

legislation making the property tax deduction an “above-the-line” deduction. This simple change makes the property tax deduction available to homeowners who do not file an itemized tax return.

The Property Tax Deduction for All Act will help millions of Americans who struggle with high property taxes, but because they do not itemize, are unable to take advantage of the Federal deduction for property taxes. Extending the property tax deduction to all homeowners will especially benefit senior citizens, whose homes often are the major part of their wealth, and young families struggling to cope with the costs of owning a new home. I respectfully urge my colleagues to help ensure all homeowners can take advantage of the tax deduction for property taxes by cosponsoring this legislation.

IN RECOGNITION OF OPERATION
COMMUNITY SHIELD

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to proudly recognize the Dallas Field Office of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Detention and Removal Operations agents who participated in Operation Community Shield—an annual, national law enforcement initiative that brings together federal, state, and local law enforcement to fight gang violence, drug smuggling and organized crime linked to illegal immigration.

I applaud the remarkable accomplishments they produced in just seven days of Operation Community Shield: 120 gang members arrested, including members from 28 alien gangs, 63 criminal arrests, and 8 firearms and over 4,000 grams of marijuana and cocaine seized.

Thanks to Operation Community Shield, numerous murderers, rapists, and drug dealers have been taken off our streets. With the collaborative work of federal, state, and local law enforcement, Operation Community Shield enables officers to more effectively communicate between agencies, developing a “force multiplier” effect in fighting against violent gangs and criminal illegal immigrants. Consequently, I believe that this important initiative represents a critical step in addressing the illegal immigration problem facing our community and nation.

Madam Speaker, I would further like to give recognition to the leadership of John Chakwin, ICE Special Agent-in-Charge, and Mrs. Nuria T. Prendes, Director for Detention and Removal Operations. Both have remarkable staffs that support the mission in light of the challenging times in our nation, and their steadfast commitment is one we can all be proud of in Dallas, Texas.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING
KRISTA SIEGFRIED FOR PLAC-
ING SECOND IN THE MAN-
CHESTER UMBRO INTER-
NATIONAL CUP

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, Krista Siegfried competed in England's largest youth soccer tournament; and

Whereas, Krista Siegfried showed hard work and dedication to the sport of soccer; and

Whereas, Krista Siegfried has broadened her abilities and skills in the sport of soccer; and

Whereas, Krista Siegfried was a supportive team player; and

Whereas, Krista Siegfried always displayed sportsmanship on and off of the field; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that along with her friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I congratulate Krista Siegfried on placing second in the Manchester Umbro International Cup. We recognize the tremendous hard work and sportsmanship she has demonstrated.

TRIBUTE TO BILL HAMPTON

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Mrs. EMERSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Bill Hampton for receiving the 2007 Missouri Community College Association News Media Award. Mr. Hampton's work has been essential to the successes of Three Rivers Community College, TRCC.

Academic institutions such as TRCC require consistent and aggressive advocacy to advance opportunities for students. By using innovative means to connect more than 20,000 households to TRCC, Mr. Hampton has effectively conveyed the importance of this institution to our regional communities. Mr. Hampton's optimistic, community-minded message continues to foster necessary support for the college's growth and continued improvement.

With career experience in education, business, and government, Mr. Hampton understands the importance of higher education; he remains a generous supporter of the college as a private citizen. Mr. Hampton's contributions, both professionally and personally, have helped foster TRCC as the source for educational and career opportunities for the entire southern Missouri region.

Madam Speaker, it is a great privilege to honor Bill Hampton on winning this prestigious award. I ask that you join me along with the people of southern Missouri to congratulate him on this wonderful achievement and to wish him a happy and productive future.

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVER-
SARY OF THE VIAHEALTH OF
WAYNE COUNTY

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Mr. WALSH of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of ViaHealth of Wayne located in Newark, New York.

