

in her children and her community the traditions of her grandparents, who hail from County Tipperary and County Kilkenny.

Mary O'Connell, born and raised in Bayonne, is past President of the County Donegal Association and remains an aide to the organization. Her mother Nora was born in County Mayo and her paternal grandfather from County Donegal. Mrs. O'Connell also served the patients of the prestigious Hoboken's St. Mary's Hospital for 10 years.

Please join me in honoring these proud members of the Irish Community of Bayonne. Their numerous contributions have enriched the lives of their neighbors, and their love of their heritage continues to preserve the Irish tradition for future generations of Irish-Americans in New Jersey and the United States.

FREEDOM FOR RENÉ MONTES DE OCA MARTIJA

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak about René Montes de Oca Martija, a political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Montes de Oca Martija, Secretary General of the Pro Human Rights Party in Cuba, is a peaceful pro-democracy and human rights activist who has courageously denounced the cruel policies of the dictatorship and demanded freedom for the Cuban people. Although he has been a constant target of the brutal tyrant's machinery of repression, he has remained steadfast in his demands for freedom, democracy, and that the people of Cuba be allowed their inalienable rights.

Mr. Montes de Oca Martija, as early as the age of 8, has been a target of the dictator's villainous regime. On more than one occasion as a child he was persecuted and denied the most basic of human dignity in treatment simply because his mother was a Jehovah's Witness and considered a threat to the totalitarian regime. Although he has been jailed and detained on numerous occasions, Mr. Montes de Oca has always maintained his steadfast opposition to Castro's tyranny.

Most recently, on July 13, 2005, René Montes de Oca Martija was wrongfully arrested during a peaceful demonstration in Havana honoring the victims of the 13 de Marzo tugboat massacre of 1994 in which 72 men, women, and children attempting to flee the Cuban dictatorship in search of freedom, were chased down and attacked by Castro's security thugs, who mercilessly sank the 13 de Marzo. More than half of the unarmed refugees on the tugboat were systematically assassinated by drowning at the direct order of Castro while they were fighting to stay alive in the waters.

On December 13, 2006, Amnesty International reported their concern that Mr. Montes de Oca would not receive a fair trial in totalitarian Cuba since the right to a fair trial is severely limited in Cuba, with the courts and prosecutors under government control. Amnesty International went on to say that they believed that Mr. Montes de Oca had been detained solely for exercising his most basic human rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly.

On February 27, 2007, after being locked in the totalitarian gulag for nearly 2 years, without ever being convicted of any genuine crime, Mr. Montes de Oca Martija was sentenced to 2 years on trumped-up charges of public disorder and locked in a dungeon in deplorable, life threatening conditions.

Mr. Montes de Oca Martija is one of the many heroes of the Cuban pro-democracy movement who are locked in the dungeons of the dictatorship for their beliefs. My Colleagues, we must not stand by in acquiescence while pro-democracy activists are suffering in the depraved prisons of tyrants. We must demand the immediate and unconditional release of René Montes de Oca Martija and every political prisoner in totalitarian Cuba.

DEDICATION OF DR. PILLOW PARK IN NORTH RICHLAND HILLS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to announce the dedication of Dr. Pillow Park in North Richland Hills, Texas.

This newly refurbished park is named in recognition of Dr. David Pillow who served the city of North Richland Hills and much of north Texas since founding the Pillow-Rush Medical and Surgical Clinic in 1955. As the success of his business grew over the years, additions doubled the size of the hospital. Dr. Pillow also serves as the Medical Director for UT Southwestern University Hospital's Chest Pain Center.

Dr. David Pillow was also the chairman of the board of trustees in 1983, when the North Hills Hospital had its dedication ceremony. On August 28, 2006, the Naming Board of the city of North Richland Hills unanimously approved a resolution for Little Bear Creek Neighborhood Park to officially be named "Dr. Pillow Park."

The new Dr. Pillow Park is a 6.5 acre neighborhood park and has a Texas Mission theme. Included are a hike and bike trail, a covered picnic area, and a playground. I would like to express my best wishes to the Pillow family and the entire North Richland Hills Community on this special occasion. It is an honor to represent a fellow physician in Congress.

PRESERVING PATIENT ACCESS TO INPATIENT REHABILITATION HOSPITALS

HON. JOHN S. TANNER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. TANNER. Madam Speaker, today I, along with my colleagues Reps. NITA LOWEY (D-NY), KENNY HULSHOF (R-MO), FRANK LOBIONDO (R-NJ) and with 70 co-sponsors, rise to introduce the Preserving Patient Access to Inpatient Rehabilitation Hospitals Act of 2007 to ensure that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, does not continue to implement the misguided 75 Percent Rule and unnecessarily compromise the ability of rehabilitation hospitals and units to

continue to provide much-needed critical rehabilitation care.

