

women who serve in the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office. Their efforts, made on behalf of the citizens of Fairfax County, are selfless acts of heroism and truly merit our highest praise. I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding this group of remarkable citizens.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF AMERICAN HEART MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 27, 2007

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 52, to support the goals and ideals of American Heart Month. The leading cause of death in the United States is not murder or gang violence or any other violent crime; it is heart disease. The statistics are staggering. One-third of adult Americans have 1 or more of the following heart diseases: high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, congestive heart failure, stroke, and congenital heart defects. While some of the major risk factors of heart disease like advanced age, gender, and heredity cannot be changed, minorities are at a greater risk than whites to die from heart disease and die at higher rates. Heart disease also is devastating to women. In 2003 a total of 685,089 people died of heart disease; 51 percent of these victims were women. Nearly twice as many women in the United States die of heart disease and stroke as from all forms of cancer, including breast cancer.

Turning to African Americans, the numbers are even more shocking. Out of the five largest U.S. racial/ethnic groups, the death rate of 300 per 100,000 population for African Americans is the highest.

It is essential for all Americans to be aware of the risk factors associated with heart disease and to take the necessary precautions to reduce those risks. Fortunately, there are things Americans can do to reduce the risk of heart disease. They can reduce stress, increase physical activity, consume alcoholic beverages in moderation, refrain from using illegal drugs or smoking or hormone replacement therapy.

Mr. Speaker, I support H. Con. Res. 52 because we need to take the steps necessary to encourage Americans to fight the causes of heart disease and to take to heart the four simple "healthy life, healthy heart goals" identified by the Healthier US initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

Regular exercise regularly and maintain a healthy weight; good eating habits; avoidance of tobacco, drugs and excessive alcohol; and regular checkups and screenings.

Mr. Speaker, we must not allow heart disease to become a silent killer. Let us support the goals and ideals of American Heart Month. I thank my colleague, Representative MILLENDER-MCDONALD for introducing this important legislation. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Con. Res. 52.

THE REINTRODUCTION OF THE FILIPINO VETERANS FAMILY RE-UNIFICATION ACT

HON. MAZIE K. HIRONO

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Ms. HIRONO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, a companion to Senator AKAKA's bill of the same name, which will provide for the expedited reunification of the families of our Filipino World War II veterans. I am pleased to be joined in this legislation by Representatives NEIL ABERCROMBIE, BOB FILNER, MICHAEL HONDA, MADELEINE BORDALLO, ROBERT "BOBBY" SCOTT, JIM McDERMOTT, DARRELL ISSA, SAM FARR, AL GREEN, RAÚL GRIJALVA, and PHIL HARE.

As you know, Filipino veterans are those that honorably answered the call of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and served alongside our armed forces during World War II. They fought shoulder to shoulder with American servicemen; they sacrificed for the same just cause. We made a promise to provide full veterans' benefits to those who served with our troops. And while we have recently made appreciable progress toward fulfilling that long-ignored promise, we have not yet achieved the full equity that the Filipino veterans deserve.

In 1990, the Congress recognized the courage and commitment of the Filipino World War II veterans by providing them with a waiver from certain naturalization requirements. Many veterans thereafter became proud United States citizens and residents of our country. However, allowances were not made for their children and many have been waiting decades for petition approval.

The Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act would allow for the further recognition of the service of the veterans by granting their children a special immigration status that would allow them to immigrate to the United States and be reunified with their aging parents. It is important to note that the Filipino soldiers who fought under the command of General Douglas MacArthur at this critical time in our Nation's history represent a unique category. These soldiers were members of the United States Armed Forces of the Far East. They were led to believe that at the end of the conflict they would be treated the same as American soldiers. It took more than 60 years to begin to make good on our commitment. The Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act recognizes the special circumstances of this group of soldiers.

I would like to submit into the record an editorial from the Honolulu Advertiser that supports the expedited reunification of these families as a meaningful way to make amends for the injustice experienced by these brave soldiers. As the editorial frankly states, "Reuniting these men with their children is not only the fair thing for the U.S. government to do, it's the least it could do."

Last year, my home State of Hawaii celebrated the 100th anniversary of the first Filipino immigrants to arrive on U.S. soil. We are exceptionally proud of the accomplishments of our Filipino community and confident that the next 100 years will be as successful. It is unfortunate that prospective family-based immigration applicants from the Philippines face

substantial, often decades-long, waits for visas.

In Honolulu, I recently had a meeting with a group of Filipino veterans from my district. I listened to many heartbreaking stories of sons and daughters waiting patiently in the Philippines with the hope that one day they will be able to come to the United States to care for their aging parents. The need to complete these families of our veterans is great.

