

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. Velella; 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 outside 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 pitcher but moved cars with drumbeat regularity.

Besides his son, of Scarsdale, Mr. Gidron survived by his wife, Marjorie; a daughter, Bridgett Gidron of Scarsdale; two sisters, Dorothy J. Holmes of Stone Mountain, Ga., and Freddie M. Kessee 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, Leoncio 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.

COMMENDING THE WORK OF WILSON HOSPICE ON ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize the staff of Wilson Hospice in Sidney, Ohio, as they mark 20 years of service to the region.

As part of Wilson Memorial Hospital in Sidney, Wilson Hospice provides invaluable care to the people of Shelby, Auglaize, Champaign, Darke, Logan, and Miami Counties. The hospice's professional and volunteer caregivers take great pride in helping those with terminal and other challenging illnesses in the final stages of their lives.

Wilson Hospice offers a wide range of assistance, from in-home care to aid in nursing facilities and other assisted-care centers in the region. Hospice staffers tailor care to each patient's needs, working in concert with families and doctors to provide pain management, spiritual and emotional care, and whatever other support is required. Because catastrophic illnesses frequently come with significant financial burden that harms quality of life, no one in need is ever turned away from Wilson based on an inability to pay.

The hospice excels in the outstanding grief support services it provides to families—including a phenomenal program targeted at teens and children, who often have the most difficult times dealing with the loss of a loved one. For more than a year after a loved one's death, family members may receive personal and group counseling and support services through the hospice. Those who have participated in these programs never forget the commitment and compassion of the many caregivers who help them cope with their losses.

Madam Speaker, Wilson Hospice will celebrate its 20th anniversary with an event this Monday, October 22. I look forward to attending and joining people throughout the region in applauding the dedicated staff of the hospice for all they do to provide comfort and peace to patients and their families.

TAX COLLECTION RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Tax Collection Responsibility Act of 2007. This legislation will put a stop to the use of private debt collection agencies to collect federal income taxes and ensure that this critical government function is performed by public servants on behalf of American taxpayers.

The small proportion of individuals who do not pay their taxes does increase the burden for the rest of the responsible, law-abiding Americans. In 2004 Congress attempted to

hold these people accountable by authorizing a pilot private debt collection program for debts owed to the Internal Revenue Service. While this program was intended to be a more efficient way to collect unpaid taxes, it has proven to be a failure.

We have found that some of the private debt collection agencies are nothing short of bounty hunters, who use harassment to collect debts. Our constituents deserve to know that the person contacting them on behalf of the Federal Government is a public-servant, who is held to the highest standards of accountability and confidentiality, not a person whose paycheck depends solely on the number of collections they make.

In addition to the use of heavy-handed and abusive tactics to collect unpaid taxes, private tax collection agencies have also shown themselves to be significantly less efficient than the IRS agents who should be doing this work in the first place. This program has cost the American taxpayers \$71 million, but has only collected \$20 million, for a net loss of over \$50 million. The IRS's National Taxpayer Advocate testified that for the same \$71 million investment, the IRS would have collected around \$1.4 billion. It simply does not make sense to waste public funds in this manner.

The Republican motion to recommit on this legislation would add to the bill a wholesale repeal of the estate tax. Repealing the estate tax would be fiscally irresponsible and break the promise this Congress made to the American people to work towards a balanced budget. Since its adoption would make the bill violate the House PAYGO rules, this motion is clearly nothing more than a political move to kill the underlying bill. This motion to recommit shows where the Republican Party's priorities are; the estate tax currently affects less than two percent of the wealthiest estates. A full repeal would require that taxes on millions of working Americans be raised and that Social Security and Medicare benefits for American seniors be reduced. I will continue to support a responsible approach to reducing the estate tax that provides relief for families without burdening future generations with additional deficit spending.

Mr. Speaker, it is unacceptable that the IRS outsources a function as central to the Federal Government as tax-collection. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3056.

COMMEMORATING PHOENIX HOUSE'S 40 YEARS OF COMMITMENT TO SERVING THOSE STRUGGLING WITH ADDICTION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Phoenix House, an honorable organization that has been an outstanding member of my community and many other communities nationwide for 40 years. The praise is well-deserved, and I am proud to recognize its invaluable service to our country.

Phoenix House is a provider of substance abuse treatment and prevention services oper-

ating in nine states across the country. In my district alone, it provides critical services to nearly 600 people each year. Phoenix House utilizes an approach based on mutual support and success through community. Today, we celebrate Phoenix House's 40 years of commitment to and success in serving those struggling with addiction and substance abuse.

Six heroin addicts started the Phoenix House in 1967 when they came together at a dextoxification program at a New York hospital. Today, it is the nation's leading nonprofit substance abuse treatment and prevention agency—operating more than 100 programs in New York, California, Texas, Florida, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont.

Over the years, Phoenix House has treated approximately 150,000 substance abusers and currently cares for nearly 6,000 men, women, and teens each day. Phoenix House operates more than 100 programs including residential centers for adults, as well as outpatient, and prison programs—at close to 120 locations in nine states. It also provides education and prevention programs, with in-school and after-school programs that reach more than 30,000 young people every year.

Moreover, for more than two decades, Phoenix House has operated the Phoenix Academies, where teens can make up schooling lost to drugs and recapture opportunities for higher education and careers. As a result, thousands of at-risk youth every year are given the tools and support they need to leave drug abuse behind and become contributing members of their communities. There are now eleven Phoenix Academies operating in seven states, and they were designated by the U.S. Department of Justice as a "model program" in 2005.

A 2004 study by RAND Corporation, a respected research organization, found that adolescents treated at a Phoenix House Academy demonstrated substantial reductions in drug use and unlawful behavior and improvement in psychological status—and that the Academy outperformed other juvenile programs in achieving these objectives.

Phoenix House is also the leading research organization among treatment providers. Its expanding research agenda reflects the broad array of services it provides; its growing number of research partners; and the historic imperative of Phoenix House to improve, refine, and innovate to make its services better, stronger, less costly, more accessible, and more predictably effective. I believe that those are objectives that all of us, as a Congress, can support.

Phoenix House was recently featured in an HBO documentary series titled *Addiction*. The project is one of the most ambitious efforts ever undertaken to educate the American public about drug addiction as well as recent advancements in treatment. *Addiction* aired on HBO in March, April, and May of 2007. I am honored to join Phoenix House in celebrating its 40 year commitment to fighting the war on drugs. I want to thank Phoenix House for the lives it has touched and its leadership in battling this harmful addiction that affects every family.