

place and home to all cultures ever since. Santa Fe, to this day, continues to be a government, cultural, religious, and social center. Throughout its history, it has attracted settlers, traders, artists, historians, and tourists, all coming to see what Santa Fe and the surrounding communities have to offer.

The Santa Fe area has long been home to native peoples, centuries prior to European incursions. In fact, some of the tribal communities in the area today have been there for over one thousand years. Arriving centuries later, though still over 400 years ago, the Spanish settlers were integral to the European exploration and settlement of this continent. This legislation honors both the tribal communities and Spanish settlers.

Throughout the city are structures of great historical importance. Built in the 17th Century, the Palace of the Governors was the seat of government for generations and is now the oldest continuously used public building in the United States. It currently serves as the State's history museum, ensuring that current and future generations will be able to learn about the events that shaped New Mexico's past, present, and future.

The creation of the commemorative coin will help in the preparation and celebration of this monumental quadricentennial. The proceeds from the sale of the gold five dollar and silver one dollar coins will be split, with half going towards the 400th Anniversary Committee to support programs to promote the understanding of Santa Fe and its legacies. The rest will go to the Department of Interior to ensure the preservation of Santa Fe, enhance national and international programs, and improve archaeological research activities throughout the area. These are especially important as we continue to learn more about all of the communities that have settled in the area for centuries.

I want to take a moment to thank Senators JEFF BINGAMAN and PETE DOMENICI who are working on this in the Senate, as well as co-sponsors Representatives HEATHER WILSON and STEVE PEARCE for their support here in the House. We must all work to preserve the legacy of America's first European communities and the people who came long before, and I am proud the entire delegation has joined together to mark this remarkable milestone.

For the rich blend of cultures steeped in centuries of heritage, it is only fitting that the Congress recognize the 400th anniversary of the Nation's oldest capital originally known as La Villa Real de la Santa Fe de San Francisco de Asis. I urge my colleagues to join me in passing this legislation.

IN MEMORY OF HENRY PRYOR

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Henry Pryor of Camden, Arkansas, who passed away December 9, 2007, at the age of 50.

Henry Pryor was a consummate professional who made a positive impact on the people and businesses he worked with throughout his life, which was abruptly and sadly cut short

due to a tragic car accident. His career in banking took him across the United States and he eventually landed in Camden, Arkansas, where he served as Executive Vice President of Heartland Community Bank of Camden, and Senior Vice President of Farmers Bank and Trust of Camden.

Although Henry Pryor had a career in business, his calling and real passion was in community development. The City of Camden and its residents were extremely fortunate to gain from his selfless gifts of time and energy to make his community a better place to live. As a member of the Ouachita County Historical Society, he was instrumental in preserving historic properties in Camden such as the Clifton-Greening Street Historic District. He took a keen interest in seeing businesses flourish throughout Camden and Ouachita County through his service as president of the Camden Area Chamber of Commerce. In addition, he was a graduate of the Leadership Camden area program and he served on numerous area boards and commissions. As a local community leader, he also recognized the vast importance of regional festivals and the impact they had on residents and businesses, through his proud service as chairman of the Annual Camden Daffodil Festival.

I send my deepest condolences to his wife of 21 years, Angela Woodward Pryor of Camden, Arkansas, and to his numerous nephews, nieces and cousins.

Henry Pryor will be missed by his family, his church, his community and all those who knew him and called him a friend. His focus on the community and his spirit of service to others and to his community will never be forgotten. I will continue to keep his family in my deepest thoughts and prayers.

TRIBUTE TO RECIPIENTS OF THE SULLIVAN BROTHERS' AWARD OF VALOR

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize three members of the Decorah, Iowa Police Department, Chief Tom Courtney, Captain Warren Leeps, and Officer Sara Stinson, and Volunteer Decorah Firefighter Jeff Ode, as recipients of The Sullivan Brothers' Award of Valor for saving another's life by risking their own.

The Sullivan Brothers' Award of Valor Program was established in 1977 to recognize peace officers and firefighters, who while serving in an official capacity, distinguished themselves by performing a heroic act while fully aware of a threat to his/her personal safety. The strict nomination process includes background investigations, and the final determination is made by the Governor of Iowa.

In January of 2007, Olive Sims crashed her car into a ditch along Division Street in Decorah. Chief Courtney, Captain Leeps, Officer Stinson and Volunteer Firefighter Ode responded to the report and quickly traveled to the scene. Upon their arrival, they discovered the engine compartment of the vehicle was engulfed in flames and that Olive was still inside. Putting their own lives in danger, they acted quickly to remove Olive from the vehicle

before the fire department arrived and just before the passenger compartment of the car was fully consumed by fire.

