

worked as an associate producer on "The Sistema Is Over," a series based on issues relevant to the daily lives of Latinos in the U.S. In 1986, she cofounded the National Hispanic Media Coalition, an organization that monitors Federal Communications Commission regulations on broadcast media. The organization successfully petitioned the FCC to revoke broadcast licenses of those television stations who neglected to hire a sufficient number of Latinos.

Esther's work did not end with her behind-the-scenes efforts to make Latinos more visible on national TV. She also founded the Hispanic Americans for Fairness in Media to award scholarships to young students who aspire to future careers in media. Esther's advocacy on behalf of the Latino community has been instrumental to the changes that have taken effect since. Esther is survived by her husband, Martin Rentería, former chief of police for the Montebello Unified District's police department, four sons, and a sister.

I extend my sympathy to Esther's husband, children, and family. She will be missed dearly.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2007, I was unavoidably detained and thus I missed rollcall vote No. 110. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 556, the National Security Foreign Investment Reform and Strengthened Transparency Act.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO MR. TIM SNOW

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my good friend Tim Snow for his long and distinguished career at Thomas & Mack Development Group.

Tim began his work with the Thomas & Mack Development Group in California during the mid-1980s and soon after moved to Las Vegas where he was instrumental in implementing extensive land development projects. Tim is responsible for developing a 100-acre area of land near McCarren International Airport into the McCarren Center. Today, the McCarren Center is comprised of 30 buildings and nearly 2 million square feet of office and light industrial space.

During his tenure at Thomas & Mack Development, Mr. Snow also developed a 20-acre ranch which today stands as the headquarters for Harrah's Entertainment. While with the Thomas & Mack Development Group, Mr. Snow oversaw the development of the Blue Diamond Ranches, the Eastgate Plaza, and the Nevada Financial Center. Mr. Snow also shares an ownership position in the important 100-acre Northern Beltway Industrial Center. Throughout his long and illustrious career with

the Thomas & Mack Development Group, Tim has guided the expansion of the Las Vegas Valley and his vision has led to the development of a mature business and thriving community.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor my good friend Tim Snow. His dedication to the Las Vegas community is commendable and I applaud his distinguished record of success. I wish him the best in his retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I would like to state for the record my position on the following votes I missed due to reasons beyond my control.

On Monday, March 5, 2007, I had to tend to some family matters and thus missed rollcall votes 119 and 120. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on all votes.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND MILESTONES OF ODESSA BROWN

HON. DIANE E. WATSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, it is an honor and privilege that I rise today to recognize Odessa Juanita Brown for her achievements and milestones as she celebrated her 85th birthday on March 1, 2007. I have known Odessa for most of my life. She and her husband Frank, and their children lived on Cimarron Street, in Los Angeles, and my family lived around the corner—that date's back to the late-1950s. Our families have remained in contact since then.

Odessa Brown has remained a committed community servant, participant in civic and fraternal groups, and an active church member over that 50-year period. She has been a member of Trinity Baptist Church for 61 years; a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Chapter Alpha Gamma Omega of Los Angeles, California, the same Chapter of which I am a member, for 25 years; and a volunteer at the election polls for the last 20 years. Odessa has been Worthy Matron of Skylight Chapter 51 of the Eastern Star and was a member of the NAACP. Today she is taking computer technology classes at Santa Monica Emeritus College. Not enough of a role model, yet? Well, Odessa has maintained an exercise routine of walking a mile almost every day for more than two decades—including hills, by the way.

Odessa Brown's leadership skills, her commitment to service, and her creative talents have been a true lifetime blessing to her family and community. She served as a Brownie and Girl Scout leader of her daughters' troops. She used her artistry to design and sew her daughters' beautiful handmade dresses when they were small. Everyone knew the three Brown girls because of their uniquely crafted dresses.

Odessa's culinary talents are also memorable, and family, friends, visitors have craved her cooking from coast to coast. She has creatively hosted small and large family dinners and barbeques, and cooked for neighborhood block parties and festivals. Her "monkey bread," oh, yes, that monkey bread—is the most desired food at all family gatherings.

