

CONGRATULATING AMBER ROSE

HON. THOMAS G. TANCREDO

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate Ms. Amber Rose, an outstanding young woman from Elizabeth, Colorado. Ms. Rose, a student at Elizabeth High School was recently named a recipient of the 12th Annual Prudential Spirit of Community Award as a State recipient. The award honors this young woman as one of the top two youth volunteers in Colorado for 2007.

Created in 1995 in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Prudential Financial's Spirit of Community Award program has become America's largest youth recognition program based solely on volunteerism. It is designed to emphasize the importance of service and encourages young Americans to give back to their communities.

Nominated by her high school, Amber founded a nonprofit organization that distributed more than \$30,000 worth of art supplied to disadvantaged children around the world. As a State Honoree, Amber will receive a \$1,000 award, an engraved silver medallion and a trip to Washington, DC, from May 5 to 8 for the program's national recognition events. During this trip she will be considered to become 1 of 10 National Honorees.

Ms. Rose should be commended for her commitment and selflessness. I wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 246, on H.R. 1434, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 896 Pittsburgh Street in Springdale, Pennsylvania, as the "Rachel Carson Post Office Building," I was attending a memorial service for the students and parents of the 18th Congressional District of Pennsylvania affected by the Virginia Tech shootings. I am also a cosponsor of H.R. 1434.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

HONORING REVEREND ANTONIO VALDIVIA

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life and work of Reverend Antonio Valdivia, Pastor of St. Louis Bertrand Parish in Oakland, California. Known affectionately to his parishioners, and throughout his community, simply as Father Tony, he has served as a priest in the Catholic Church for over 44 years. Today, the St. Louis

Bertrand Parish and the Oakland community come together to thank him for his leadership and service on the occasion of his retirement.

The son of first-generation immigrants from Jalisco, Mexico, Father Tony was born in Oakland. Growing up in West Oakland, he attended St. Joseph Parish, which later merged with St. Andrew Parish and is now part of the Catholic Parish of Christ the Light. During his childhood, Father Tony spent every Sunday at the parish church, attending morning Mass and then returning in the evening for Benediction. One day a priest picked him to be an altar server, and this began his journey into the religious vocation.

Father Tony attended elementary school at Old St. Mary's Parish and was taught by the Holy Names Sisters. Later he studied at St. Patrick's Seminary and University in Menlo Park where he was one of the few Hispanic seminarians on campus, and the only student from West Oakland. He enjoyed his experience in the seminary, particularly his studies in English literature and philosophy.

Father Tony was especially drawn to studies that presented a model of Church as being present in the life of the people. While in school he worked to put those teachings into practice, guiding people as they struggled through the changes in the liturgy, the birth of parish councils, and the development of lay leadership. He also walked with them through the pain of the civil rights era, the Vietnam War, the advent of widespread drug use, the emergence of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and the continuing and often tumultuous dialogue over the issue of immigration.

During his 44 years as a priest, Father Valdivia served as pastor of five parishes: St. Anthony in Oakland, St. Leonard (now Our Lady of Guadalupe) in Fremont, St. Cornelius in Richmond, St. Catherine in Martinez, and at St. Louis Bertrand since 2003. In addition to serving as vicar of the diocesan Hispanic community, he also served as an associate pastor, as well as a member of the diocesan Pastoral Leadership Placement Board.

Father Tony holds a master's degree in counseling and has used those skills to counsel at-risk youth at public schools throughout the Bay Area. He also put that training to use as a missionary in the Archdiocese of San Salvador from 1991-93, serving as an advocate for peace and justice in a community that was being ravaged by civil war.

I have known Father Tony for many years, and it has always been a pleasure to work with him in the service of my constituents. He is an unwavering advocate for human rights, labor rights, immigration reform, peace and social justice. His commitment to his parishioners and to the people of Oakland has had a positive impact on countless lives. Today I join the St. Louis Bertrand Parish, along with our entire community, in thanking and saluting Reverend Antonio Valdivia for his profound contributions to California's 9th Congressional District, our country and our world.

