

world in which our grandchildren's children will live their lives, amid whatever kind of landscape we have left them. Count mine as one solid voice and vote on behalf of taking care that the landscape we bequeath to future generations is one with an abundant, generous, diverse system of wilderness areas, not only in the remotest stretches of the Arctic, but right here close to home—in a “backyard wilderness” such as the Alpine Lakes.

IN LASTING MEMORY OF JUDGE
CHARLES SKINNER

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2007

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Judge Charles Skinner, a true treasure to the community of El Dorado, Arkansas, and to Union County. Judge Skinner passed away November 2, 2007, at the age of 73.

Judge Charles Skinner spent his lifetime dedicated to public service and to improving the community around him. He devoted 20 years to Union County as a juvenile probation officer where he garnered much support and admiration for his professionalism and outgoing nature. His work over the years with youth where he taught the values of respect and service shaped the lives of numerous young people, and had a lasting impact on the quality of life in Union County that can still be felt today.

It was Judge Skinner's deep work ethic and dedication to helping others that led him to seek public office as Union County Judge. His popularity, which he gained through his selfless service, was evident in his 1990 landslide victory in which he won each precinct within the county. He will always be remembered and held in high regard for his service to Union County to make it a better place to live for all who called it home.

Throughout his life and career, Judge Skinner believed deeply in the fundamental idea of assisting others and giving back to those who needed a helping hand. I extend my deepest condolences to his wife, Jo Ann Skinner of El Dorado; his two sons, Charles Skinner Jr., of El Dorado and David Skinner of El Dorado; his brother, James Skinner of Magnolia; and to his numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews and friends. Judge Skinner will be greatly missed in El Dorado, Union County and throughout the state of Arkansas, and I will continue to keep his family in my thoughts and prayers.

EXPRESSING CONCERN RELATING
TO IRANIAN REGIME AND
MAHMOUD AHMADINEJAD

SPEECH OF

HON. RON KLEIN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 5, 2007

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 435, a resolution that I authored with my friend, Mr. MACK.

This resolution expresses the concern of the House of Representatives about the growing

national security implications of Iran's relationships with countries in the Western Hemisphere.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has visited Latin America three times in the past year, and has signed agreements with several countries in the region worth billions of dollars. This is a strategic move on his part to build capabilities in our neighborhood.

On one side of the word, Iran continues to make progress on its nuclear program. And, on this side of the word, Iran has tried to sway leaders into supporting this dangerous agenda. And so far, his strategy is gaining momentum, which is extremely alarming.

Iranian involvement in Latin America is particularly concerning, especially considering Iran's history in places like Argentina. This week, Interpol, the world's law enforcement agency, will consider whether to uphold the arrest warrants for five Iranians and one Lebanese who planned and executed the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center. Argentines are still waiting for justice to be served against those responsible, and Hizbollah and Iran are the lead suspects.

I also remain concerned about Hizbollah in our hemisphere as it relates to fundraising in the tri-border area, and other places. In fact, just last month, Admiral Jim Stavreedeas, head of the U.S. Southern Command wrote, “We consider Latin America and the Caribbean as being highly likely bases for future terrorist threats to the U.S. and others.”

The region has seen some progress, with new anti-terrorism legislation and increased counter-terrorism efforts. But, we all have a long way to go. Eliminating the threat of terrorism and its state sponsors is not just in the best interest of the United States. The countries in our hemisphere will be safer. The United States and Central and Latin America have an aligned interest.

I hope that this resolution is seen as a signal that the United States is willing to help our friends in Central and Latin America make their countries safer and free from terrorism.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR FRANK J.
RYAN

HON. MIKE FERGUSON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2007

Mr. FERGUSON. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Mayor Frank J. Ryan and his service to the residents of Bound Brook, NJ.

Mayor Ryan is a graduate of Bound Brook High School and is married to Rachel “Te.” He is a father of two, and grandfather of four. Mayor Ryan served with honor in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. In 1959, Mayor Ryan was elected to the Board of Education, where he served for 7 years before also serving as the president of the Board of Education between 1966 and 1968. In 1998, he was elected to the Borough Council and in 2000 was elected mayor of Bound Brook.