Newark Wayne Community Hospital opened its doors on April 1, 1957, and for 50 years it has provided the people of Wayne County and surrounding areas with quality medical care. The highly trained, dedicated staff is committed to providing superior health care to everyone who comes through the hospital doors.

The health care professionals at Newark Wayne Community Hospital offer a wide range of expertise, from heart and cancer care to providing living assistance for seniors. The incredible staff is able to offer care to everyone, using leading edge medical technology that ensures patients receive the best health care services possible.

I thank all of the individuals, families, and foundations whose hard work and dedication have been instrumental in making Newark Wayne Community Hospital a success. I congratulate all of you on reaching this important milestone and know that you will continue to serve the community proudly for another 50 years.

HONORING JACKIE AND MOLLIE
SINGER

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jackie and Mollie Singer, remarkable twin sisters from my district in Las Vegas, Nevada. At the age of four, Mollie was diagnosed with diabetes. Since that time, both sisters, now eighteen, have worked tirelessly to raise money and promote awareness of the disease which afflicts more than 20 million Americans.

The Singer sisters first came to my attention nearly ten years ago on their first visit to my office for the important advocacy work they began at such a young age. As part of their spirited efforts, Mollie and Jackie organize annual walks and numerous other events to benefit the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. Altogether their efforts have raised more than \$500,000 for the cause. The sisters have also formed the Diabetic Angels, an international support group for those suffering from juvenile diabetes.

The Singer sisters have put a memorable face to this alarming medical crisis through speaking engagements, meetings with policy makers, and numerous print and television interviews. They have compiled many of their experiences into a booklet entitled “The Road to a Cure,” which gives pointers to parents and kids on fundraising, health fairs, and public speaking. Members of my staff and I have had the pleasure of meeting with Mollie and Jackie and their family on many occasions through the years.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor the work of Mollie and Jackie Singer and their family to raise awareness of diabetes and to work toward a cure, and I wish them continued success in their efforts.

CONGRATULATING KAZAKHSTAN
ON ITS ELECTION AS CHAIR OF
OSCE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I welcome the unanimous decision of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to elect Kazakhstan its Chair-in-Office for 2010, reached on November 30, 2007 in Madrid.

This is undoubtedly a monumental event not only in the history of modern Kazakhstan, but also of the OSCE of which the United States is a member. For the first time, a country which in recent past was part of the Soviet Empire will lead this international institution. This vividly shows that Kazakhstan has managed to make a breakthrough from its communist past to a democratic future in a short time. This is also testimony to the evolutionary development of the OSCE itself. The Madrid decision, helps the OSCE strengthen its unity and become an organization of equal partners who sincerely believe in and are committed to ideals of democracy and freedom.

This is a stellar moment for the people of Kazakhstan, and a recognition of the long-standing efforts of their leader, President Nursultan Nazarbayev, on building a truly democratic and free society. President Nazarbayev has managed to achieve things leaders of many other countries can only dream of. To pull the country from the chaos of Soviet era and lead it towards the ranks of economically strong and democratically developed nations of the world in a little more than a decade takes incredible efforts, strategic vision and endless care for one's people. Today, Kazakhstan is a recognized leader in Central Asia, and I believe that, as Chair-in-Office, Kazakhstan will not only strengthen its leadership in that key region but will also help strengthen the OSCE's authority internationally, as well as improve mutual understanding and cooperation between East and West.

Madam Speaker, next week the people of Kazakhstan will celebrate the 16th anniversary of their independence and mark the establishment of Kazakhstan-U.S. diplomatic relations. We are proud that in these 16 years our relations have developed into a true strategic partnership. Kazakhstan has always been true to its commitments and has never wavered in its support for our nation.

I join my colleagues in congratulating our strategic ally and friend with its Chairmanship of OSCE in 2010 and with the 16th anniversary of independence. I strongly believe the opportunities Kazakhstan and our strategic partnership have to offer have not been fully explored. I wish the wise people of Kazakhstan and their leader Nursultan Nazarbayev happiness, well-being, and further prosperity.

