

The most crucial point is what happens when the President and his top advisors confer in the Oval Office about an international crisis. We need a Cabinet member at that table who will forcefully and persistently advocate the peaceful options. Too often, the phrase "search for peace" is simply a political sound bite. President Bush assured us he was searching for peace, and that attacking Iraq was his "last resort," while he secretly plotted war. We need to ensure that war really is America's last resort.

Some of my colleagues may find this proposal interesting but feel they must deal with "more pressing matters." What is more pressing than preventing the violent deaths of our GI's and of our fellow human beings everywhere?

Some colleagues may think a Department of Peace is being offered as a substitute for our Armed Forces. That is not true. We realize that sometimes force proves necessary to protect our truly vital interests. A Peace Department would complement the Pentagon, not replace it, but a Peace Department would make war as rare as possible.

I remind those cynical about the absolute priority of pursuing machinery for peace that Gandhi, Dr. King and Nelson Mandela, who each pioneered paths of peace and non-violence, are now hailed worldwide as heroes of humanity.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RURAL COMMUNITIES INVESTMENT ACT, H.R. 833

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise to inform my colleagues of legislation I have introduced today to strengthen economies in rural America.

The legislation that I have proposed, The Rural Communities Investment Act, H.R. 833, extends tax initiatives to make the interest income on farm real estate and certain rural housing loans exempt from federal taxation.

Rural communities are facing sharp declines in population and business development due to urban migration and consolidation trends in U.S. agriculture. My bill would provide tax incentives to facilitate low cost financing options for farm and rural housing loans. More financing options will encourage greater competition among lenders and better rates for borrowers.

The Rural Communities Investment Act, first introduced as H.R. 4854 in the 109th Congress, has received the support of the Kentucky Bankers Association, a trade group representing the interests of thousands of bank employees across the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

I believe the incentives offered in The Rural Communities Investment Act will provide a solid foundation for new investment and economic stability in small town America, making rural communities affordable and attractive places to live and do business.

THE PASSING OF CHARLOTTE THOMPSON REID

HON. J. DENNIS HASTERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Mr. HASTERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of a former member of this House and one of my predecessors, Charlotte Thompson Reid, who passed away on January 25, 2007. For those of us from the Fox Valley who have since gone on to a life of public service, Charlotte Thompson Reid is an inspiration to us all and an example of how to serve the people you have been trusted to represent with the utmost integrity.

Known as the "Grand Lady of Aurora, Illinois," and "Charley" to her friends, Charlotte accomplished great things for her hometown of Aurora and the surrounding area. Her sparkling personality and just plain Midwest-friendliness is renown throughout all of Chicago land.

As I have said before on the floor of this House, her service in Congress overlapped with the beginning of my teaching career in Yorkville, Illinois and her outstanding record helped inspire me to seek public office in the late 1970s. In fact, Charley's endorsement and work on my behalf helped me get elected in 1986 during my first and toughest race.

After raising her family of four, she worked side by side with her husband Frank as he ran for the House of Representatives in 1962. When Frank suddenly died, she was elected in his stead. She won re-election in four terms bringing her solid Midwestern values to this House. Charlotte went on to be appointed to the F.C.C. where she served with distinction until the mid-70s and was later appointed by President Reagan to serve on the Presidential Task Force on International Private Enterprise from 1985–1987.

To be sure, Charley's surviving children (Patricia, Susan, and Frank), eight grandchildren, and thirteen great-grandchildren, should be proud of the legacy she has left behind and carry her spirit for life with them in their journeys.

Madam Speaker, we are all indebted to Charlotte Thompson Reid for her energy, her gentle manner and what she meant for this country. I offer her family my sincere condolences during this difficult time and wish them the very best in the future.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Madam Speaker, during the month of February, we celebrate Black History Month. This year's theme is "From Slavery to Freedom: The Story of Africans in the Americas."

I would like to call the attention of my colleagues to a man who exemplifies the characteristics of a leader in the African American community. It is with great pride that I introduce and honor Farrell J. Chiles as he celebrates his 9th year as a member of Blacks In Government (BIG) and on completion of his

5th consecutive year as its Chairman of the Board.

In 2000, Mr. Chiles began his leadership role within BIG as the President of the Los Angeles/Long Beach Area Chapter. The following year, he was elected to the board of directors of the National Organization.

In 2000, Mr. Chiles became the Chairman of the Board and has been re-elected for 4 consecutive years. During his chairmanship, the organization has grown and achieved remarkable successes.

Mr. Chiles is also a Life Member of the NAACP and the ROCKS, Inc., and an associate member of the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.

