

NORTHEAST TARRANT CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE ON ITS 50TH AN-
NIVERSARY

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Northeast Tarrant Chamber of Commerce.

The Northeast Tarrant Chamber of Commerce was chartered on December 23, 1957 as "The Greater Richland Area Chamber of Commerce." The initial meeting to establish the chamber was the dream of Gertrude Tarpley and Jack Bean. Tarpley was Northeast Tarrant County's unofficial matriarch and Bean was its first president. At the time, the Richland Industrial Park was in the planning stages and many people were concerned about how it would affect their homes. Seventy five local civic leaders signed up to participate in the new chamber, coming from as far away as Grapevine and paying an annual fee of \$25.

The organization quickly gained momentum. In the 1960's, the chamber worked to balance commercial, industrial and residential zoning. It also helped expedite the Airport Freeway construction and helped form the Tarrant County Junior College District. The organization's membership also increased, with the group's regular dinners averaging 500 to 600 attendees.

In the late 80's and early 90's, the chamber hit a rough patch as questions arose about the organization's effectiveness.

In 1992, Doug Terry, president of Frost National Bank in Hurst, took over as president and the organization agreed to make changes to promote economic development, retain its membership and offer programs to help member businesses. As a result, the chamber became more visible to city councils and became more effective overall.

In 2001, Robert Hamilton was named president and CEO and was responsible for implementing innovative ideas and new programs to enhance the chamber's position in the North Texas region. A new economic development foundation called Quad Cities DFW was founded in early 2003 with marketing of the four cities and chamber membership as the main priority. Throughout the next few years, the chamber, its programs and materials earned top honors from chamber peers throughout the state.

Today, the chamber has 925 members. As a current member of the Board of Directors, I can attest to the hard work and commitment the Northeast Tarrant Chamber has to its members and community. The chamber has been a key player in helping bring economic development and leadership to local businesses and the Tarrant County community.

I commend the Northeast Tarrant Chamber for its hard work and dedication. Your involvement in the economic development of our region is very crucial and greatly appreciated.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGETOWN HIGH
SCHOOL MEN'S BASKETBALL
TEAM

HON. JEAN SCHMIDT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer congratulations to Georgetown High School in Brown County on winning the Division IV Ohio High School Athletic Association's Men's Basketball Title.

The city of Georgetown has always been attached to the catchphrase "the home of our 18th President, Ulysses S. Grant". Now President Grant will need to share that catchphrase with the 2007 Men's Basketball Champions.

Georgetown, Ohio, home of Ulysses S. Grant and the 2007 State Champion G-Men.

With the win the Georgetown G-Men became the only basketball team in Ohio this year to complete an undefeated season. Though unranked the G-Men never gave up their dream of a perfect season and a state championship.

As Georgetown High School marched their way through the state tournament all of Brown County caught G-Men fever. It seemed when Georgetown took to the basketball court in Columbus Brown County's population crashed to near zero.

Madam Speaker, I salute the school, Coach Underwood and the entire community on their perfect season. Brown County is very proud tonight. Go G-men!

**SMALL BUSINESS PROTECTION
ACT**

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I introduced the bipartisan Small Business Securities Protection Act with my colleague, Representative Steve Israel. This bill follows the recommendations of the SEC's own advisory committee to help small businesses with the costs of implementing just one section of Sarbanes-Oxley—Section 404.

Section 404 requires publicly traded companies to document all of their internal controls. While this is helpful with 90 percent of the companies offering stock in America, it has cost the average small company half of its profit margin. America has lost 90 percent of its foreign securities business as markets in Hong Kong and London advertise themselves as "Sarbanes-Oxley-free." SEC Chairman Cox warned that Section 404's implementation on small businesses has led to an instinct to "go for the capillary," focusing millions of dollars on micro-accounting issues rather than expanding employment. The Chief Finance Officer of Whole Foods recently said ". . . we spent even more time drilling into insignificant details . . . spending millions on accounting research—not on new stores, new products, and new jobs."

Our bill follows the recommendations of the SEC's Advisory Committee to clearly define key accounting terms like "material," "reasonable," "significant," and "sufficient"—terms

that if left undefined lead to millions spent in pointless litigation. The bill would allow consultants advising on Sarbanes-Oxley compliance to actually talk to accountants so differences could be resolved. Finally, the bill provides relief to small enterprises and companies less than one year old to revive the business sector hit hardest by Section 404.