Together, Mayor Ryan and I have worked on flood control for the Bound Brook portion of the Green Brook Flood Control Project. To date, we have secured more than 50 million Federal dollars and have completed more than half of the project. Mayor Ryan has been and remains a strong advocate of the project; ear-

lier this year he travelled to Washington to personally promote continued Federal funding for the project with senior members of the House Appropriations Committee.

Mayor Ryan is retiring this year from elective public service in Bound Brook. On behalf of residents of Bound Brook, I wish Mayor Ryan many happy years of rest and relaxation with his wife, Te, and I am pleased to honor his service to Bound Brook.

HONORING CENTRAL VALLEY
SAFETY SOCIETY

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2007

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the Central Valley Safety Society for their commitment to serving the Central Valley.

The Central Valley Safety Society, CVSS, was created as a non-profit organization in 1996 to provide safety and human resource professionals with a place to exchange ideas and information, for the professional enhancement of members and to recognize those who excel in safety and health. CVSS is based in the Central Valley and is the only group of its kind from Los Angeles to Modesto. The long time organizational members include; Pelco, Rich Products, The Fresno Bee, Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District, Fresno County EOC and Clovis Cemetery District.

CVSS holds nine monthly luncheon meetings in downtown Fresno. Typically, there are 20 to 30 members present to discuss topics that cover a range of issues from Heat Illness Protection, Hazardous Materials and Health and Wellness Programs. The speakers are typically volunteers from the community. Over the past 8 years, the organization has partnered with similar organizations in the Fresno area, such as; Ag Safe, Human Resource Association of Central California, Fresno County Employer Advisory Council and California State University SHRM Student Chapter. CVSS has partnered with these and other organizations to plan and participate in a half-day human resource and safety seminar and it is held annually in October.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the Central Valley Safety Society for their commitment to serving the Central Valley. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing the organization many years of continued success.

CITY OF ST. PETE BEACH, FL,
CELEBRATES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2007

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating the people of St. Pete Beach, FL, as they celebrate the city's 50th anniversary this weekend.

It is an honor to represent this beautiful beach community that is home to one of our Nation's finest beaches and picture perfect

sunsets. The residents there take tremendous pride in their city, which has just the right combination of parks, shops and cultural offerings.

St. Pete Beach is a barrier island with a permanent population of just over 10,000. It was incorporated in 1957 with the consolidation of the towns of Pass-a-Grille, Don Cesar, Belle Vista and St. Petersburg Beach.

Today it is a popular tourist destination when its population doubles during the winter months. Visitors flock to St. Pete Beach to enjoy its 38 acres of public parks and 39 acres of public beaches.

This is also a fiercely patriotic city as flags fly on homes throughout the community. The people there have also led a seven-city effort to collect items to send our troops serving overseas. They want our soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, and coastguardsmen to know they are loved and appreciated.

Madam Speaker, as the city prepares for its festivities this weekend, let me commend Mayor Ward Friscolowski, Vice Mayor Michael Finnerty, Commissioners Linda Cheney, Ed Ruttenecutter and Harry Metz, and all the city's employees for their dedication to governing and managing one of our Nation's finest hometowns and vacation destinations. St. Pete Beach reminds us of all that is right in Florida and why it is such a great place to live, to work and to play.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2007

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote No. 1059 on Wednesday, November 7, 2007.

However, had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on H. Res. 801, providing for consideration of the bill, H.R. 3688, to implement the United States-Peru Trade Promotion Agreement.

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF OREGON, OHIO

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2007

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a community in my District, that of Oregon, Ohio. Formally incorporated following elections in November of 1957, Oregon celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2007.

Oregon, located on the Western Bay of Lake Erie, was once part of Northwest Ohio's Great Black Swamp. Cultivated for its trees and rich earth, its first government—Oregon Township—was formed in 1838. It is bounded by the City of Toledo to the West, Lake Erie to the North, Wood County to the South, and Jerusalem Township to the East.

Through the 1800s and 1900s, water and rail systems developed in the region. Northwest Ohio is a cornerstone of water, rail, and surface transportation, and Oregon is at its hub. As a result of its location, its two largest employers built and remain in Oregon: Sun Oil

and BP refineries. Oregon continued to grow as an industrial center of the region, with several chemical plants and energy generating facilities. Industrialization brought residential and commercial growth, and Oregon thrives.