NORTHERN IRELAND PARLIAMENT

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, today is an historic day for the peo-

ple of Northern Ireland. A day that has been years in the making and which heralds a new era of peace. Today in Belfast, parliament opened with the swearing in of Unionist and Sinn Fein members side-by-side.

I congratulate Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness on their new roles as first minister and deputy first minister of the assembly. Today is proof that despite decades of violence, two previously bitter enemies can sit down and work through their differences peacefully through representative government.

Nine years ago, the Good Friday Agreement envisioned this day. The work to cement that achievement has been difficult but it has been accomplished through negotiation and compromise.

Certainly, today is not the end of disagreement, but it is the beginning of settling things politically and not militarily. Today is possible because both sides have recognized that violence is not productive, that killing benefits neither side. The children of Northern Ireland can now grow up in a country where hate is not a virtue.

What the people of Northern Ireland have accomplished today is an example for areas around the world suffering with internal conflict. A people who were once at war with one another have freely elected leaders who will work to solve problems peacefully.

Again, I congratulate the people of Northern Ireland on this historic occasion. It is a day to remember and in which they should take pride.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 247, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 320 South Lecanto Highway in Lecanto, Florida as the "Sergeant Dennis O. Flannigan Lecanto Post Office Building," I was attending a memorial service for the students and faculty of the 18th Congressional District of Pennsylvania affected by the Virginia Tech shootings.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

HONORING SAINT JOHN MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Saint John Missionary Baptist Church, one of the oldest and most highly regarded churches in Oakland, California. Today, the Oakland community comes together to celebrate Saint John's 60 years of ministry and invaluable service to the community.

Saint John Missionary Baptist Church was founded by the late Dr. Carl J. Anderson on July 7, 1947. For 54 years, Dr. Anderson led an extensive outreach effort to thousands of sick, disadvantaged and imprisoned persons.

His love for God and humanity impacted the lives of many from Washington, DC, to the West Coast and Alaska as he led his membership in feeding and clothing those in need, and assisting in the employment of thousands.

During the Vietnam War, church members even received testimony from soldiers stationed abroad whose loved ones has sent them tapes of Dr. Anderson's famous Gospel Call Hour radio broadcast. They expressed gratitude for the encouragement they gotten from those broadcasts, during which Dr. Anderson and the members of the Saint John Missionary Baptist Church would pray for anyone requesting prayer, regardless of race, ethnicity or creed.

On September 1, 2000, Dr. Anderson was called home after his many years of service and ministry. Today Saint John Missionary Baptist Church continues this proud tradition of under the spirited and inspired leadership of Reverend Gregory B. Payton.

Saint John Missionary Baptist Church continues to play a leading role in initiating and expanding a wide range of charitable and community-building activities. In addition to ministering and counseling countless members of the congregation, the church regularly hosts a variety of community gospel events and seeks to promote the development and education of our young people.

On July 7, 2007, Saint John Missionary Baptist Church will celebrate its 60th anniversary in Oakland, California. I would like to mark this occasion by commending the church for the exceptional service it has provided to the community not only in its capacity as an institution of faith and worship, but also as a leader in working to provide invaluable social and charitable services to the people of Oakland. By remaining committed to the areas of leadership and service throughout its 60 years of ministry, the Saint John Missionary Baptist Church has contributed enormously not only to the Oakland community, but also to our shared goal of world peace.

TRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL
PEACE COUNCIL OF SRI LANKA
AND ITS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
JEHAN PERERA

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. CAPUANO. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka and to a man who, were he not a brave and determined patriot, might be my constituent. Jehan Perera came to Massachusetts as a student and graduated magna cum laude from Harvard College in 1982. After winning a traveling fellowship, he returned and earned a J.D. from the Harvard Law School in 1987. He could have chosen to remain in the United States, practice law, and become an exemplary citizen here. Instead, he chose to work for peace in his native country. The son of a distinguished Sinhalese family, he learned Tamil and devoted himself to national reconciliation. He serves as the Executive Director of the National Peace Council and from that forum he has, for almost two decades, urged moderation and restraint, mutual respect and understanding. Jehan Perera is a

fearless but thoughtful and nuanced critic of intransigence from any quarter. He has never ceased to call for magnanimous policies that respect both democratic decision-making and minority rights, and, of course, individual human rights. He has been active worldwide in encouraging representatives of civil society to work to resolve communal tensions. He rejoiced in a ceasefire negotiated in 2002 between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). I share his profound sorrow that the hopes it inspired have not been fully realized.