Much of the new foreign securities work has already left our country. Many publicly-traded companies are going private to eliminate millions in Sarbanes-Oxley costs. Our reforms would keep 95 percent of companies under full Section 404 rules. It would relieve the burden on only the newest and smallest companies—who are the most dynamic and innovative parts of our economy.

While other bills offer more far reaching proposals, this one is soundly grounded in the work of the SEC's own Advisory Committee.

**SMALL BUSINESS EXPENSING EX-
PANSION AND PERMANENCY ACT
OF 2007**

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, in 2003 Congress and the President enacted the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003. This bill strengthened and expanded the existing ability of small businesses to immediately expense new investment under Section 179 of the tax code. The objective of this law was to further encourage small businesses to make new capital investments, helping to spur economic growth and create jobs in our economy. Like many, I believe we should permanently extend and expand this provision, which is why I am introducing the Small Business Expensing Expansion and Permanency Act of 2007.

The Jobs and Growth Act increased from \$25,000 to \$100,000 the amount of new investment a business can expense—or deduct from income—in a given year. The law also increased—from \$200,000 to \$400,000—the amount of total investment a business can make in a year and still qualify for expensing under Section 179. The original sunset date for expensing was slated for 2007, however we successfully extended the current law expensing limits under the Tax Increase Prevention and Reconciliation Act in 2006. They will now expire in 2009.

If the higher expensing limits are good for our nation's small businesses over the next two years, they should be good for small businesses indefinitely. This legislation will repeal the 2009 sunset and expand the current expensing limits to \$200,000, indexed for inflation. The current phase out level would also increase, and would begin at \$800,000 of annual investment. Further, the legislation would allow more small businesses to use this powerful expensing ability by reducing the phase out to only 50 cents on every next dollar of investment. Effectively, firms investing up to \$1.2 million per year would be able to use some level of expensing.

Small businesses truly are the backbone of our economy, representing more than half of all jobs and economic output. We should not take small business vitality for granted, however. Rather, our tax laws should support

small businesses in their role as the engines of innovation, growth, and job creation.

Madam Speaker, in difficult economic times, we must do all we can to encourage new investment and job creation by creating certainty and predictability for America's small business owners. The Small Business Expensing Expansion and Permanency Act of 2007 will help accomplish this worthy goal. I applaud the Administration for its consistent leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working with others in Congress to enact this much-needed legislation.

CÉSAR CHÁVEZ'S BIRTHDAY

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, this Saturday, millions of Americans will honor a great American hero—César Chávez—on what would have been his 80th birthday.

César Chávez was a civil rights and human rights leader who learned about the importance of justice early in his life. He would often say: "The love for justice that is in us is not only the best part of our being but it is also the most true to our nature."

After graduating from the eighth grade, a young César Chávez went to work in the fields as a migrant farm worker to support his family. In 1962, Chávez and Dolores Huerta founded the National Farm Workers Association, later to become the United Farm Workers. Chávez had the foresight to train his union workers and then to send many of them into the cities where they were to use the boycott and picket as their weapon.

Chávez was able to successfully organize farm workers because of his tireless leadership and nonviolent tactics that helped pass laws which would permit farm workers to organize into unions and allow collective bargaining agreements. He also helped make people aware of the struggles of farm workers for fair wages and safer working conditions. His movement was the beginning of La Causa ("The Cause"), a cause that was supported by organized labor, religious groups, minorities, and students.

César Chávez, the founder and president of the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO, died peacefully in his sleep on April 23, 1993. On August 8, 1994, César Chávez was posthumously awarded the Medal of Freedom, our country's highest civilian honor, by President Clinton. In the words of President Clinton: "He was for his own people a Moses figure . . . who, with faith and discipline, soft spoken humility and amazing inner strength, led a very courageous life."

César Chávez left our world better than he found it, and his legacy inspires not just the 43 million Latinos in this country, but every person on this earth who believes in non-violence as a means to achieve social change. He truly was, in the words of Senator Robert Kennedy, "one of the heroic figures of our time."

