

are grown nowhere else commercially in the nation, are shipped throughout the United States as well as foreign markets. Good farmers, favorable weather conditions and water supplies are major factors contributing to California's bountiful crops, but the role of the Fresno County Farm Bureau in Fresno County's agricultural success cannot be understated.

Fresno County Farm Bureau will celebrate their 90th anniversary during their annual banquet held on May 3, 2007. It is appropriate at this time to highlight its many achievements and to underscore the crucial role that Farm Bureau has had in supporting and advocating on behalf of agriculture in Fresno County.

The Farm Bureau is the largest organization of farmers, ranchers, business people and citizens in the United States and it continues to grow in size and stature. In California, the Farm Bureau was formed in 1919. Today, there are nearly 92,000 members in 56 counties and nationwide with over 6.2 million enjoying membership.

Two years prior to the formal establishment of the Farm Bureau in California, a group of Fresno area farmers met with the first Extension Service farm advisor assigned to Fresno County to lay the groundwork for a county Farm Bureau organization. The vision was to provide a bona fide farm organization which could disseminate information and promote better farming practices.

Ninety years later, the Fresno County Farm Bureau is the largest farm bureau in the state of California, participating in nearly every facet of farming life. The Fresno Farm Bureau, through its voluntary, elected leaders and professional staff, is dedicated to promoting and protecting the family farm and to maintaining the treasured natural resources that are so important to California and this nation's vitality and lifestyle. The Fresno Farm Bureau has committed to the protection of public health, safety and welfare. Both are accomplished by local determination and active participation in the legislative process. In fulfilling these responsibilities, the Fresno County Farm Bureau is helping local agricultural producers maintain a viable system of production and delivery of abundant, safe supplies of wholesome food and fiber to our local, national and export consumers.

I commend Fresno County Farm Bureau for the presence, dedication, knowledge, professionalism and hard work on behalf of our farmers in California. Our nation's residents as well as citizens of other nations are the beneficiaries of this amazing supply of agricultural products. Farmers, Fresno County, California and our nation can be proud of Fresno County Farm Bureau's 90 years of service.

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IN MEMORY OF NICOLE REGINA WHITE

**HON. J. RANDY FORBES**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 1, 2007*

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, I rise today in memory of Nicole Regina White, who was tragically killed in the recent attack at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University on April 16, 2007.

Nicole was known to many as a person who possessed the heart of a servant. She found

ways to invest in those around her, whether it was through conversation, friendship, lending a helping hand, or through volunteer work. As a trained emergency medical technician, she is believed to have even been helping people in the final moments of her life. Those who were close to her know how passionately Nicole gave back to her community, classmates, teachers, and family. She was a committed member of her church's outreach program, a Sunday school teacher, an EMT for the Smithfield Volunteer Fire and Rescue Squad, and a lifeguard at her local YMCA.

Many say that one of Nicole's greatest loves in life was taking care of animals. During high school, Nicole volunteered at local stables and barns to take care of horses. In this hobby, it is clear to see that Nicole's heart and mission in life was to serve and care for others. Nicole was a double-major in International Relations and German at Virginia Tech.

Nicole was a person who loved life, loved serving people, loved her family, and, most importantly, loved the Lord. Although her life was tragically cut short, many are blessed to have known and loved her.

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RECOGNIZING THE FIRST MAJORITY WOMEN CITY COUNCIL IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI HISTORY

**HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 1, 2007*

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize history in the making. Today, for the first time in Kansas City, Missouri's history, a majority women's City Council will be sworn in at City Hall. While I wish I could have joined them in person in the Council Chambers I used to serve in as Mayor of Kansas City, I want to honor today's incoming Mayor, Mark Funkhouser, and the talented twelve City Council members who represent our State's largest city. Among them, seven women who are making history; by proving that our society can deliver change when the people call for it. These extraordinary women have demonstrated that the social norms by which women have traditionally been confined can be eradicated and the prospect for real change is not only plausible, but possible.

The women that stand before the City Clerk today and take the oath of office as members of the first majority women City Council are: Deb Hermann—serving the 1st District-at-Large, Melba Curls—serving the 3rd District-at-Large, Sharon Sanders Brooks—serving the 3rd District, Beth Gottstein—serving the 4th District-at-Large, Jan Marcason—serving the 4th District, Cindy Baker Circo—serving the 5th District-at-Large, and Cathy Jolly—serving the 6th District-at-Large.