CONGRATULATING THE L.D. BELL
HIGH SCHOOL BLUE RAIDER
MARCHING BAND

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the L.D. Bell High School Blue Raider Marching Band of Hurst, Texas, on being named the 2007 Bands of America Grand National Champion on November 17, 2007 in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The L.D. Bell Blue Raider Marching Band has participated in the Bands of America Grand Nationals five times since 2001, placing 4th, 5th, 3rd, 2nd, and now 1st. They also received the highest achievement awards in the areas of Outstanding Music Performance and Outstanding General Effect. In the semi-finals round, the band received the highest score given in Bands of America history: an astounding 97.8.

The Band is capably led by Director of Bands Jeremy Earnhart, Assistant Director of Bands Jolette Wine, and Associate Band Directors Nick Thomas and Brandon Holt.

I sincerely commend the L.D. Bell High School Blue Raider Marching Band, their directors, and Drum Majors, for winning 1st place at the University Interscholastic League Bands of America Grand Nationals. Their hard work, dedication, desire to excel, and success in promoting and performing music deserves the highest recognition and congratulations. I'm very proud to represent these students and teachers in the U.S. House of Representatives.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING
ALEX LEAS FOR PLACING SEC-
OND IN THE MANCHESTER
UMBRO INTERNATIONAL CUP

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, Alex Leas competed in England's largest youth soccer tournament; and

Whereas, Alex Leas showed hard work and dedication to the sport of soccer; and

Whereas, Alex Leas has broadened her abilities and skills in the sport of soccer; and

Whereas, Alex Leas was a supportive team player; and

Whereas, Alex Leas always displayed sportsmanship on and off of the field; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that along with her friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I congratulate Alex Leas on placing second in the Manchester Umbro International Cup. We recognize the tremendous hard work and sportsmanship she has demonstrated.

HONORING MRS. HELENA SNYDER
ON THE CELEBRATION OF HER
100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker I rise today to honor Mrs. Helena Snyder, an outstanding American, on her 100th birthday. A resident of Riverside, Illinois, for over fifty years, Helena celebrated 100 years on November 7th of this year.

Born in Pekin, Illinois, to Sicilian parents, Helena grew up dreaming of a career in Chicago. After graduating high school, Helena left Pekin to pursue her dream and was hired by the offices of the U.S. District Attorney in Chicago. She remained employed there until 1939, when she married her husband Bernard Snyder.

Shortly after their first child was born, World War II began and Bernard enlisted in the Navy. Helena and their son Brad moved to California with him until he was sent overseas. Upon Bernard's return, Helena became a full-time homemaker and spent much of her valuable time volunteering for a number of different groups in her community. Notably, Helena has held many offices as a member of the Riverside Women's Club and served as president of the organization for two years.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize Mrs. Helena Snyder, an exceptional woman and pillar in the community, on the celebration of her 100th birthday. I am honored to have such an outstanding individual in my district and wish Helena and her family a joyous celebration.

TRIBUTE TO EFRAIN GUERRERO,
AKA: "HAPPY"

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 5, 2007

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a unique American patriot, a South Texan whose pleasure is derived from making other people happy: Efrain Guerrero, also known as "Happy the Clown."

If you ever have the pleasure of talking to Happy, you will laugh too loud, and walk away wiping tears of laughter. If laughing is indeed good for our health, Happy is an extraordinary doctor.

Like every great American comedian, Happy delves deeply into the human condition—our habits, our reactions, our relationships, and all the things that make us laugh about ourselves, our families, and our lives.

Happy has a tremendous connection to people, using humor—and his exceptional personal charm—to inspire them and motivate them. He is an international award-winning entertainer and public speaker throughout Texas and the United States. As a motivational consultant, Happy has made countless presentations to schools, health organizations, and parent groups.

His humor is disarming. Happy recently brought down the room as a headliner at Harrah's Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas Nevada. He has written and co-produced comedy