In April of this year, Jehan Perera was honored in a ceremony at the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation in New Delhi addressed by Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India. Dr. Perera had been chosen by the Inter Faith Harmony Foundation of India to receive its 2006 National Award for Peace, Tolerance & Harmony. A few days later, as friends gathered in Colombo to congratulate him, Jehan Perera received a death threat, the first addressed to him personally.

I honor and admire his fortitude. Active citizenship always demands some sacrifice, loss of privacy and leisure; hours and days spent in negotiations; the willingness, on occasion, to differ with our friends or to make common cause with old adversaries. In some places and at some times, politics, even the politics of peace and reconciliation, demands more than that. It calls for unflinching courage in the face of those who would threaten murder to kill even the hope of peace. I call upon all peace loving men and women to keep Jehan Perera in their thoughts and in their prayers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIM MURPHY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 245, on H. Res. 179, Expressing Support for a National Foster Parents Day, I was attending a memorial service for students and faculty of the 18th Congressional District of Pennsylvania affected by the Virginia Tech shootings. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

HONORING THE 400TH
ANNIVERSARY OF JAMESTOWN

HON. ERIC CANTOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Mr. CANTOR. Madam Speaker, the 105 settlers who landed at Jamestown in the spring of 1607 had little idea of the hardships they would soon face in the New World—life in the wilderness was racked by disease and famine. Nor was this band particularly equipped for life under such unforgiving conditions. Captain John Smith dubbed half of them "gentlemen."

But with just the right blend of faith, ingenuity and luck, the settlers of Jamestown survived, planting the seeds for the American Democratic experiment. Indeed, the inspiration for the current U.S. Congress comes from July 1619, when the New World's first representa-

tive body convened in the Jamestown church. There, they established "one equal and uniform government" over all Virginia. It brings me great honor today to recognize the sacrifices of these first brave Virginian settlers.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2007

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, during rollcall vote No. 299 on May 3, 2007, I was unavoidably detained in my congressional district. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

CALLING ON VIETNAM TO IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY
RELEASE POLITICAL PRISONERS
AND PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 1, 2007

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, April 30, 2007, Vietnamese Americans across the nation observed the 32nd anniversary of the fall of Saigon to North Vietnam, marking the end of the Vietnam war. There are now more than 1.12 million Vietnamese Americans living in the United States. They overcame many hardships to rebuild their lives, created thriving communities, contributed to the diversity and well-being of our country and worked towards their American dreams.

They have not forgotten that their former compatriots, family members, and friends in Vietnam are still being denied the basic freedoms that America has fought so hard for. Vietnamese Americans of different generations are actively working with their counterparts in Vietnam to create a more open, democratic society that is free of oppression and religious persecution.

The United States, in good faith, granted Vietnam permanent normal trade relations with the assurances that Vietnam was and will continue to improve its human rights records. Vietnam expressed its desire to create stronger, bilateral relations with the United States. However, despite these assurances, Vietnam has significantly increased the level of its detention, harassment, and oppression of political activists in the past several months since its accession into the World Trade Organization. They have blatantly disregarded their own claims that they will be actively engaged in promoting and protecting human rights with the United Nations Human Rights Council.

On May 2, 2007, the U.S. House of Representatives passed House Resolution 243, calling on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to immediately and unconditionally release Father Nguyen Van Ly, Nguyen Van Dai, Le Thi Cong Nhan, and other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. The resolution further urges the Government of Vietnam to comply with internationally recognized standards for basic freedom