Deb Hermann was first elected to the City Council in March 2003 and was immediately appointed Chairwoman of the Neighborhood and Housing Committee and member of the Operations Committee. She brought with her experience and leadership ability through active participation and involvement in nearly thirty civic and community organizations since 1979. She was a member of the Gracemor Randolph Community Council for 24 years

and served as its President from 1994 until her election to the City Council. Councilwoman Hermann served as the Chairwoman for the Property Maintenance Advisory Committee in 2001, and in 1999 was appointed as a Kansas City Plan Commission Board Member. Councilwoman Hermann has proudly served the citizens of the 1st District-at-Large for the past four years and continues to place a high priority on her commitment to neighborhoods.

Melba J. Curls has served the 41st District in the Missouri House of Representatives since 1999, ending her service in 2006 to run for City Council. While in office, she championed many causes, the most notable being legislation that extended renewal of the KC Area Transportation Authority's taxing ability to ensure that the critical needs for public transportation services remained funded in our community. This helped the less fortunate with their need for public access to jobs and health care. Curls has a long history of public service. Prior to her State election, she was employed in the Mayor's Office with the City of Kansas City, and before that, she served as a staff assistant in the Kansas City office of U.S. Senator Tom Eagleton. Curls is a life-long resident of Kansas City, and attended the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Sanders Brooks has served the 37th District in the Missouri House of Representatives since 2000, ending her service in 2006 to run for City Council. While in the State Legislature, she championed many causes, the most notable being a bill that outlived mandatory set-asides for Minority and Women-owned businesses. She has long been committed to protecting our community's history and brings that passion to fight for the causes of her constituents with her to City Hall. Prior to her State election, Brooks was successful civil rights investigator. A long-time friend and parishioner of mine, Brooks is a graduate of American University in Washington, DC where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism.

Beth Gottstein formerly served as the Resource Development Manager at the Hispanic Economic Development Corporation before stepping down to run for City Council. Gottstein has also been known to spearhead several local candidate campaigns and has long been active in our region's political organizations, including assisting with my first election to Congress. Gottstein has prior City Hall experience and has also been intimately involved with the Greater Kansas City Women's Political Caucus, a local organization that promotes women's involvement in politics. Gottstein earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Missouri and a Master's of Public Administration from University of Missouri-Kansas City.

For the past sixteen years, Jan Marcason has served as the Executive Director of the Mid-America Assistance Coalition, where she managed an annual budget of more than a million dollars and helped direct millions of dollars to local social service organizations. She was also the former President of the Women's Political Caucus. Previously, Jan's public service extended to Washington, DC, where she worked for former Vice President Walter Mondale. Marcason was born and raised in Kansas City. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Education from the University of Kansas, and a Master's in Business Administration from University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Cindy Baker Circo has been a small business owner for more than two decades; she has also been the neighborhood President of the Country Valley Homes Association, an eastern Kansas City suburb, and is a former Public Improvements Advisory Council member for the 5th District. As 5th District Councilwoman, Circo plans to continue to focus on addressing the basic needs of the community, including infrastructure issues that face so many of our neighborhoods. Circo is a lifelong resident of the Kansas City area and an active member of St. Mark's Church.

Cathy Jolly has served the 45th District in the Missouri House of Representatives since 2000, also ending her service in 2006 to run for City Council. While in our State's Capital, Jolly sponsored several pieces of legislation related to reducing crime and protecting our community through harsher sentences for criminal action. Prior to her State election, Jolly served as an Assistant Prosecutor in Jackson County, where she was instrumental as the coordinator of the Drug Abatement Response Team. Jolly is also an active member of the Women's Political Caucus and a recipient of their highest award, the "Torch Award." A resident of South Kansas City, Jolly earned a Bachelor of Science in Political Science from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Madam Speaker, please join me today in recognizing this historical moment, the first majority women City Council in Kansas City, Missouri's history. Their past experiences and impeccable records are certainly indications of all the good that is to come. With this recognition, we join the citizens of Kansas City in paying tribute to these extraordinary women. On this historic occasion, I wish my best to our incoming Mayor, Mark Funkhouser, and all of the members of the Kansas City Council. I urge my colleagues of the 110th Congress to join me in congratulating the first majority women City Council since the establishment of Kansas City's modern government in 1925 as they set an example and precedent we can all be proud of and strive to replicate across our Nation.

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INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL RAILROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

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**HON. CORRINE BROWN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2007

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I want to thank Chairman OBERSTAR for joining me in introducing the Federal Railroad Safety Improvement Act of 2007. This legislation is long overdue and will authorize safety programs in both passenger and freight rail that will protect passengers, workers, and the communities that our passenger and freight rails serve. It will also improve the safety of our rail infrastructure which will allow for the exceptional growth expected in both passenger and freight rail.

