

father, Theodore N. Lerner, more than 50 years ago. In 2006, along with his father and brothers-in-law, Mark became a principal owner of Major League Baseball's Washington Nationals, in large part because of a "family model" of ownership lauded by Major League Baseball as the ideal way to ensure continuity and growth, both for the team and for the greater Washington community. Mark believes in a vision of athletics as a catalyst for civic renewal and that vision extends to his many other professional business interests.

Mark's dedication to community service is illustrated by his impressive record of volunteerism and philanthropy, whether serving as a valued board member or participating in the daily life of institutions fighting for the causes he champions. As Vice President of The Annette M. and Theodore N. Lerner Family Foundation, he provides generous support to Jewish organizations in the fields of higher education, community-building, religious life, and tolerance. Pairing his investment in strengthening Jewish communal life with his passion for athletics, he has co-chaired the JCC Maccabi Games of Greater Washington and continues to seek out opportunities to foster community through sport.

Mark Lerner has displayed an unwavering commitment to the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School throughout his years of involvement as a parent, alumni parent, and steadfast supporter. He chaired the Building Committee of Operation Excellence, the CESJDS campaign for the construction of the state-of-the-art Lower and Upper School campuses. Until recently, he also was a member of the Board of Directors and chaired the Building and Grounds Committee. His expertise in the area of real estate management has guided the school's expansion and ensured that its students are equipped to thrive in a space that nourishes their love of learning.

CESJDS honors a distinguished member of our community every year with the "Chadesh Yameinu" Award. With a name drawn from a Hebrew prayer that refers to "renewing our days," the Chadesh Yameinu Award expresses the school's appreciation for the recipient's contribution to the institution's continued vitality and, by extension, to the promise of a bright Jewish tomorrow.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Mark D. Lerner, whose commitment to Jewish education and his leadership in community service and philanthropy serve as a shining example to future generations.

HONORING BENTON COWLES

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Benton Cowles, a remarkable public servant and friend from my home State of Kentucky. Mr. Cowles recently announced his intention to retire as the Edmonson County Property Valuation Administrator after 21 years of service.

Benton Cowles has served the Edmonson County community for the past three decades; first as Deputy PVA and then as PVA, a position he has held for the past 21 years. Mr.

Cowles' father had also held this important role in the local government.

Benton Cowles and his wife Teresa raised their family in Brownsville and have remained deeply invested in the Edmonson County Community. Outside his role in the local government, Mr. Cowles has spent time as a member of the Chamber of Commerce, the Brownsville Education Site based decision making council, and has volunteered with the Boy Scouts of America. He has also served as a damage coordinator for the Edmonson County Department of Emergency Management.

On behalf of the countless men and women who have benefited from his skill and generosity, I would like to express my profound appreciation to Mr. Cowles for his years of service and wish him a happy and healthy retirement.

It is my privilege to recognize Mr. Benton Cowles today, before the entire U.S. House of Representatives, for his exemplary citizenship and community leadership. His unique contributions to the Edmonson County community make him an outstanding American, worthy of our collective honor and respect.

SHAREHOLDER VOTE ON EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 18, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1257, the Shareholder Vote on Executive Compensation Act, which ensures that shareholders have a say in corporate executive compensation plans and golden parachute packages for executives who are negotiating the purchase or sale of the company.

For too long, executive compensation has been determined behind closed boardroom doors. The results have been that executives' pay has skyrocketed to the point of absurdity.

In 1991, the average large-company CEO received roughly 140 times the pay of an average worker. In 2003, the ratio was up to 500 to 1. It takes CEOs of the Nation's top companies the first two hours of the first workday of the new year to make \$10,712. It takes a minimum wage worker 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year to make the same. According to a report by Americans United for Change, those CEOs make \$5,279 an hour, \$10,982,000 a year, or 1,025 times more than their minimum wage employees.

These numbers are even more stunning when one considers that those salaries are not based on performance. As hearings held by Chairman FRANK have shown, even executives of companies that lose money, restate earnings, and face extensive regulatory scrutiny have received substantial compensation packages.

The Shareholder Vote on Executive Compensation Act would help hold board members accountable when setting executive pay by allowing shareholders to vote on whether they approve of the compensation packages or not. It would also give shareholders the right to vote on golden parachute packages that executives may negotiate for themselves when

arranging the purchase or sale of the company.