IN REMEMBRANCE OF CORNEL
"CONNIE" TERECK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of Cornel "Connie" Tereck, whose fierce dedication to family, friends and country serves as a model for all who have been blessed by his presence.

As a member of the Greatest Generation, Connie served in the United States Navy during World War II, where he protected our country with great pride and courage. After retiring from the service, Connie carried this commitment to the security of our country into his professional life, as he went to work for the Department of Defense. He proudly worked at the Defense Contract Administration Service Region until his retirement in 1987.

Connie was known as a man of honesty, intelligence and wit, not only to friends and family but to the whole community. He took interest in and care of the people surrounding him, and his deep devotion to, and commitment for his family and friends stands as a shining example to us all. He was a beloved husband of 57 years to his wife, Laura, and his legacy will continue through three children and five grandchildren.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring Cornel "Connie" Tereck as a true example of the spirit upon which this great Nation is built. We have lost a loving father, a faithful husband, a courageous serviceman and a wonderful neighbor, but his caring personality and loving devotion continue to inspire everyone that has crossed paths with him.

THE 2006 COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES AND THE PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2007

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, this morning the Committee on Foreign Affairs held a hearing on the recently-released 2006 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices prepared by the Department of State. Over the past three decades, we have seen a steady increase in the quality, candor, and scope of the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. In fighting the plague of human rights abuse, sunlight is often the best disinfectant. On the whole, the Country Reports shine brightly into some very dark corners. We owe a debt of gratitude to the men and women of the Department of State who work so hard to compile them.

Although we do not claim to be perfect and are ourselves subject to the universal ideals we espouse, the United States continues to be the world's most prominent champion of fundamental human rights.

This Congress, I have re-introduced the Global Online Freedom Act of 2007 which seeks to promote and defend human rights re-

lated to this increasingly influential communication medium. I am pleased to note that the State Department has already implemented one of the action items of this proposed legislation by including important additional information in the Country Reports, such as the domestic legal authority for internet restrictions and penalties imposed for the exercise of free speech via the Internet. This information is critical to efforts to address Internet repression in countries like Vietnam, China, Tunisia, and Belarus, and to convince governments that free speech restrictions are contrary to their national interests.

It is worth noting that most of the major human rights efforts undertaken by the United States Government in recent decades—including the Country Reports themselves—have been the result of Congressional mandates: The Jackson-Vanik Amendment; The International Religious Freedom Act; the Torture Victims Relief Act; the Lautenberg Amendment; the Trafficking Victims Protection Act; the North Korean Human Rights Act. These were Congressional initiatives undertaken in the face of skepticism—and sometimes outright opposition—by the Executive branch.

For example, I recall when then-Assistant Secretary Shattuck appeared before my subcommittee 10 years ago to oppose the International Religious Freedom Act. He argued that he was "particularly concerned" that the bill would "harm the very people it seeks to help" because it would "legislate a hierarchy of human rights into our laws" that could "severely damage our efforts to ensure that all aspects of basic civil and political rights . . . are protected." Not surprisingly, this doomsday prophecy did not come to pass.

To the contrary, once such issues have been forced by legislation, the Executive branch eventually internalizes, and sometimes embraces, those human rights priorities. For example, religious freedom and trafficking are now mainstream policy priorities that receive far more international attention and action than they did before the laws were on the books. Other mandates are embraced more slowly, such as the refugee title of the North Korean Human Rights Act, which has not yet been adequately implemented.

There are many countries where the seriousness of human rights violations deserves condemnation, including Zimbabwe with its recent horrific crackdown on the political opposition, North Korea, Eritrea, Belarus, Burma, Saudi Arabia, Cuba, Ethiopia and Iran. The Report provides disturbing details about how these countries in particular—though not exclusively—continue to thwart universal principles of respect for fundamental human rights. However, I will limit myself to focusing the spotlight on three human rights violators in particular—China, Sudan, and Vietnam.

This year's report repeats the assessment of prior years that the Chinese Government's human rights record "remained poor," but even when many of us thought the situation could not get much worse, it adds that the Chinese record "in certain areas deteriorated." One of those areas often ignored or downplayed by the international community is the appalling lengths to which the government will go to enforce its one-child per couple limit.

The Chinese government has a long record of oppressing its people, especially women, through its population control program. Beijing does not deny levying huge fines against people who have children the State deems illegal.