This legislation will make major improvements in railroad safety by requiring the Department of Transportation to develop a long-term strategy for improving rail safety, authorizing funds for the purchase of track geometry

vehicles and for the development of an underground and tunnel safety facility.

The legislation strengthens hours-of-service by mandating consecutive hours of rest, eliminates limbo time, and requires fatigue management plans. It also strengthens whistleblower protections and imposes penalties for safety, hours-of-service, and accident reporting violations.

The legislation also mandates the implementation of Positive Train Controls, improves warning systems in non-signaled territory, establishes minimum training standards, and recommends ways to mitigate health hazards.

Congress last passed legislation to reauthorize the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in 1994. That authorization expired in 1998. Since that time, the railroad industry has changed dramatically. Economic growth and an increase in international trade have led to record traffic levels. At the same time, Amtrak and the commuter railroads—which often operate on freight rail lines—are moving more passengers, which means that there is a lot of pressure on our rail system. This has a significant impact on worker and public safety.

According to the FRA, train accidents have increased by 33 percent since 1994. Fatalities and injuries have also increased—from 12 fatalities and 262 injuries in 1994 to 33 fatalities and 734 injuries in 2005. Injuries hit an all-time high of 1,884 in 2002 due to the train accident in Minot, ND.

According to the FRA, human factors are responsible for nearly 40 percent of all train accidents, and a new study confirms that fatigue plays a role in approximately one out of four of those accidents.

Researchers analyzed the 30-day work schedules of locomotive crews preceding 1,400 train accidents and not surprisingly found a strong correlation between the crew's level of alertness and the likelihood that they would be involved in an accident. NTSB investigators have reached similar conclusions.

The hours of service law, which was originally enacted in 1907 and substantially amended in 1969, is outdated. It deals only with acute fatigue, not cumulative fatigue. Since the rail industry is markedly different today compared to 40 or 100 years ago, there are some significant shortcomings in the law.

For example, the law does not properly address "limbo time," which is the time when a crew's working assignment is finished and they are waiting for transportation back to their homes. During limbo time, crewmembers are required to stay awake, alert, and able to respond to any situation, which means that crews can be on the job for as long as 15 or 20 hours at a time. Although the NTSB has repeatedly asked the FRA to make improvements to hours-of-service and address fatigue, the FRA seemingly does not have the regulatory authority to do so.

The Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee has held numerous hearings on railroad safety, fatigue, and human factor accidents and has heard testimony from all the stakeholders and policy makers in the passenger and freight rail industry. I believe this legislation will help reduce accidents, improve rail safety, and improve the work environment for employees which will allow the passenger and freight rail industry to safely handle the future growth projected for both modes of transportation.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this legislation and I urge its swift passage so

that we can begin to implement these important safety measures immediately.

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IN RECOGNITION OF DANA J. KELLY FOR OVER FORTY YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO LOCAL 537, PIPEFITTERS ASSOCIATION OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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**HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2007

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of my longtime friend and fellow brother of the Building Trades, Dana J. Kelly. Dana is a remarkable labor leader with a long and illustrious career in Local 537 Pipefitters Association of Boston. Throughout his tenure, Dan has dedicated his efforts to improving the lives of working men and women throughout Massachusetts.

Madam Speaker, Dana joined Local 537 in March of 1965 while attending Charlestown High School in Boston, Massachusetts. Dana's attention to detail and craftsmanship led him to become a welding instructor for Local 537. As a result of his dedication to this craft, Dana attended and graduated from the United Association's 5 year Instructor Training Program at Purdue University.

After 18 years of dedicated work and leadership, Dana was elected in both 1983 and 1985 to serve on the Executive Board to Local 537. In 1985 he was appointed Organizer of Local 537, a position he held for the next 13 years. Due to his unique leadership abilities, Dana as designated Chairman of the New England Pipe Trades Action Committee which coordinated organizing efforts throughout New England. In 1998, Dana was elected Assistant Business Manager of Local 537 and held this position for 2 terms. In 2004, he was elected Business Manager and Financial Secretary Treasurer.

Despite his various accomplishments, as his friend, I can honestly say that the title that Dana's always been most proud of and which he cherishes most, is that of husband and father. Dana has had the tremendous good fortune and distinct honor to be married to his wife Linda. Together, Linda and Dana have three wonderful children and four beautiful grandchildren.

Speaker, it is my distinct honor to join Dana's family, friends and brothers and sisters of labor to thank him for over 40 years of remarkable service to the American Labor Movement. I hope my colleagues will join me in celebrating Dana's distinguished career and wishing him good health and success in all his future endeavors.

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TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMAN HEALTH

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**HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2007

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, I congratulate The Institute of Environmental and