Odessa is a dedicated and devout Christian, and her church continues to be important part of her life. She and her husband, Frank, joined Trinity Baptist Church in 1946, the year they were married. She has been an active member since. Their five children—Marion, Gwen, Kathleen, Frank, and Reginald—grew up in Trinity. Her grandson, James, attends Trinity, and her other grandchildren, who live outside Los Angeles—Cameron, Brian, Rachel, Charesse, Kahlil, Imani, and Camara—have visited. Odessa's great grandchildren, Cameron and Ciera, are expected to one day be the fourth generation to worship at Trinity. Odessa is a Deaconess and is a longtime member of the Gospel Choir, which was directed by the late Inez Caston. Odessa regularly and lovingly still participates in church projects.

Odessa was born in Lewisville, Arkansas, on March 1, 1922, and Frank was born in Stamps, Arkansas. They joined the church not long after they had moved to Los Angeles. They were part of the great war-era migration of African Americans from the south to the north and west.

Odessa was the fifth child of Annie and Joe Brown. She had three brothers—Joseph, Clarence (deceased), and Cleant, and three sisters, Mary (deceased), Bernice (deceased), and Margie. The church was an important part of their community and Odessa was baptized at Galilee Baptist Church in Lewisville at 11 years of age.

From a young child, Odessa was extremely creative, artistic, and talented, whether she was in the kitchen helping her mother bake or designing and sewing outfits for her dolls. She started cooking at the age of seven and her teacher was her sister, Mary. When her parents attended church, they would return to a fantastic meal. Her parents were surprised to find out that she was the genius behind the great family meals. Her mother taught her how to sew and she quickly picked up the skill. She always helped her Mom around the house.

Odessa's parents were extremely resourceful. The Brown family understood the value of land ownership. Annie Brown's family was considered middle class, and they owned land. She inherited river land from her parents, which is still owned by the Brown Family, and she and her husband, Joe, purchased land together, as well. Joe was a hard working, proud farmer who raised his seven kids with the proceeds from the land. He grew corn, cotton, truck patches (watermelon), and raised animals (chickens, hogs and cows). He marketed his own products and sold direct to consumers. He also showcased his animals at conventions and fairs.

He was a chef and cooked at clubhouses, and was known for another unique skill—making ice cream. He sold his produce and ice cream at church conventions, and his fondness for making ice cream was passed down to Odessa, who developed homemade ice cream as a specialty. Annie also was an entrepreneur and learned how to use a pressure

cooker to process vegetables and fruit. This, of course, was a rarity in that period. With this unique talent, the community could have food stored during the winter months. Annie became the expert who trained others in the community on the benefits of using the pressure cooker to preserve foods.

In 1942, many things changed in the lives of the Brown family, as it did for most families in the country. The three Brown brothers, Joseph, Clarence, and Cleant joined the Army to serve their country during World War II. Joe Brown, now had a challenge. He too desired to serve his country and left for California to work in the Navy Shipyard in northern California. Odessa and her sister left Lewisville for California. For a short time, Odessa worked at a Ford Plant in northern California. Frank, having finished his tour of duty in the U.S. Army, decided to settle in Los Angeles. Odessa and Frank married, and began building a family. They soon settled as one of the first African American families in Leimert Park.

Years later, after her eldest children left home for college, Odessa decided it was time to pursue her dream. She registered for college and earned her bachelors of arts degree from California State University at Dominguez Hills. Odessa then taught as a substitute teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School System.

Her quest to learn continues, as she has mastered the newest technologies. She now uses the computer and sends e-mail messages to her family. She continues to exercise her creative design skills by knitting and crocheting, and shares knitted scarves and crocheted blankets with family and friends.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Odessa Juanita Brown as she celebrates her 85th birthday. She is truly an inspiration and a community treasure. I wish her many more years of health and prosperity.

RECOGNIZING THE 95TH BIRTHDAY OF THE GIRL SCOUTS OF THE USA

HON. JASON ALTMIRE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 95th birthday of the Girl Scouts of the USA. I wish to recognize the incredible contributions Girl Scouts have made to the United States over the past 95 years.