Although these votes are non-binding, shareholders' voices will be heard. Executives and boards of directors will have to give weight to the shareholders' opinions when deciding on what the gold-plated packages of executives will look like. And, it will let executives know they are being watched when negotiating the selling price of a company while simultaneously negotiating an additional personal exit package.

A similar shareholder vote has been in practice in the United Kingdom since 2003 and is now used in Australia as well. The policy is credited with improving management/shareholder dialogue on executive compensation matters and increasing the use of long-term performance targets in incentive compensation. It was recently adopted voluntarily by Aflac, and according to Institutional Shareholder Services, is currently pending before 52 companies. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1257 and make it the norm for all U.S. companies.

CONGRATULATING THE EMPLOYEES OF HOLCIM IN THEODORE, ALABAMA ON RECEIVING THE 2006 COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS ASSOCIATES AWARD FOR CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the Holcim cement plant in Theodore, Alabama, for winning the Council of State Governments (CSG) Associates award for outstanding corporate citizenship.

The CSG Associates award recognizes those who have shown great dedication in service to their communities. The nominations for the award are submitted by state officials from across the country, and the CSG leadership then chooses a winner. The 156 employees of the Holcim Theodore plant were honored with this prestigious award for their service to the Theodore community—and surrounding areas—in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

There are two specific efforts of the employees of the Theodore plant that were highlighted by the award. First, Holcim played a key role in rebuilding the Bayou La Batre Rural Health Clinic. This clinic, serving mostly the less fortunate, was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina and then, only days before its reopening, was ravaged by a fire. With the help of other local industries, Holcim led fundraising efforts to rebuild the clinic, contributing \$50,000 of the \$120,000 raised.

Holcim also sponsored two students from Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta as temporary summer staff at the clinic.

Second, the CSG Associates recognized Holcim for its efforts towards rebuilding new homes in Theodore for those who were displaced by Hurricane Katrina. Joining with Habitat for Humanity, Holcim donated concrete for 11 new homes, while Holcim employees volunteered their time and effort to build the new homes.

Holcim's honors, however, do not stop with the CSG Associates award. They have received honors not only at the local level but

also the national level. Recently, the Theodore plant won the Environmental Performance award from the Portland Cement Association. Additionally, Dow Jones Sustainability Index named Holcim as "Leader of Industry," and for four years, Holcim has been noted in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index and the Dow Jones STOXX Sustainability Index in Europe.

Holcim (US) Inc. is one of the Nation's leading manufacturers and suppliers of cement and mineral components. With 14 manufacturing plants and over 70 distribution facilities in the United States, the Holcim Theodore plant is a shining star in Holcim's corporate constellation.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating the Holcim cement plant in Theodore, Alabama, for all of their great accomplishments. I know the plant manager, Joe McFalls, the employees, their friends, families, and members of the community join with me in praising Holcim for their many accomplishments, and I extend thanks for their continued service to Mobile County and the First Congressional District.

TRIBUTE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN WHITEWATER WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Wheelchair Basketball team, who—in a stunning display of athleticism and courage, captured the 2007 National Intercollegiate Wheelchair Basketball Championship.

Led by Coach Tracy Chynoweth, the Warhawks capped an extraordinary season by defeating the Fighting Scots of Edinboro University to win their fourth national championship in 5 years. UW-Whitewater coiled a 28–2 season record, with a conference record of 18–0.

The Warhawks were led by freshman stand-out Joe Chambers, who averaged 15 points and 10 rebounds this season and registered 23 points and 12 rebounds in the championship game. His play was complemented by National Play-of-the-Year Matt Scott, who averaged 14.5 points per game, including 14 points and 9 rebounds against Edinboro. "It's an honor to be a part of this team," said Chambers. "We clicked on all cylinders and played like a band of brothers." The Warhawks are favored to return to the National Title game next year as they lose only one player from this year's championship team.

Winning the title in front of 1,750 fans, the Warhawks brought tremendous victory home to the great state of Wisconsin and established their dominance as the premiere wheelchair basketball program in the country. I sincerely congratulate the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Wheelchair Basketball team for their remarkable achievements and wish them the best of luck in their quest to repeat as National Champions.

