

HONORING JAMES A. MICHENER

**HON. PATRICK J. MURPHY**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 7, 2007*

Mr. MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of America's most prominent 20th century authors, James A. Michener.

Born on February 3, 1907 and raised in Doylestown, PA by his adopted family, this great man would have been 100 years old this weekend and I find it fitting to commemorate his great contributions to our society on this day.

The author of over 40 great works, Michener is one of the United States' most important literary figures and one of the 8th district's most notable sons. His most famous work, *Tales of the South Pacific*, was based on his experiences while serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II. This descriptive account of soldiers' lives during the war was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1948 for its great ability to show the human side of war.

Throughout his career, Madam Speaker, Mr. Michener continued to explore the human side of our American experience with many stirring novels, including *The Bridges at Toko-Ri*, *Alaska*, *Chesapeake*, and *Centennial*. These excellent glimpses into our national history and character illustrate the genius of Mr. Michener, who in 1977 was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, our nation's highest civilian honor.

Although most of his works were literary, Mr. Michener was truly a man of the world, a citizen servant, and a promoter of the arts.

Madam Speaker, from running for Congress in 1962, to serving on the Advisory board for NASA, to his appointment as cultural ambassador to numerous countries, Mr. Michener has left an indelible mark on our Nation.

Indeed, he has also left a strong mark on the 8th district of Pennsylvania, where he donated large sums of money directed to the promotion of the arts. In 1988, the James A. Michener Art Museum opened in Doylestown, PA, promising to preserve and display the rich artistic heritage of the Bucks County region. With the help of many donors who shared in Mr. Michener's vision this museum stands today as one of the great collections of Pennsylvania art.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commemorating this fixture of American literary history. Truly, James A. Michener was an experienced traveler, a dedicated citizen and an inspiring writer.

In commemoration of the centennial of his birth, I am proud and honored to remind this body of his many contributions to our Nation.

# REINTRODUCTION OF THE COLORADO NORTHERN FRONT RANGE MOUNTAIN BACKDROP PROTECTION STUDY ACT

**HON. MARK UDALL**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 7, 2007*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am again introducing the Colorado

Northern Front Range Mountain Backdrop Protection Study Act. I introduced similar bills in the 107th and 108th Congresses, and last year the legislation was passed by the House but the Senate did not complete action on it before the end of the 109th Congress.

The bill is intended to help local communities identify ways to protect the Front Range Mountain Backdrop in the northern sections of the Denver-metro area, especially the region just west of the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology site. The Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest includes much of the land in this backdrop area, but there are other lands involved as well.

Rising dramatically from the Great Plains, the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains provides a scenic mountain backdrop to many communities in the Denver metropolitan area and elsewhere in Colorado. The portion of the range within and adjacent to the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest also includes a diverse array of wildlife habitats and provides many opportunities for outdoor recreation. The open-space character of this mountain backdrop is an important esthetic and economic asset for adjoining communities, making them attractive locations for homes and businesses. But rapid population growth in the northern Front Range area of Colorado is increasing recreational use of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest and is also placing increased pressure for development of other lands within and adjacent to that national forest.

We can see this throughout Colorado and especially along the Front Range. Homes and shopping centers are sprawling up valleys and along highways that feed into the Front Range. This development then spreads out along the ridges and mountain tops that make up the backdrop. We are in danger of losing to development many of the qualities that have helped attract new residents. So, it is important to better understand what steps might be taken to avoid or lessen that risk—and this bill is designed to help us do just that.

Already, local governments and other entities have provided important protection for portions of this mountain backdrop, especially in the northern Denver-metro area. However, some portions of the backdrop in this part of Colorado remain unprotected and are at risk of losing their open-space qualities. This bill acknowledges the good work of the local communities to preserve open spaces along the backdrop and aims to assist further efforts along the same lines.

The bill does not interfere with the authority of local authorities regarding land use planning. It also does not infringe on private property rights. Instead, it will bring the land protection experience of the Forest Service to the table to assist local efforts to protect areas that comprise the backdrop. The bill envisions that to the extent the Forest Service should be involved with federal lands, it will work in collaboration with local communities, the state and private parties.