Mr. Chiles is presently employed with the Department of the Army, at the 63rd Regional Readiness Command in Los Alamitos, California where he serves as the Division Chief of the Human Resources Division. He is a member of the United States Army Reserve, a Vietnam Veteran, and was mobilized for a year in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

He is a Life member and former board member of the United States Army Warrant Officers Association. Mr. Chiles is also a Life Member of the Reserve Officers Association. During Black History Month in 2005, he presented a report at its MidWinter Conference entitled "African American Warrant Officers—In Service to their Country—Their History, Achievement, and Contributions to the Military and the United States." This year, his presentation is on African American Warrant Officers during World War II.

Mr. Chiles served on the 37th Congressional District's Veterans Congressional Council and is a Life Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

It is my sincere hope that my colleagues will join me in honoring and recognizing Mr. Chiles and his significant accomplishments throughout his career, his leadership with Blacks In Government, and his service to the African American community and his country.

HONORING THE DIOCESE OF ORANGE COUNTY

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Diocese of Orange County which has recently celebrated its 30th anniversary and thank Bishop Tod Brown for his leadership of the Diocese.

The Diocese of Orange was established in 1976 after 200 years of presence by the Catholic Church symbolized by the Mission at San Juan Capistrano built in 1776.

Since its original charter, The Diocese of Orange has always stood for justice and peace and has grown with Orange County providing immeasurable service to the community.

The Diocese has a hand in the education of over 65,000 students from elementary through high school instilling values of community involvement and a strong moral compass.

The Diocese has also provided assistance to over 400,000 patients through its clinics, health centers, and hospitals in Orange County.

On top of these services, the Catholic Diocese has been a beacon of hope for the underprivileged in Orange County and always provides help to those in need.

The Diocese has united a culturally diverse group of people, including my Vietnamese and Latino communities, through faith, love and understanding. The Church has always been welcoming and I thank them for their service.

IN RECOGNITION OF ST.
BARTHOLOMEW CATHOLIC SCHOOL

HON. BARON P. HILL

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Mr. HILL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate St. Bartholomew Catholic School in Columbus, Indiana for receiving the Department of Education's 2006 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School Award.

St. Bartholomew Catholic School is among only 250 schools in the Nation to receive the Blue Ribbon School Award, and 1 of 14 schools in Indiana honored with the award. The award recognizes the high academic achievements of the students.

The Blue Ribbon School Award is a testament to the hard work and dedication demonstrated by the students, parents, teachers, and administrators of St. Bartholomew Catholic School, including its Principal Kathy Schubel. This school has become a model for other Indiana schools for its academic excellence.

It is my honor and privilege to recognize St. Bartholomew Catholic School for its out-

standing achievement in preparing our Hoosier children for their future opportunities. I urge St. Bartholomew Catholic School to continue to be a shining example of superior leadership, and continue its commitment to excellence in education.

INTRODUCING THE HAWAIIAN
HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY
ACT OF 2007

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of legislation I am proud to introduce today. The Hawaiian Homeownership Opportunity Act of 2007 is the exact same language of H.R. 5851, reported out of the House Financial Services Committee on September 28, 2006, in the 109th Congress.

The measure reauthorizes existing Native Hawaiian housing programs for 5 years and makes two adjustments to the program that will allow the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to help more Native Hawaiians whose incomes are equal to or less than 80 percent of the median income.

In 2000 Congress passed legislation authorizing the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD, to provide block grants for affordable housing for Native Hawaiians through the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. The 2000 measure also authorized HUD home loan guarantees for low-income Native Hawaiians. Eligible borrowers include Native Hawaiian families, the Depart-

ment of Hawaiian Home Lands, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and private nonprofit organizations experienced in planning and developing affordable housing for Native Hawaiians.

The Hawaiian Home Ownership Opportunity Act of 2007 reauthorizes these programs and adds a new provision authorizing loan guarantees for home mortgage refinancing. This introduces greater flexibility and allows families to take advantage of lower interest rates as millions of other American families have. The measure would also permit the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to issue bonds. This will allow the Department to service more low-income families without a large increase in appropriations.

This bill is about homeownership; this is not welfare or public assistance. It offers another tool for a family to provide for a basic need, housing. This is unbelievably important in Hawaii where land is scarce and the median home price on the island of Oahu is \$639,000 and the median condominium price is \$310,000. This measure will advance our efforts to address housing affordability in the islands.

I would like to thank the House Financial Services Committee Chairman BARNEY FRANK and Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity Chairwoman MAXINE WATERS who have been extremely supportive in dealing with the housing problems of Hawaii. I would also like to recognize my colleague from Hawaii, Congresswoman MAZIE HIRONO, who, like Chairman FRANK and Chairwoman WATERS, is a cosponsor of this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to help the residents of Hawaii and support this legislation.