

She also played a key role in developing the Take the Wheel Program, which focused all of the organization's resources and programs into Harris County because it had the highest number of drunk driving deaths in Texas. By partnering with law enforcement, businesses, government, community and religious leaders, the program seeks to save lives by encouraging personal responsibility in the use of alcohol and educating the public about the dangers of drunk driving.

On Dec. 13, 2007, Linda passed away unexpectedly. She leaves behind a legacy of compassion and exceptional service. On Dec. 19, 2007, friends and family will gather to celebrate the remarkable life of this extraordinary community servant. The State of Texas and our Nation owes much to Linda Kitazaki for making our streets and highways safer.

And that's just the way it is.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, due to medical reasons I missed a suspension vote and the vote on the motion to postpone consideration of the veto message for the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall No. 1154 and "aye" on rollcall No. 1155.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, due to personal medical reasons, I was unable to vote during the following roll call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted as indicated below.

Rollcall No. 1163: "yea."
Rollcall No. 1164: "yea."
Rollcall No. 1165: "yea."
Rollcall No. 1166: "yea."
Rollcall No. 1167: "yea."
Rollcall No. 1168: "yea."
Rollcall No. 1169: "yea."
Rollcall No. 1170: "yea."
Rollcall No. 1171: "yea."
Rollcall No. 1172: "yea."
Rollcall No. 1173: "yea."

ALL ALONG HIS WATCHTOWER

HON. HEATH SHULER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. SHULER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to present the following poem entitled All Along His Watchtower, which was written by Mr. Albert Carey Caswell in honor of Brent Hendricks, of the 172nd Striker Brigade from Forest City, North Carolina. Mr. Hendricks lost his leg when an IED blew up his humvee.

Bump, bump bump bump bump . . .
Bump, bump bump bump bump . . . bump,
bump bump bump bump . . .
Whether, upon football fields of green . . . or
on so Heroic Battlefields of Honor Seen
. . .
All Along His Watchtower, "They could get
no relief" . . .
Striking Hard, Striking Fast!
A bold heart, That is his motto, That is his
path!
Dying twice, when . . . The Dark Riders in
the distance, they began to approach
. . .
When Brent, began to howl . . . "I'm not
ready now!"
The Nort Catolacki Kid,
6'9" . . . built for power and speed . . . 9
sacks in one football game . . . a man
who would not heed!
Until, on battlefields of horror he would
bleed . . . In The Real Game of Life, all
for our Country 'Tis a Thee!
Giving up his fine leg, as he did . . .

Brent Hendrick, an Army Man . . .
A Real American Hero, who before us now
stands . . .
Strength In Honor, who respects so com-
mands . . . cheating death, as towards
evil he ran . . .
Into that dark valley of death, for our nation
to so bless . . . Striking Hard, Striking
fast . . . all in death's path!
But, when you're 6'9" . . . and have a 17½
shoe . . .
You can kick some glutenous maximus too!
Now isn't that true! As this patriot's
heart comes into view!
Could we, would we . . . ever such magnifi-
cence find so too?

All ready, operations . . . he's had 65!
But, this Heroes Heart . . . will not wilt, will
not die!
Like Arnold, he'll be back . . . Back . . .
Back . . . Back in Iraq . . . with his
brothers in arms . . . or he'll resign!
And The Wind Cries Hero!
Do Do Do Do . . .

I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing our appreciation for this soldier's dedication to the United States Armed Forces and to this Nation. His service and sacrifice is a shining example of the quality of men and women who serve this great Nation at home and abroad.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTMAS AND THE CHRIS- TIAN FAITH

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 11, 2007

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the Ranking Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the gentlewoman from Florida, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for her support and help in getting this important measure to the House floor for a vote.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to address the House today to discuss the importance and relevance of Christmas, the Christian holiday celebrating the birth of our savior Jesus Christ.

As this resolution notes, there are approximately 225 million Christians in the United States, making Christianity the religion of over three-fourths of the American population. Beyond that, there are approximately 2 billion

Christians throughout the world, making Christianity the largest religion in the world and the religion of about one-third of the world population.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, in recent decades there have been some who have undertaken efforts to diminish the significance of this great religion, and these efforts are no more apparent than during this time of Christmas.

It is not hard to look out over this great country of ours and find those who, for one reason or another, have engaged in a highly-politicized and highly-publicized crusade to rid the public square of any reference to the religious underpinnings of the Christmas holiday. These are individuals who have subscribed to a radical interpretation of our Constitution's free exercise and establishment clauses and have sought to impose their secular views and beliefs on the nation as a whole.