Throughout its earlier years of growth, its Western neighbor Toledo tried to annex Oregon Township. Annexation attempts failed, but so, too, did early attempts to incorporate Oregon on its own. In 1957 after another annexation attempt, the residents of Oregon voted overwhelmingly to incorporate as the City of Oregon.

Oregon's own residents coined the slogan "City of Opportunity" in 1958 shortly after adopting the City Charter. Indeed Oregon lives up to its slogan. The City is home to Maumee Bay State Park—a jewel on our Western Lake Erie shoreline—as well as Pearson Metropark, South Shore Park, and Coontz Recreational Complex. Oregon is home to one of Ohio's largest festivals, the German American Festival, as well as its own Oregon Fest. The community is an urban mix of business, industrial, residential, recreational, educational and municipal ventures.

The City of Oregon is a vibrant community full of pride. Oregonians celebrate their past while moving toward the future. It is a City on the move. While recognizing the achievements of its first 50 years, Oregon is poised for the next 50. Onward!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PHIL HARE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 8, 2007

Mr. HARE. Madam Speaker, on November 5, 2007, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: on rollcall No. 1034, On Closing Portions of the Conference for Department of Defense Appropriations, I would have voted "aye"; on rollcall No. 1035, H.R. 513—National Heroes Credit Protection Act, I would have voted "aye"; and on rollcall No. 1036, H. Res. 744—Recognizing the contributions of Native American veterans and calling upon the President to issue a proclamation urging the people of the United States to observe a day in honor of Native American veterans, I would have voted "aye."

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3685, EMPLOYMENT NON- DISCRIMINATION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3685, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2007, introduced by my distinguished friend and colleague Representative FRANK. This important legislation extends the basic civil rights that we, as Americans, enjoy and cherish, to millions of gay, lesbian, and bisexual citizens.

This legislation also fulfills the vision and promise of our Founding Fathers who in the

"Declaration of Independence" proclaimed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." This legislation ensures that all of America's citizens inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are protected.

The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2007 will make it illegal to fire, refuse to hire, or otherwise discriminate against employees simply based on their perceived or actual sexual orientation.

I would like to thank my colleague, Mr. FRANK, for introducing this important legislation, as well as for his ongoing leadership on this issue. I would also like to thank Chairman MILLER, of the Education and Labor Committee, for bringing this legislation to the floor. Madam Speaker, today marks a historic occasion. This bill has been introduced in every Congress since 1975, and the October 18th vote in the Education and Labor Committee to report this legislation to the floor was the first vote ever taken on this legislation in the House of Representatives.

Madam Chairman, we live in a Nation that has long prided itself on predicated success on merit and hard work. In recent decades, we have fought to create a level playing field, to allow women, African Americans, and other minorities to compete in the workplace. In addition to employment legislation, we have worked to eliminate discrimination against members of minority groups. Earlier this Congress, we passed a landmark piece of hate crimes legislation, which crucially included crimes motivated by prejudice of sexual orientation.

H.R. 3685 speaks to our Nation's core values of equality and justice. There are currently no Federal laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. This means that in the 30 States that have not enacted State legislation to this effect, employers may make critical personnel decisions, including firing, refusing to hire, demoting, or refusing to promote employees solely based on the sexual orientation of the individual.

Madam Chairman, I strongly believe that employees should be hired or fired on the basis of their merits. Their jobs should not be threatened because of sexual orientation. Many U.S. companies have recognized that it is in the interest of U.S. companies, as well as U.S. citizens, to make employment decisions based on qualifications and job performance. Ninety percent of Fortune 500 companies now include sexual orientation in their non-discrimination policies. Many major American companies, including General Mills, Microsoft, Citibank, and Morgan Stanley, have expressed their strong support for legislation outlawing discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. In addition, a May 2007 Gallup poll clearly indicated that non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is broadly supported by the American people, with 89 percent of participants stating that they support equal treatment for gays and lesbians in determining employment opportunities.

However, anti-gay discrimination persists in the workplace. According to a 2005 survey, a quarter of gay, lesbian, or bisexual individuals disagreed with a statement that most employers in their area would hire openly gay, lesbian, or bisexual people. A 2007 study found