Madam Speaker, I strongly believe it is in the national interest for the Federal Government to assist local communities to identify ways to protect the mountain backdrop in this part of Colorado. The backdrop beckoned settlers westward and presented an imposing impediment to their forward progress that suggested similar challenges ahead. This first exposure to the harshness and humbling majesty of the Rocky Mountain West helped de-

fine a region. The pioneers' independent spirit and respect for nature still lives with us to this day. We need to work to preserve it by protecting the mountain backdrop as a cultural and natural heritage for ourselves and generations to come. For the information of our colleagues, I am attaching a fact sheet about this bill.

## COLORADO NORTHERN FRONT RANGE MOUNTAIN BACKDROP PROTECTION STUDY ACT

Generally: The bill would help local communities preserve the Front Range Mountain Backdrop in the northern sections of the Denver-metro area in a region generally west of the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology site.

Front Range Mountain Backdrop: The backdrop consists of the mountainous foothills, the Continental Divide and the peaks in between that create the striking visual backdrop of the Denver-metro area and throughout Colorado. Development in the Denver-metro area is encroaching in the Front Range backdrop area, and thus adversely affecting the esthetic, wildlife, open space and recreational qualities of this geographic feature. Now is the time to shape the future of this part of the Front Range. There is a real but fleeting opportunity to protect both protect Rocky Flats—a "crown jewel" of open space and wildlife habitat—and to assist local communities to protect the scenic, wildlife, and other values of the mountain backdrop.

What the bill does:

Study and Report: The bill requires the Forest Service to study the ownership patterns of the lands comprising the Front Range Mountain Backdrop in a region generally west of Rocky Flats, identify areas that are open and may be at risk of development, and recommend to Congress how these lands might be protected and how the federal government could help local communities and residents to achieve that goal.

Lands Covered: The bill identifies the lands in southern Boulder, northern Jefferson and eastern Gilpin Counties in the Second Congressional District; specifically, an area west of Rocky Flats and west of Highway 93, south of Boulder Canyon, east of the Peak-to-Peak Highway, and north of the Golden Gate Canyon State Park road.

What the bill would not do:

Affect Local Planning: The bill is designed to complement existing local efforts to preserve open lands in this region west of Rocky Flats. It will not take the place of—nor disrupt—these existing local efforts.

Affect Private Property Rights: The bill merely authorizes a study. It will not affect any existing private property rights.

## SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

SPEECH OF

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 5, 2007*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to fully support the goals and ideals of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. In 2005, African Americans accounted for nearly 50 percent of all new HIV infections, despite representing nearly twelve percent of the total population. The HIV/AIDS infection rate among Black men is six times that of white

men and the rate among Black women is sixteen times that of white women. More children with AIDS are African American than all other race and ethnic groups combined. There is no question that we must continue to devote considerable attention and resources to support the efforts of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day and its mission to build capacity and increase the awareness, participation and support for HIV prevention, care and treatment among African Americans in particular. For these many reasons, I urge you to support the passage of H. Con. Res. 35, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

While a cure for HIV/AIDS remains just beyond our reach, there are many known factors that contribute to the devastating effects that HIV/AIDS continues to have in the African American community in particular. For example, we know that the stigmatization surrounding those with HIV/AIDS deters many from being tested and learning about treatment needed to prolong their lifespan. We also know that economic issues such as the need for more inexpensive housing, substantial increases in livable wages and affordable health care, weakens community ties making it difficult to build capacity, disseminate information and target interventions. It is also evident that funds are needed to support these initiatives, perform meaningful outreach and provide organizations with the resources necessary to serve this vulnerable population.

It is important for us to increase knowledge about preventative measures, educational techniques, capacity building and outreach to find targeted solutions to the problem of HIV/AIDS in the Black Community. In the State of New York alone there are 33,747 Black Americans living with HIV/AIDS. Sadly, this number will continue to grow at exponential rates without the attention, care and resources supported by the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. While it is important to direct resources to Black Americans and others who are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS, we must remember that HIV/AIDS does not discriminate. It is estimated that between 1,039,000 and 1,185,000 infected persons live in the United States and approximately 40,000 new infections occur each year. Those affected belong to all gender, racial, ethnic, religious, socio economic and regional configurations. Those affected are mothers and fathers, sisters and our brothers, bosses, friends, and children.