As our Filipino veterans are entering the sunset years of their lives, Congress is running out of time to fulfill our obligations to them. I look forward to working with my colleagues by providing for the reunification of our Filipino World War II veterans with their families.

[From the Honolulu Advertiser, Feb. 25, 2007]

FILIPINO VETS' FAMILIES DESERVE SPECIAL STATUS

Filipino veterans, who fought alongside U.S. troops during World War II, have waited far too long—more than 60 years—to get what's due them.

While they still seek full pension benefits from Congress, another key measure would give them something that could be more important in their senior years: family reunification.

Senate Bill 671, recently introduced by U.S. Sens. Dan Akaka and Daniel Inouye, grants special immigrant status to the children of naturalized Filipino veterans, enabling them to move up in the visa backlog that has had some family members waiting for entry to the U.S. for nearly 20 years.

Indeed, this solution is not a simple one. In the aftermath of Sept. 11, visa policies were rightly revamped and strictly enforced. To expedite the process for these family members and not others merits concern.

But let's look at the bigger picture: An estimated 200,000 Filipinos were drafted in 1941 to fight under Gen. Douglas MacArthur when war broke out. The men were promised citizenship and benefits by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. But Congress reneged on the promise with the Rescission Act of 1946.

Not until 1990 did the Immigration Act allow these men citizenship. But they have yet to receive the same benefits as their GI counterparts, and the change in immigration law did not extend the same rights to the veterans' sons and daughters.

Today, there are an estimated 5,000 Filipino veterans in Hawai'i and the Mainland, according to the American Coalition for Filipino Veterans, but most are well into their 80s and 90s—and their number is quickly dwindling.

Reuniting these men with their children is not only the fair thing for the U.S. government to do, it's the least it could do.

And Congress shouldn't stop there. The aging veterans deserve to see the final piece in their struggle for equity: the granting of full pension benefits that could mean \$200 a month per veteran.

For these men, it's more than just a paycheck—it's a promise.

RECOGNIZING MR. ERIC BRANSBY'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

HON. DOUG LAMBORN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Mr. LAMBORN. Madam Speaker, I rise in recognition of Mr. Eric Bransby on his 90th birthday and the tremendous contributions he

has made to the Colorado Springs community and the greater art world.

A gifted artist, Mr. Bransby developed his interest in mural painting while studying at the Kansas City Art Institute. Since that time he has become an internationally renowned muralist. Recognized as a Phi Kappa Phi National Honorary and a Fellow of the National Society of Mural Painters, he is one of only a few painters to work in traditional fresco. Mr. Bransby studied at Colorado College and later at Yale University as a graduate fellow. He translated this formal training into a life dedicated to furthering American art as both an artist and educator.

Students from Yale University and Colorado College among others have benefited from Mr. Bransby's passion, and the citizens of Colorado from his extraordinary talent. Among Mr. Bransby's works are the history of aviation mural at the United States Air Force Academy and the pioneer scene in Cossit Hall at Colorado College. His magnificent depiction of 200 years of Colorado history featuring nearly 100 subjects, from early, unknown settlers to historical figures can be seen at Colorado's Pioneer Museum located right in my hometown of Colorado Springs.

My district and our Nation are fortunate to count among their citizens this extraordinary individual. Mr. Bransby has inspired generations by bringing to life, with vivid imagination, our history, and we owe him immense gratitude.

IN HONOR OF MRS. RHODA ANN SOKOL

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Mrs. Rhoda Ann Sokol, a dedicated teacher and citizen from Long Branch, New Jersey. It is with great pride and admiration that I honor her today for her outstanding commitment to New Jersey's Jewish community and for the legacy she has left for her students, her family, and the people of Monmouth County.

Mrs. Sokol was born in New York at Beth Israel Hospital but lived most of her young life in West Long Branch, New Jersey. She graduated from Long Branch High School, my alma mater, and went on to obtain a bachelor of science degree from Monmouth College. She and her husband Robert were married for 40 years and raised three children in Ocean Township.

Mrs. Sokol was a very generous person and was incredibly dedicated to her work. She taught at the Jewish Community Center in Deal for 21 years and taught at the Solomon Schechter Academy in Howell for 23 years. She loved the arts and music and worked with students on musicals while she taught at Solomon Schechter. She will always be remembered as a teacher who adored her students and who was always willing to help them in any way she could.

There are many people all over Monmouth County who will never forget Mrs. Sokol. It gives me great pride to say that the Spirit of Israel Dance Company is performing a tribute concert to honor her memory. The concert will

take place on Sunday, March 4th and will showcase young dancers ranging from ages 14–20. This dance group has performed all over the world, including at the Maccabia opening ceremony, Adloyada, Carmiel, various TV programs, and at numerous school events.