The 75 Percent Rule is one of seven criteria inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and units must meet in order to be paid under the inpatient rehabilitation facilities prospective payment system, IRF-PPS, rather than the inpatient prospective payment system, IPPS, under which general acute care hospitals are paid. The rule was first issued in January 1984 pursuant to the Social Security Act Amendments of 1983, and has faced minimal revision to date. Simply put, to qualify as an IRF under the 75 Percent Rule, 75 percent of a facility's patients must be receiving treatment in one of 13 specified conditions. The result is that inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and units are the only Medicare providers that are classified on the basis on patient condition rather than the services provided to patients admitted to their care.

Inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and units provide specialized programs and services for patients who have suffered brain injuries, strokes, spinal cord injuries, and other debilitating injuries. However, CMS has consistently refused to update the 75 Percent Rule to reflect medical advances made over the 20 years since the classification criteria were first developed.

It is shocking how many patients have been turned away because of this rule. The 75 Percent Rule functions as a quota system without any foundation in clinical or scientific evidence, which makes it just that much more frustrating to watch the inpatient hospitals and units in my home state struggle to comply with the regulation without jeopardizing patient access to crucial rehabilitative care.

Our legislation will ensure that patients across America will continue to have access to the rehabilitative care they need, and that CMS will take a long, hard look at the impact this policy is having on Medicare beneficiaries and the Medicare system itself. The legislation would freeze the compliance threshold at 60 percent indefinitely, allowing facilities to continue to provide care to Medicare beneficiaries in need of intensive inpatient rehabilitation therapy. The legislation also codifies medical necessity standards and requires CMS to provide Congress with a comprehensive assessment of what is happening to patients that are denied care in this specialized health care setting.

Congress has year after year called on CMS to modernize the 75 Percent Rule. This year we face a time-sensitive imperative. Unless Congress acts by July 1, 2007, the CMS rule automatically imposes a 65 percent compliance threshold. It is abundantly clear that this chamber will have to take legislative action if we hope to stop implementation of this policy and ensure that our constituents have access to intense rehabilitative care in the appropriate inpatient setting.

We urge our colleagues to support this legislation.

TRIBUTE TO THE SOUTH RIVER RURITAN CLUB

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my congratulations to the South River

Ruritan Club in Edgewater, Maryland. This weekend they are hosting an event to mark their 50th anniversary.

The South River Ruritan Club, a community service organization, was chartered on March 13, 1957, and for 50 years has been providing much needed services to the citizens of Edgewater, Annapolis and southern Maryland.

The club, whose members are all volunteers, have contributed well in excess of half a million dollars in direct financial aid, and countless hours of time, to numerous community service projects.

The club awards local students scholastic and vocational scholarships and provides assistance to local Scout Troops, youth athletics, and other youth-related programs. They conduct an annual essay contest for 5th grade students, and have sponsored students to the National Association of Student Council Conference and Exchange Student programs.

They contribute annually to the local fire and rescue departments, the Maryland and Anne Arundel County police departments, and support environmental programs, including efforts to protect the Chesapeake Bay.

Our active duty military, retired and disabled military, and veterans organizations also benefit from the volunteer efforts of the club. They have sent direct aid to our troops in Iraq, and provide additional financial assistance through the military's Morale and Welfare assistance programs.

Their work also includes assistance in such areas as financial aid to needy families, victims of violent crimes, families displaced by catastrophes such as fires, and hurricanes, and assistance through Habitat for Humanity. They contribute annually to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and Johns Hopkins Hospital Children's Center and they loan wheelchairs, walkers and other medical assistance equipment to members of the community.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate the South River Ruritan Club on their wonderful record of community service over the last 50 years, and wish them enormous success as they continue their commitment to improving the overall quality of life of the residents of Anne Arundel County and the State of Maryland.

TRIBUTE TO THE UNITED COMMUNITIES OF SAN ANTONIO, INC.'S BROTHERHOOD/SISTERHOOD HUMANITARIAN AWARDS RECIPIENTS

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Mr. GONZALEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the United Communities of San Antonio, Inc., and the USCA Humanitarian Awards and Lifetime Humanitarian Award recipients, on the occasion of the celebration of their 53rd Brotherhood/Sisterhood Awards Dinner on March 8, 2007.

The mission of the United Communities of San Antonio, Inc. (USCA) is to create safe and inclusive communities, particularly among our young people, by promoting understanding and respect among all races, religions and cultures through dialogue, education and awareness. This year's USCA Humanitarian Award recipients and Lifetime Humanitarian

Award recipient embody the goals of USCA with their numerous civic and professional contributions to the San Antonio community. They are all well known and respected members of their community known for their personal and professional integrity. They are committed to such democratic values as equality of opportunity, tolerance and human rights, values which form the basis for any diverse community. It is for these achievements that I rise today to honor these outstanding members of the San Antonio community.