The devastating effect of HIV/AIDS impacts us all. Confronting this international crisis will require the collective efforts of researchers, legislators, clergy members, community activists and organizations, and all others committed to reducing the force of HIV/AIDS. We must work together to find solutions that are scaleable and make possible innovations that result in value adding and sustainable positive changes.

Observance of the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day provides an opportunity for governments, national AIDS programs, churches, community organizations and individuals to communicate the importance of the fight against HIV/AIDS. If we have any hope of ending conversations about the injurious effects of HIV/AIDS, we must immediately devote the time, energy and resources needed to educate, treat and prevent against future transmission.

## RECOGNIZING MATTHEW HELM FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 7, 2007*

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Matthew Helm, 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, Troop 138, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

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

## IN HONOR OF VERNA M. WOOLFOLK-SLOAN

### HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 7, 2007*

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak in honor of Verna M. Woolfolk-Sloan, who passed away on Wednesday, January 31, at the age of 81. Verna lived in Central California's Monterey County for more than 50 years. In that time she built a great record of personal, professional, and community achievement in advancing equal employment opportunity for women and minorities.

Verna was born in Providence, Kentucky and received straight A's throughout school, indicative of professional successes to come. She graduated as class Valedictorian from Rosenwald High School. Verna married Sergeant First Class Robert D. Sloan and they traveled throughout the United States and Germany with their son Joseph. They first set down roots in Seaside with her husband's 1955 posting to Fort Ord. A lifelong learner, Verna studied at Monterey Peninsula College, was awarded high honors in a Masters Degree in Business Administration from Golden Gate University, and later completed a Ph.D. in Organizational Psychology from International University.

Verna's motivation for education and equal opportunity came from her paternal grandparents, former slaves, who established Woolfolk School as the first Black secondary school in Kentucky. These principles guided her civil service career, which she began in 1956 as a simple typist, before climbing the career ladder as an accountant, manager, and ultimately Director of the U.S. Army's Equal Opportunity Office, which monitored and oversaw equal employment opportunity programs at Fort Ord and Fort McArthur. Here, she was the highest-ranking civilian employee at these bases.

Retiring after forty years of civil service employment gave Verna an opportunity to be-

come ever more deeply involved in her local community as a volunteer. She was a Golden Heritage life member, Secretary and Executive Committee member of the Monterey Peninsula's branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and held seats on the boards of many Christian, cultural, and women's organizations. Verna was a role model and inspiration to countless young women and minorities in her local Monterey County, and was recognized with a number of awards, including the Outstanding Woman of Achievement Award and the Outstanding Equal Opportunity Officer award.

She is survived by her sister Eloise Wells of Marina, her brother Thomas Woolfolk of Chicago, grandson Joseph Sloan, Jr. of Atlanta, along with numerous beloved family members, including two great great nieces, one great great nephew, and three godchildren. Many of her family are also based in Seaside or Monterey County, which will ensure her legacy is continued and her work remembered in the district.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the House, I would like to extend our Nation's deepest thanks for Verna's service to the United States and her local community. Her dedication and commitment opened the door to equal opportunity for many to whom that door would have otherwise been closed, and I know that I speak for every member of Congress when I say that it is our honor to recognize her today.

### TOM MARTIN

### HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 7, 2007*

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, every once in a while, someone great comes along who flawlessly fills a position and epitomizes the role he or she performs. Tom Martin, long-time aide and Field Representative to Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe, is such a person.

Tom spent almost 35 years working in state and local government, retiring only after a serious health condition forced him from the job he loved. These many years of public service earned him the well-deserved nickname "Godfather of Field Deputies." It's widely acknowledged that few people in the region have done as much as Tom has for so many. And his upbeat demeanor is always matched with seemingly effortless action. For Tom, helping people has always been second-nature.

I do not think I have ever seen Tom without a smile on his face, or heard him say "no" to someone. From 1969 until his retirement in 2005, Tom worked to improve the lives of his neighbors and enhance the community. During that time, the South Bay saw many changes, but one thing remained constant: Tom was always there to listen and to assist those who came to him with their problems, concerns, and ideas.

No item was too small for Tom when it came to helping others and he seemed to involve himself in everything. He ensured that the lights would be promptly fixed in Marina del Ray. He made limiting growth at LAX and its modernization a priority. And he was instrumental in engineering the land swap that saved Los Angeles Air Force Base in the most