In many respects, it is this ongoing effort to bring about the secularization of Christmas—and all of our everyday lives for that matter—that motivated me to bring this resolution before the House today.

Regardless of how others may define it, Mr. Speaker, Christmas is a religious holiday. It is the day on which Christians—those who identify themselves as believers in the salvation from sin offered to them through the death and resurrection of their savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and who, out of gratitude for the gift of salvation, commit themselves to living their lives in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Bible—celebrate the birth of their savior. For Christians, the birth of Jesus is cause for great celebration. As the Son of God, Jesus was sent to earth, by our Heavenly Father, to become a human being, live a sinless life, be crucified on a cross for our sins, and rise from the dead three days later. The purpose of this, as you well know, Mr. Speaker, was to save sinners from eternal death—the price to be paid for their sin.

And so, Mr. Speaker, the birth of Christ, as celebrated by Christians on Christmas is a truly important and significant day because it is celebrated as a recognition of God's redemption, mercy and Grace.

The importance of Christmas, however, does not end with the tenets of Christianity. Because Christmas is one of the most important holidays on the Christian calendar, I believe that its annual passage should serve as an opportunity for all Americans, Christian or not, religious or not, to recognize the important role played by Christianity in the formation of our nation and in the founding of our civilization.

It is no coincidence, Mr. Speaker, that court-houses throughout this country proudly display the Ten Commandments. It is no accident that, in this very chamber, it is the face of Moses, the human author of those divinely dictated commandments, that looks down upon you, keeping close watch on all that transpires in this chamber. Mr. Speaker the framework of our laws and the fabric of our society is heavily dependent upon the maxims of Christianity, and I believe that as we Christians begin our annual celebration of the birth of our savior, the one from whom Christianity derives its name, it is wholly appropriate for us, as a nation and as members of this House, to take the time to acknowledge the contributions that the Christian religion has made to our country and our way of life.

Mr. Speaker, I think we all can agree that virtually any American, whether Christian,

atheist, agnostic, or otherwise, when confronted with the fact that he has in some way wronged his neighbor, will rightly respond in one universal way—knock on his door, confess to him, repent, and ask for forgiveness. The neighbor would then forgive them as Christ has taught us. True and simple as this may seem, it is important to ask why we as Americans naturally react in such a way. The answer of course is that in this “conditioned behavior” we see very clearly the positive effect that Christianity has had on the development of our country and culture.

There are few places in the United States— if any—that you can visit where the laws “do not steal” and “do not murder” do not apply. Likewise, there are few households in this great country in which moral character is developed in young children without the invocation of the ninth and tenth amendments regarding lying and coveting that which belongs to others.

Mr. Speaker, we as Americans live in a moral society and in a country that is governed by moral laws. While many of these laws obviously cannot be found in any explicit sense within the pages of the Holy Bible, when we survey the content of that book—the document that outlines how it is the Christians are to live their lives here on earth—we do find much in the way of foundational principles that has come to guide not just the development of our laws, but also the foundation of our nation.

It was from the Bible and the example of Jesus that Pilgrims first established government on this continent, from which the Founders outlined the political thought that shaped our nation, and by which Congress first intended to educate our children. Furthermore, as the scholar David Barton and others have tirelessly pointed out, it was from the Bible that early American leaders derived concepts like private ownership, the free-enterprise system, an industrious work ethic, and workfare rather than welfare. As a result, the life and teachings of Jesus Christ have permeated every aspect of life in America. He has shaped our culture and transformed every great leader to rise from our population. As a testament to this, each of our American Presidents has acknowledged God’s hand on this Christian nation that is the United States. If there never had been a Jesus Christ, there would never have been an America.

In an address to the nation President Truman once said that, “In love, which is the very essence of the message of the Prince of Peace, the world would find a solution for all its ills. I do not believe there is one problem in this country or in the world today which could not be settled if approached through the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. The poets’ dream, the lesson of priest and patriarch and the prophets’ vision of a new heaven and a new earth, all are summed up in the message delivered in the Judean hills beside the Sea of Galilee. Would that the world would accept that message in this time of its greatest need!”

He went on to say that, “This is a solemn hour. In the stillness of the Eve of the Nativity when the hopes of mankind hang on the peace that was offered to the world nineteen centuries ago, it is but natural, while we survey our destiny, that we give thought also to

our past—to some of the things which have gone into the making of our Nation.”

In 1940, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said of Christmas, “it is well for all humanity to remind itself that while this is in its name a Christian celebration, it is participated in reverently and happily by hundreds of millions of people who are members of other religions, or belong actively to no church at all. The reason is not far to seek. It is because the spirit of unselfish service personified by the life and the teachings of Christ makes appeal to the inner conscience and hope of every man and every woman in every part of the earth.”