Their bravery goes above and beyond what we are asked of as citizens of this country. Their courage illustrates the compassion of Iowans willing to risk their own lives for a neighbor in need. For this I offer them my utmost congratulations and thanks.

I commend Chief Tom Courtney, Captain Warren Leeps, Officer Sara Stinson and Volunteer Firefighter Jeff Ode for their bravery. I am honored to represent each of them in Congress and I wish them the best in their future endeavors.

RECOGNIZING ZACHARY RYAN WALSH FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Zachary R. Walsh, 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 and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Zachary has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Zachary 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 Zachary R. Walsh for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

UNITED STATES-CUBA CULTURAL EXCHANGE LETTER TO PRESIDENT BUSH—ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the U.S.-Cuba Cultural Exchange's letter to President Bush and to enter into the RECORD a copy of their letter.

On November 27, 2007, the U.S.-Cuba Cultural Exchange sent a letter to President Bush that expressed their desire to establish relations with Cuban artists and urged him to take steps to normalize interaction with Cuba. The letter was signed by several artists including Harry Belafonte, Danny Glover, Carlos Santana, and Sean Penn. As of December 11, 2007, the letter has been signed by one thousand four hundred and twelve people.

I applaud the U.S.-Cuba Cultural Exchange for urging President Bush to change the U.S. policy towards Cuba and for raising awareness about how the policy impacts the artist community. Further, I support their movement, which would allow people from both countries to exchange and experience performing and literary arts.

Art in any form including, but not limited to dance, music, and poetry provides a mechanism where by people are able to express themselves, which ultimately represents their culture, identity, and voice. In addition to representing a culture, the selling of artistic goods provides a source of income for artists and substantially contributes to an economy, especially in the U.S.

The artists issue is part of the broader implications with the travel ban and trade embargo, which hurts the U.S. economically, politically, and socially. It is estimated that the U.S. economy loses millions of dollars annually due to the trade embargo. The lack of diplomatic relations prevents any effort to democratize Cuba. There is no way to quantify the cost paid by Cuban Americans who can't visit their loved ones freely.

The United States-Cuba policy is a failure, period. Change is needed now. I urge my colleagues to support my bills, H.R. 624 and H.R. 654, which would lift the embargo and travel ban.

U.S.-CUBA CULTURAL EXCHANGE,
Albuquerque, NM, November 27, 2007.

President GEORGE W. BUSH,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT BUSH: We wish to bring to your attention the accompanying letter, dated October 26, 2007, received from Alicia Alonso, Prima Ballerina and Director of the Cuban National Ballet, and also Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Ms. Alonso has toured extensively in the United States and her work has long been admired by the American performing arts community, cultural critics and the public.

We are writing you as representatives of the cultural sphere in the United States. We write you as American citizens. We write to express our dismay at your administration's continuing hostility towards Cuba. We write to express our opposition to policies that keep us divided from our Cuban counterparts, preventing cultural interchange between our two countries. We believe the time has come to move towards cooperation and constructive relations with Cuba.

The present policies deny such possibilities of friendship and cultural sharing. We further note that cultural interchanges and relationships are also modes of communication and expression. In denying us the possibility of engaging in such exchanges and relationships, we are being denied our fundamental rights as guaranteed by the 1st, 5th and 14th Amendments of the U.S. Constitution.

This reality seems to run counter to other positions expressed by your Administration. In September 2006, for example, Laura Bush inaugurated your Administration's "Global Cultural Initiative," stating that "One of the best ways we can deepen our friendships with the people of all countries is for us to better understand each other's culture by enjoying each other's literature, music, films and visual arts."

As citizens, artists, scholars, educators and cultural workers from all artistic practices, academic disciplines, advocacy and service organizations in the arts, we hope you will read and consider the words of Alicia Alonso as we call upon your Administration to:

1. open a respectful dialogue with the government and people of Cuba in accord with established protocols supported by the community of nations;

2. end the travel ban that prevents U.S. citizens from visiting Cuba and allow for Cuban artists and scholars to visit the United States, thus eliminating the censorship of art and ideas, and

3. initiate, by working with appropriate members of Congress, a process that can result in the development of normal bilateral relations between our countries.