Since their inception in 1912, the Girl Scouts have used different skill-building exercises and instruction to inspire over 50 million young women of this country to reach their full potential as members of their communities and as citizens of the United States. With the acceptance of the Girl Scout Promise, young women around the world make a commitment to respect themselves and others, to help people at all times, and to be honest and caring in all that they do. Today, over 3.5 million Girl Scouts are working with each other and their communities to help build a brighter future for all of us.

This Saturday, young women from over 200 Girl Scout troops in my district will gather for a Girl Scouts of the USA birthday party. I am honored to have the privilege of joining them for this special celebration and I look forward to proudly thanking them for all of their hard work. These young women are truly an inspi-

ration to me, to the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania, and to all American citizens.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO KATHLEEN BOUTIN

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

Mr. PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Kathleen Boutin for her leadership as director of Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth.

For the past 7 years, the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth has provided a safe and secure environment for abused and neglected children. At their facility, the Partnership provides a nurturing environment that teaches these children life skills and provides them with new opportunities for success.

Under Kathleen's leadership and direction, the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth operates two Safe Place programs, two drop-in centers and two additional centers are being constructed. In 2005, Nevada Partnership was responsible for Clark County's first count of homeless youth. This past year, they have assisted over 1,500 homeless youths. The Partnership also provides Nevada's homeless youth with medical care, emergency shelter services, long-term residential programs and the opportunity to transform their lives.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Kathleen Boutin for her leadership of the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth. The service that she and her organization provide for the area's homeless youth is laudable. I applaud Kathleen for her leadership and wish her continued success in their efforts to improve the lives of our cities' youth.

EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 800) to amend the National Labor Relations Act to establish an efficient system to enable employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to provide for mandatory injunctions for unfair labor practices during organizing efforts, and for other purposes:

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Chairman, I regret that I was unable to vote on H.R. 800, the Employee Free Choice Act, because of previously scheduled family matters. Had I been present, I would have enthusiastically cast my vote in support of this very important bill. In addition, I would have voted against each of the three anti-worker amendments and the Republican motion to recommit.

As a strong supporter of the rights of workers to organize and bargain collectively, I have been an original cosponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act in each session of Congress that it has been introduced.

I believe it is critical that workers be able to make their own decision—freely and fairly—

about whether or not to form a union. Although we have had several years of economic growth and high corporate profits, middle-class families in America continue to feel the squeeze of stagnating incomes coupled with rising health care, education, and housing costs. By passing the H.R. 800 today, we can take an important step towards easing the middle class squeeze by giving workers a free choice to join together to bargain for better wages, benefits and working conditions.

Some have said that this bill would abolish the secret ballot election. It would not. It simply gives employees a choice. Employees can still petition for an election, but if a majority of workers sign cards saying they want a union now, they get a union, and the employer must respect that choice.

This is about fixing the current system for forming unions and bargaining, which is badly broken. But above all, it is about respect and fairness for middle-class America, ensuring that workers have a choice—and a voice—at work.

EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 1, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 800) to amend the National Labor Relations Act to establish an efficient system to enable employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to provide for mandatory injunctions for unfair labor practices during organizing efforts, and for other purposes:

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 800, the Employee Free Choice Act, and I applaud Chairman MILLER and the Education and Labor Committee for making working families and the rights of organized labor a national priority.

Every employee's right to organize must be protected. Too often, this is not the case, and I saw it first hand when I worked in the retail industry. While many companies respect the rights of their employees, others put up hurdles and even break the law to keep workers from effectively coming together to fight for improved working conditions. This must be stopped.

H.R. 800 ensures that American workers have a voice in the workplace. It allows workers to decide whether they want to form a union if the majority of workers sign authorization cards in support of the union, and it strengthens penalties for employers that discriminate against union supporters.

This legislation is about strengthening America's working families. Union workers earn almost 30 percent more, on average, than non-union workers and approximately 44 percent more when you take into account wages and benefits.

In my home State of Minnesota and throughout the country, families struggle every day to make ends meet. The Employee Free Choice Act protects employees' right to organize, allowing workers to bargain for the higher wages and the better benefits that American families rely on and that they deserve.