and was sentenced to one to three years in prison. State officials said his former dealerships still owed \$12 million in taxes.

In 2006, Mr. Gidron emerged from a year in prison, said he hoped to make a comeback and sued General Motors for \$150 million, charging that the automaker had reneged on a deal to sell him an auto repair center in Yonkers that he had restored at a cost of millions after it was damaged in a fire in 2000. The suit is pending.

Richard Daniel Gidron was born in Chicago on Oct. 10, 1939, and was raised by his mother and grandmother after his father died when he was 7. At 19, he got a job in a Cadillac dealership on Chicago's South Side. He went to night school but learned salesmanship on the lot and in the showroom. By 26, he had become Cadillac's first black salesman, a natural who did not come across as a super pitchman but moved cars with drumbeat regularity.

Besides his son, of Scarsdale, Mr. Gidron is survived by his wife, Marjorie; a daughter, Bridgett Gidron of Scarsdale; two sisters, Dorothy J. Holmes of Stone Mountain, Ga., and Freddie M. Kesse of Aliso Viejo, Calif.; a brother, Thomas Parker of Little Rock, Ark.; and two grandchildren.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately yesterday, October 15, 2007, I was unable to cast my votes on H. Res. 738, H.R. 2089, and H.R. 20 and wish the RECORD to reflect my intentions had I been able to vote.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 961 on suspending the rules and passing H. Res. 738, Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the Government of Syria's continued interference in the internal affairs of Lebanon, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 962 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 2089, To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 701 Loyola Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the "Louisiana Armed Service Veterans Post Office," I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 963 on suspending the rules and passing H.R. 20, the Melanie Blocker-Stokes Postpartum Depression Research Care Act, I would have voted "aye."

TRIBUTE TO IC CORPORATION OF TULSA, OKLAHOMA

HON. JOHN SULLIVAN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize IC Corporation of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and its parent company, Navistar International. This year, the IC school bus facility in Tulsa, Oklahoma will manufacture its fifty thousandth school bus since the company became part of the Tulsa community in 1999. I am honored to represent the employees at IC Corporation who build the school buses that provide a reliable means of transportation and keep our children safe as they travel to and from school.

The current IC facility originally opened 19 days after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and was built to make B-24 Bombers to help our Nation win WWII. Based on a history of hard work, the first school bus was built by IC Corporation in January 2001. Still one of the largest industries in Tulsa County, the buses built by the employees of the Tulsa IC Bus Plant carry hundreds of thousands of children around the country to and from school.

The employees at the Tulsa plant exemplify dedication and are one reason that the IC Corporation has more than 60 percent market share in the school bus industry. The fifty thousandth school bus will be delivered to the Ardmore City Schools in Oklahoma at a ceremony on October 17, 2007. Congratulations again, and thank you to IC Corporation and the more than 900 employees who work at the Tulsa Bus Plant in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

FREEDOM FOR ERNESTO DURÁN RODRIGUEZ

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about Ernesto Durán Rodriguez, a prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Durán Rodriguez is a pro-democracy activist currently imprisoned in a dungeon for his peaceful work to liberate Cuba from the grasp of the terrorist totalitarian regime. His insistence on freedom, fundamental human rights and speaking openly about the plight of the Cuban people under the tyranny's machinery of repression has made him a target of the totalitarian regime.

Mr. Durán Rodriguez has been repeatedly harassed and detained by regime thugs since 1995, when he was first arrested and in a farcical trial "sentenced" to 22 years in the regime's heinous gulag on charges of "evasion" and attempting to exit the country without "proper permission". Let me be very clear, Mr. Durán Rodriguez has been thrown in the gulag for daring to dream of and working on behalf of a democratic Cuba.

On August 8, 2002, Mr. Durán Rodriguez and another political prisoner, Leontio Rodriguez Ponce were brutally beaten by regime thugs and thrown into the wretched squalor of punishment cells. On August 28 of that year, both men were tried on trumped-up charges that they had "disrespected" the demented tyrant. Both men were denied the right to a defense, and although the exact motive for their second trial is unknown, the so-called "court" found "sufficient cause" to increase their prison terms by two years.

While incarcerated in the squalor of the heinous gulag, Mr. Durán Rodriguez has suffered beatings, lack of medical treatment and being persistently denied the opportunity to communicate with his family. On January 29, 2006, prison thugs without warning entered his cell during the early morning hours and placed him in shackles on mere suspicion that he might have circulated leaflets in the prison. With his movement constricted, they proceeded to ransack his cell, stealing what few documents he kept and leaving his few precious personal effects thrown throughout his cell.

Mr. Durán Rodriguez is one of the many heroes of the Cuban pro-democracy movement who are locked in the dungeons of an oppressive totalitarian dictatorship for their beliefs. These men and women are symbols of freedom and democracy who will always be remembered when freedom returns to Cuba. Mr. Durán Rodriguez's courage in defiance of tyranny serves as an inspiring reminder that the tyranny's gulags are full men and women who represent the best of the Cuban nation.

Madam Speaker, it is absolutely unacceptable that peaceful pro-democracy activists are languishing in the heinous and depraved prisons of tyrants. My Colleagues, we must demand the immediate and unconditional release of Ernesto Durán Rodriguez and every prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.