Supporters of Cultural Exchanges with Cuba:

Louis Head—Cuba Research and Analysis Group—Co-founder US-Cuba Cultural Exchange.

Bill Martinez—Martinez & Associates—Co-founder US-Cuba Cultural Exchange.

Cynthia Semon—Media consultant/music promoter—US-Cuba Cultural Exchange.

James Early—Cultural Policy Specialist—U.S.-Cuba Cultural Exchange.

Harry Belafonte—actor/singer.

Danny Glover—actor.

Sean Penn—actor.

Carlos Santana—musician.

(Plus more than 1,400 other signatories).

VETERANS GUARANTEED BONUS ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 17, 2007

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this bill that corrects a desperately ill-advised regulation hurting our Nation's heroic men and women in uniform. This Defense Department policy has resulted in several veterans being denied their full bonuses or being asked to repay funds they are entitled to, simply because their injuries prevented them from serving out their full term of service.

Unfortunately, this is not a new problem. Back in October of 2004, Brian Ross of ABC News reported that Army Specialist Tyson Johnson, who was injured by an exploding mortar round in Iraq, later received a letter demanding repayment of his enlistment bonus while he was still recuperating in the hospital.

Two months ago, National Public Radio highlighted the story of Army Specialist Ronald Hinkle, who suffered a traumatic brain injury after an IED explosion cut short his military career. Not only was Specialist Hinkle owed \$2,500 in back salary, but two months after NPR's story aired, he was notified that a \$3,000 enlistment bonus would not be paid because he "failed to fulfill his contract."

In yet another case, Tommy Guinn, who is a respected 14-year Army veteran, ended his term of service early when a helicopter accident in Pakistan left him paralyzed. Thank God he made it home safely to his family, but the military kept \$1,000 out of his re-enlistment bonus.

This is not the treatment our returning warriors deserve. I am proud to support this bill that finally changes this flawed policy. The Veterans Guaranteed Bonus Act makes the bonus payments automatic and requires the Secretary to pay any remaining portion of bonus payments within 90 days of medical discharge. During this season of Peace on Earth and goodwill towards men, let us show goodwill to those on the frontlines protecting our peace. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

IN APPRECIATION OF DANIEL V.
KISH

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Daniel V. Kish and the 28 years of service he has provided to the State of Alaska and the Nation.

In the summer of 1978, a young long-haired college student dressed in muddy work boots wandered into my office looking for an internship. Why he chose my office in particular, I do not know, though I suspect it had something to do with an attractive young lady working at the front desk, but he appeared willing and eager to work. Thus, after telling him to get a haircut and a pair of loafers, I put him to work.

My staff and I were immediately impressed by Dan's strong work ethic, his innate understanding of even the most complex issues, and his natural ability to communicate to my constituents—both in writing and in spoken word—the practical impacts of the various legislative proposals before the Congress.

In fact, when Dan returned to Indiana's Washburn College at the end of that summer to finish his studies, he left our office with an unexpected void to fill. The following year Dan had completed his undergraduate degree, and we had an open position to fill. Thanks to the good judgment and recommendation of the young woman who drew Dan into our office the previous summer, I tracked him down and asked him to come to work for me full-time. In the years since then, Dan has earned himself a well-deserved reputation as one of the most talented, dedicated, and knowledgeable staffers on the Hill.

Dan has stuck with me through thick and thin. He has always kept my best interests, and the best interests of the State of Alaska, at heart. His devotion to me, the State of Alaska, and the Nation has been unparalleled. Dan's unwavering commitment to and understanding of strong Republican ideals, free market policies, and responsible development of our Nation's resources have been an inspiration to hundreds of Hill staffers and Members alike, and he has served as the moral compass by which the Resources Committee has sailed throughout his tenure.

Dan's writing throughout the years has been equally inspiring. He is by far the single most impressive writer I've come across in 35 years. His talent and ability to get to the root of an issue in two or three eloquent sentences is unmatched. While Dan's use of words has always been powerful, it has often been humorous as well. A strong supporter of a free market economy, Dan once wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Treasury recommending that the \$1 coin bear the likeness of Dolly Arthur—the owner of a historic bordello in Ketchikan, Alaska—suggesting that unlike Susan B. Anthony, she "was truly a woman who knew the value of a dollar." This unique sense of humor has brought smiles to my face and many others for nearly three decades.

But most of all, Dan Kish will be remembered for the genuine respect and appreciation he has always had for what he called "the Working Man." Although his mind was often occupied in debates over esoteric federal policies, his heart has always belonged to the