Madam Speaker, I sincerely hope that my colleagues will join me in recognizing Mrs. Rhoda Ann Sokol for her lifelong dedication to her community. While she was taken from the Long Branch community before her time, her friends, family, and students will never forget her.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF KEN BERKMAN

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Mr. ISRAEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in great sadness. My community has lost a great leader and a humanitarian: Ken Berkman.

Of all the things that can be said of Ken Berkman, the most profound is that he made a difference in his community. And to every good cause and every community project he brought a sparkling wit, a wry smile, a deep compassion, and an exuberant dedication. He built one of the leading law firms on Long Island, but understood that the foundation of a strong law firm is a good and flourishing community.

I have known Ken and his wife Irene for many years, but anyone involved in any facet of community life or any issue confronting Long Island has also known them.

Ken cared about his country. He cared about the town of Huntington. And cared most about his family. His legacy will be a standard of grace and commitment that to which others will aspire. He made our community better, and those who follow his example will continue to push our community forward.

That, Madam Speaker, is the true legacy of Ken Berkman. We lost him, but not the standard he set, and the difference he made to the people I represent in the United States Congress.

THOMASINA E. JORDAN INDIAN TRIBES OF VIRGINIA FEDERAL RECOGNITION

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, last year representatives and leaders of Virginia's Native American tribes left their communities and flew to England to participate in ceremonies that were a prelude to the 400th anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in America. Some of the distinguished Virginia residents who made this trip are the blood descendants and leaders of the surviving 7 tribes that once were a part of the Great Powhatan Confederacy that initially helped sustain the colonists during their difficult first years at Jamestown. Virginia's best known Indian, Pocahontas, traveled to Eng-

land in 1617 with her husband John Rolfe and was received by English royalty. She died a year later of smallpox and is buried in the chapel of the parish church in Gravesend, England.

This year marks the 400th anniversary of the settlement of Jamestown. It would be a sad irony if the direct descendants of the native Americans who met these settlers, were still not recognized by the federal government. I, along with fellow Virginians, Reps. JO ANN DAVIS, BOBBY SCOTT and TOM DAVIS of Virginia, and Reps. NICK RAHALL, NEAL ABERCROMBIE, DALE KILDEE, and FRANK PALLONE are introducing legislation today entitled the "Thomasina E. Jordan Indian Tribes of Virginia Federal Recognition Act." This legislation will finally, and at long last, grant federal recognition to six Indian tribes in Virginia: the Chickahominy Tribe, Chickahominy Indian Tribe Eastern Division, the Upper Mattaponi, the Rappahannock Tribe, the Monacan Tribe, and the Nansemond Tribe.

Like most Native Americans, the Virginia tribes first welcomed western settlers, but quickly became subdued, pushed off their land, and, up through much of the 20th Century, denied full rights as U.S. citizens. Despite their devastating loss of land and population, the Virginia Indians successfully overcame years of racial discrimination that denied them equal opportunities to pursue their education and preserve their cultural identity. That story of survival doesn't encompass decades, it spans centuries of racial hostility and coercive state and state-sanctioned actions.

Their story, however is unique in two ways. First, they signed their peace treaties with the Kings of England, and second, they suffered centuries of state sanctioned hostilities. Unlike most tribes that resisted encroachment and obtained federal recognition when they signed peace treaties with the federal government, Virginia's six tribes signed their peace treaties with the Kings of England. Most notable among these was the Treaty of 1677 between these tribes and Charles the II. This treaty has been recognized by the State every year for the past 329 years when the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia accepts tribute from the tribes in a ceremony now celebrated at the State Capitol. I understand it is the longest celebrated treaty in the United States.

In the intervening years between 1677 and the birth of this nation, however, these tribes were dispossessed of most of their land and were too weak to pose a threat. They were, therefore, never in a position to negotiate and receive recognition from our nascent federal government. Last summer the English government reaffirmed its recognition of this treaty with the modern Virginia tribes.

Their unique history speaks to the reason Congress must act to recognize the Virginia tribes. They have experienced what has been called a "paper genocide" and been persecuted by the Commonwealth of Virginia. At the time when the federal government granted Native Americans the right to vote, Virginia's elected officials were embracing the eugenics movement and began adopting racially hostile laws targeted at those classes of people who did not fit into the dominant white society.

These actions culminated with the enactment of the Racial Integrity Act of 1924. This act empowered zealots, like Walter Plecker, a state official, to destroy records and reclassify in Orwellian fashion all non-whites as "colored." It targeted Native Americans and