President Eisenhower called the nation to reflect during his remarks at the lighting of the Nation’s Christmas Tree on December, 15th 1967 when he said, “In a few days we shall all celebrate the birth of His Holiness on earth. We shall recreate in our minds, once more, the ancient coming of that Spirit who remains alive for millions in our time. We shall acknowledge the Kingdom of a Child in a world of men.”

He went on to say, “That Child—we should remember—grew into manhood Himself, preached and moved men in many walks of life, and died in agony. But His death—so the Christian faith tells us—was not the end. For Him, and for millions of men and women ever since, it marked a time of triumph—when the spirit of life triumphed over death. So—if this Christmas season in a time of war is to have real meaning to us, it must celebrate more than the birth of a Baby.”

During his Radio Address to the Nation on Christmas Eve, 1983 President Reagan pointed out that “It’s been said that all the kings who ever reigned, that all the parliaments that ever sat have not done as much to advance the cause of peace on Earth and good will to men as the man from Galilee, Jesus of Nazareth.”

As the words of these great men—these revered and honored presidents of the United States of America have clearly demonstrated, it is not a stretch to say that the precepts and principles of Jesus have so completely permeated the culture of this nation that even an American atheist would be hard pressed to separate his worldview from the impact of the first Christmas.

Though we are not all Christians, Mr. Speaker, we are all Americans. By virtue of that simple fact, I will again reiterate my belief that it is not only appropriate but, more importantly, is necessary during this special time of year to remember not only the birth of Jesus Christ, the savior of the world, but also to recognize the important impact that the Christian faith has had on the foundation and development of our society, our nation, and our civilization.

RECOGNIZING ROOSEVELT PETRY,
JR.

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to recognize Mr. Roosevelt Petry, Jr.,

President and CEO of GP Industrial Contractors, Inc.

He began his professional career as a draftsman for Bethlehem Steel, performing piping, mechanical, electrical, and structural drafting. He worked for fifteen years on electrical instrumentation, mechanical and pipe designing, residential, and commercial construction, and has been a senior designer, project engineer, project manager, and project superintendent. Each job garnered Mr. Petry the necessary skills for his company to secure massive projects such as the Toyota Center, Minute Maid Park, and other high profile projects around the country.

Mr. Petry received his bachelor’s degree from Lamar University in 1997, and one year later, he founded GP Industrial Contractors. He partnered with an acquaintance who owned Gulf Copper Manufacturing Company to form a company specializing in building refineries and petrochemical plants. Piping, steel fabrication, carpentry, maintenance, and engineering, are just a few of the services his company offers.

Mr. Petry attributes all of his success to God, and doesn’t think twice about giving back to the community. With a focus on youth education, he shared his knowledge as an instructor at Lamar University, teaching AutoCAD, surveying and drafting. He and his wife recently donated money to create an endowment scholarship at Lamar State College, for nursing and engineering students in Port Arthur. Currently, he hosts the Roosevelt Petry, Jr. Business Hour on KSAP 107.1—the Breeze, in Port Arthur, TX. After Hurricane Rita, Mr. Petry’s GP Industrial Contractors were there to help the small gulf coast community of Sabine Pass pick up the pieces, assisting in rebuilding.

He has served the community as Commissioner of the Port Arthur Housing Authority; Chairman of the Port Arthur Economic Development Corporation; Member of the Port Arthur Citizen Advisory Committee; Member of the National Society of Black Engineers; Board of Directors for Junior Achievement; and Board of Directors for the United Way. He also serves on the Military Academy Selection Board for our Congressional District.

Over the years, Mr. Petry’s hard work and community involvement have resulted in several honors and awards, including Score’s 2007 Business Man of the Year Award; 2006 Port Arthur Economic Development Corporation’s Business of the Year Award; 2004 Houston Minority Business Council’s Emerging Ten Award; 2002 Lamar State College Port Arthur’s Industrial Business of the Year Award; 2004 Make Ready, Inc. 4th Annual Humanitarian Award; and he was featured in the National Society of Black Engineers in 2000.

This Port Arthur native has shown that your environment and circumstances don’t predict your future. Hard work and perseverance have been the lifeblood of Mr. Petry’s success. Port Arthur’s future is brighter because of Mr. Petry’s continuing commitment and involvement in our community. Roosevelt Petry seizes the opportunities that come his way and has a positive attitude and zest for life.

And that’s just the way it is.