

TRIBUTE TO MADISON HIGH
SCHOOL BEL CANTO CHOIR,
REXBURG, IDAHO

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an exceptional high school choir in my district, the Madison High School Bel Canto Choir of Rexburg, Idaho, which has been chosen to perform at New York City's legendary Carnegie Hall on March 19, 2007.

The Bel Canto choir was selected out of dozens of high school choirs across the country for this performance. The concert will feature 200 students from three states, and it is the capstone of Carnegie Hall's yearlong National High School Choral Festival. The concert will be conducted by Dr. Craig Jessop, esteemed Music Director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, who has been working with the choirs and their conductors throughout the year. Apart from their world-renowned performances, Carnegie Hall brings innovative music education programs to students across the nation. I am delighted that these young constituents have been given this opportunity.

Led by David Hinck, the Madison High School Bel Canto Choir had its beginnings in the 1960s. The choir consistently receives high ratings at regional choral festivals and has been a featured ensemble at the Idaho Music Educators Conference, Northwest Music Educators Conference, and the Idaho ACDA Retreat. In 2005, the choir received top honors at the FAME festival in Branson, Missouri. The ensemble regularly joins with the MHS Orchestra and has performed several works with the orchestra and other choirs from the Eastern Idaho Area.

I am honored to have one of the four schools in the nation chosen for the Carnegie Hall National High School Choral Festival residing in my Idaho district. They should be proud not only of their musical achievement, but their embodiment of the quality musical education the State of Idaho provides. I commend these students and their leaders for their success, and wish them the best of luck on March 19 when they perform at Carnegie Hall.

TRIBUTE TO DR. KARL S. WRIGHT

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise with great gladness over the inauguration of Dr. Karl S. Wright as the 11th President of Florida Memorial University. On March 15, 2007 he will take over the reins of this university amidst ceremonies that evoke the historical significance of this occasion. Having earned his Ph.D. in Economics at Mississippi State University and his bachelor's

and master's degrees from the University of Maryland at College Park, Dr. Wright will preside over South Florida's only historically Black institution of higher learning which has played a major role in responding to the needs of a burgeoning urban center like Miami-Dade County.

He is not new to the challenge since he has served as executive vice-president and provost when he oversaw the dramatic increase in the size of its student enrollment. He has actively participated in navigating the rough waters of this university's change from a college status to that of a university. Dr. Wright is no stranger to this institution's upgrading since he has managed not only the quality of the faculty and staff, but also the number of courses and degree programs that now validate its status as a major university.

Being an institution of higher learning alongside the Baptist tradition, Dr. Wright's role is enhanced by his commitment to religious education amidst the challenge of academic achievement and higher learning, emphasizing financial management and entrepreneurship, aerospace engineering and personal development. He has also devised a very innovative program on physical fitness and dropout prevention strategies during a time when this urban university reaches out to inner city students in need of mentoring and tutorial assistance. These unique programs are making Florida Memorial University into one of those pioneering institutions whereby its outreach efforts to the youth of Miami-Dade County and beyond are generating dividends toward enhancing its prestige and reputation.

In the midst of these innovative educational strategies, Dr. Wright will continue to strengthen this university's graduate degree accreditation process, while expanding qualitatively its presence in the South Florida community and throughout nearby countries within the Caribbean basin. Having served for 7 years as Dean of the School of Business at South Carolina State University, he is well equipped with his educational background and hands-on experience to bring the necessary upgrade toward ensuring that Florida Memorial University become indeed a world-class university.

Defined by his ability to reach out beyond the confines of a university setting, Dr. Wright will no doubt bank on his role on the Miami-Dade County Investment Advisory Committee, as well as on the prestigious 100 Black Men of Ft. Lauderdale to give him the necessary tools to consolidate community and business support for the university. Most importantly, Dr. Wright has been recognized by the Kellogg Foundation as a leadership Fellow, and has earned kudos from the American Association of State Colleges and University, which recently selected him to participate in the Millennium Presidential Leadership Fellows Initiative.

As he is sworn into office, I am confident that Dr. Karl S. Wright will demonstrate to all those called upon by public service that excellence is never beyond the reach of those willing to make the sacrifice and dare the impossible on behalf of our leaders of tomorrow. I rest assured that he is truly imbued with the personal integrity and intellectual acumen to

bring Florida Memorial University into one of the leading universities in our State.

A TRIBUTE TO THE WESTERN DIOCESE
OF THE ARMENIAN
CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 15, 2007

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America upon the celebration of its 80th Anniversary.

The Diocese of the Armenian Church was established on July 2, 1898 under the direction of Khirmian Hayrig, placing all Armenian Churches in the United States and Canada under the jurisdiction of the Diocesan Headquarters in Worcester, Massachusetts.

On November 28, 1927, the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church was officially established by an Encyclical issued from the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin by His Holiness Kevoork V. Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians. The creation of the Western Diocese was a response to a continued and vigorous growth of the Armenian community in California and the vast distance separating the Armenian Churches in the West from the Headquarters in the East.

From its creation, the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church progressed and expanded to serve the Armenian population throughout California. In 1928, the newly established Western Diocese consisted of five parishes. By 1953, the number of parishes had expanded to eight, and an additional three were added by 1957—the year that the Diocesan Headquarters relocated to Hollywood.

The Diocesan Headquarters remained in Hollywood until the 1994 Northridge Earthquake. Later that year, the Diocesan Assembly decided to purchase a new Headquarters. On May 16, 1997 the Western Diocese moved to its new Headquarters in Burbank. Today, the Western Diocese is the proud owner of a multi-purpose complex where it is currently headquartered and will be the future site for the Mother Cathedral.

In addition to providing places of worship, the Western Diocese has made a strong commitment to community service. In 1963, the Diocese began to provide youth throughout the community with the opportunity to participate in a Summer Camp. In 1967 the Diocese purchased the Alta Sierra Camp providing year-round camping facilities for children, families, and organizations. The Western Diocese also publishes the bi-monthly periodical, "The Mother Church," reaching 28,000 people worldwide.

I consider it a great privilege to recognize the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America for its eighty years of service to the Armenian community and I ask all Members of Congress to join me in congratulating the Western Diocese for its remarkable achievements.