USCA Humanitarian Award recipient Charlie Amato is the chairman and co-founder of Southwest Business Corporation (SWBC), a recognized leader in the financial services industry. Mr. Amato's civic involvement recognizes the importance of giving back to the community where he has prospered, and he is an active participant in various charities and corporate leadership activities. His community service achievements include serving as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Christus Santa Rosa Health Care Corp., Board Member of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and Executive Committee Member of the United Way. Mr. Amato has also been recognized by the Arthritis Foundation as a "Humanitarian of the Year" (2002) and the San Antonio Business Journal as "One of the Most Influential San Antonians" (2004). He has also been inducted in the San Antonio Business Hall of Fame (2005) and most recently the College of Business Hall of Honor—Sam Houston State University (2006).

USCA Humanitarian Award recipient J. Russell Davis is a founding member and chief executive officer of Davis, Cedillo & Mendoza, Inc., a law firm with a diversified practice. Mr. Davis has distinguished himself through his deep commitment and involvement in the San Antonio community. He has served on the board of directors of such organizations as the Community Guidance Center, the Barshop Jewish Community Center, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and the Southwest Texas Public Broadcasting Corporation. His unwavering dedication as a community leader is reflected in his work as the first president of the campus of the San Antonio Jewish Community and as director and later chairman of the Holocaust Memorial of San Antonio. Mr. Davis has also served as director and later president of the Jewish Federation of San Antonio.

USCA Humanitarian Award recipient Aaronetta Hamilton Pierce is president of Premier Artworks, Inc., a company which promotes African-American artists throughout the country in public exhibits, museums, corporations, government buildings, businesses and homes. Mrs. Pierce has distinguished herself through her extraordinary work as an advocate for multi-cultural education and artistic development. In 1985, she became the first African-American woman appointed to the Texas Commission on the Arts. She was also a founding chair of the San Antonio Martin Luther King Jr. Commission. Mrs. Pierce's leadership achievements include serving on the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees for United Way of San Antonio, the University of Texas San Antonio—Development Board and the Texas Cultural Trust Council. Mrs. Pierce has also been inducted into the San Antonio Women's Hall of Fame (1984) and the Texas Women's Hall of Fame (1993).

USCA Lifetime Humanitarian Award recipient Jimmy Toubin is president of Toubin Insurance Company, but his real work is as a distinguished civil leader and a passionate advocate for San Antonio's hungry. Mr. Toubin's notable civic involvement has earned him much deserved recognition. He has been named "Outstanding Young Man of the Year" by El Campo, TX Jaycees and was nominated for the Governor's Award for outstanding achievement in the volunteer community in 2001. His community service portfolio includes serving on the board of trustees for Temple Beth-El for 6 years, on the board of the Jewish Federation for 8 years and currently as Vice-President and membership Chairman of Temple Chai Congregation. He also served for 10 years on the United Way of San Antonio review and allocation panel. In recognition of his past service as both a board member and chairman for 2 years, the Board of the Alamo Area Council of Governments Bexar County Agency on Aging elected Mr. Toubin as Emeritus member of the board.

Mr. Toubin's true achievement has been as a tireless advocate against hunger. He is a longtime member and past-president of the San Antonio Food Bank's board of directors. In 2001, it was through his tenacious work to rally Congress and the Department of Agriculture to make available peanut crops to make peanut butter for nonprofit organizations who work with low-income populations. Mr. Toubin also worked as the chairman of the fundraising committee for the San Antonio Food Bank's capital campaign which went on to raise \$8.5 million over the course of 2 years for a new warehouse facility. His determination to help the San Antonio Food Bank meet its goals is evident in his work to identify members of the community who could help aid in this effort. Jimmy also helped organize the San Antonio Food Bank's Second Serving Program which makes use of excess prepared foods from hotels, restaurants, and caterers and directly delivers it to agencies that serve hot meals. He has embraced his role of helping San Antonio's hungry so profoundly that Jimmy, like other board members, would sometimes take a hands-on role; he could be found out on a truck with a driver or gleaning in a south Texas field. Jimmy is a person who believes in change and knows what it takes to actually make those changes happen through advocacy and legislative work, and the power of long-term policy efforts.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the United Communities of San Antonio, Inc., as it celebrates and honors the outstanding contributions to the San Antonio community of all of its 2007 Humanitarian Award recipients. Their dedication to the community is remarkable and I wish them all continued success in all their future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 2007

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 9, 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will better prepare our scientists to be professionally competitive