TAXPAYER PROTECTION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2007

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1677, the Taxpayer Protection Act of 2007.

This bill accomplishes several important objectives. It cracks down on websites that attempt to strip unwitting consumers of sensitive information by imitating the IRS website. Electronic filing is on the rise, which is good for both consumers and the IRS, and we must make sure Americans feel comfortable and secure when paying their taxes online.

This legislation would also require the IRS to notify a taxpayer when it becomes evident in the course of a tax fraud investigation that he or she may have been the victim of identify theft. In the past, when presented with evidence of such fraud, the IRS, incredulously, would not apprise an individual of the serious situation he or she was facing. This must change.

In addition, the bill would also simplify tax filing requirements for businesses owned jointly by a husband and wife and make it easier for a married couple to file as a single proprietor of a business rather than as a partnership. It increases consumer protections from predatory providers of refund anticipation loans, gives taxpayers more time to recover property seized improperly by the IRS, and updates federal law to stop certain forms of tax fraud.

Perhaps most importantly, this bill would strengthen our outreach to people entitled to cash back on their tax returns under the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The EITC is effective because it rewards work. The families of Americans who work hard but don't earn a lot should not be forced to live in poverty. However, recent evaluations have shown that approximately 25 percent of hardworking households eligible for the EITC have not claimed it, and billions of dollars in targeted tax credits did not end up in the hands of the workers who needed them most.

When hundreds of millions of Americans step up to invest in their country by paying their taxes, they must know that Congress is looking out for their best interests. By passing this bill, we are doing just that.

I thank my colleagues and urge passing of the bill.

RECOGNIZING YOM HASHOAH, HOLOCAUST MARTYRS' AND HEROES' REMEMBRANCE DAY

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues and my constituents in solemn recognition of Yom Hashoah, or Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day; a special day where we mourn the millions of Jews who perished at the hands of the Nazis.

This day has special significance for Jews, the main target of Nazi atrocities. I represent many constituents who are Holocaust survivors and many more that lost friends, relatives and loved ones. We mourn their loss; honor their memory; and unite in opposition to acts of bigotry and intolerance.

We also pause to remember the innocent people of Darfur. The mass killings, acts of rape, and displacement of innocent civilians occurring daily in Darfur is unconscionable and must end. This is a moment in human history when the poignant expression "Never Again" must be repeated over and over again, coupled with real action to end this tragic period of human suffering.

This year, as we commemorate Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day on Capitol Hill, we pause to remember one Holocaust survivor, Professor Liviu Librescu, who was tragically killed on the campus of Virginia Tech protecting his students from a gunman who murdered 32 innocent people.

His death occurred on Monday, April 16, the day Israelis commemorated Yom Hashoah.

A native of Romania, Liviu Librescu survived the Holocaust, endured years of communist oppression in Eastern Europe, immigrated to Israel in 1978 and then relocated to the United States where he taught engineering science and mathematics.

Before the tragedy at Virginia Tech, Professor Librescu was known as a passionate, world class educator who dedicated his life to teaching students. Now, he will also be remembered as the hero who saved lives by blocking a doorway from an oncoming killer, allowing students to escape to safety. Professor Librescu sacrificed his life, so that others may live. His selfless action in the face of such terrifying danger epitomizes the heroism and courage that defined Liviu Librescu's life.

May the memory of Liviu Librescu, the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust, and the victims of genocide in Darfur be blessed for all eternity.

RECOGNITION OF SUPERINTENDENT PAUL VRANISH

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 19, 2007

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, I rise here today to pay tribute to a great educator: Mr. Paul Vranish, Superintendent of Tomillo Independent School District. The Texas Education Agency named Mr. Vranish the Communities in Schools Superintendent of the Year.

Mr. Vranish became the Superintendent of Tomillo ISD in June 2002. He was recognized for his part in his "Parent Chats" program which encourages better communication between the community and the school district.

Along with increasing dialogue between the district officials and the public, Mr. Vranish has also worked to bring his students and community the information and technology they need to excel in the world by providing increased computer access and free high-speed internet access to Tomillo, a small Texas town near the Mexico border.

Mr. Vranish is a dedicated educator who has done much to provide a quality education