

HONORING THE SERVICE OF SENIOR CITIZENS IN GRAYSON COUNTY

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Mr. HALL of Texas. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to honor the Senior Citizens of Grayson County for all of their services rendered to the community, and I would especially like to acknowledge the dedication exhibited by Harold and Hazel Wright of Sherman, Texas.

Harold and Hazel have been extremely active and influential in their community for over 20 years. They represented the Texoma Council of Governments at the White House Conference on Aging two years ago and were crowned Mr. & Mrs. Senior Citizen of Grayson County. It is because of dedicated individuals such as the Wrights that President George W. Bush fittingly proclaimed the month of May, 'Older Americans Month' on April 22nd of this year.

During Older Americans Month, we recognize the many ways older citizens have enriched our Nation through their character, wisdom, and service. America's seniors provide an example for younger generations, and during Older Americans Month, we reflect on their efforts toward building a stronger and brighter future for all. Our country remains forever in their debt, as older Americans have provided a guiding light for the rest of the Nation to follow.

With this in mind, I and Rep. FRANK PALLONE introduced H.R. 3701, Keeping Seniors Safe from Falls Act in September of 2007. I was pleased when Congress approved the bill, which was later signed by the President of the United States and made public law. This legislation will develop effective strategies to raise awareness about elder falls, encourage research, and support demonstration projects to help prevent falls among senior citizens, as Elder falls are one of the leading risks for Americans 65 years old and above. The Secretary of Health and Human Services will oversee and support demonstrations, research projects, and grants for local and state education campaigns to help achieve these goals. The legislation was endorsed by the Falls Free Coalition Advocacy Work Group, led by the National Council on Aging, the National Safety Council, the Home Safety Council, AARP, the American Occupational Therapy Association, and the American Physical Therapy Association.

Our country remains strong because of the foundation our elders have helped lay, and we commend older Americans for the many contributions they have made and will continue to make to our Nation.

IN TRIBUTE TO LT. GEN. MICHAEL HAMEL

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Mr. GALLEGLY. Madam Speaker, I rise in tribute to Lieutenant General Michael Hamel,

who will officially retire from the United States Air Force on July 1 after 36 years of distinguished service.

I first met General Hamel when he commanded the 14th Air Force, Air Force Space Command, and the Space Air Forces, U.S. Strategic Command, at Vandenberg Air Force Base, which is in my district. With a bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering from the U.S. Air Force Academy, a master's in business administration, and a lifetime of service to the Air Force and its role within and beyond our atmosphere, General Hamel impressed me not only with his knowledge, but also with his ability to explain it in conversational terms. We quickly became friends.

General Hamel's illustrious career included assignments in a variety of command, acquisition, operations and policy positions involving space, system development, intelligence, space operations and launch. General Hamel has served in senior staff positions at Headquarters U.S. Air Force and Air Force Space Command, and he was the Vice President's military adviser on defense, nonproliferation and space policy.

General Hamel's final assignment was to command the Space and Missile Systems Center, Air Force Space Command, Los Angeles Air Force Base. While there, he was responsible for managing the research, design, development, acquisition and sustainment of space and missile systems, launch, command and control, and operational satellite systems.

General Hamel also was the Air Force Program Executive Officer for Space and was responsible for the Air Force Satellite Control Network; space launch and range programs; the Space-Based Infrared System Program; military satellite communication programs; the Global Positioning System; intercontinental ballistic missile programs; Defense Meteorological Satellite Program; the space superiority system programs and other emerging transformational space programs.

Madam Speaker, in his nearly four decades as an Air Force officer, General Hamel has played a major role in our nation's military and civilian space program. I know my colleagues will join me in thanking General Hamel for his many years of dedicated service and in wishing him a long and fruitful retirement.

RECOGNIZING MONICA NELSON FOR REPRESENTING MINNESOTA AT THE NATIONAL HISTORY DAY COMPETITION

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a truly special Minnesotan. Sixth grade student Monica Nelson from Ham Lake, Minnesota has been chosen to represent Minnesota at the National History Day competition taking place at the University of Maryland this week. Monica was selected from the nearly 30,000 students from Minnesota who take part in History Day every year.

The theme for this year's competition is "Conflict and Compromise in History." At this competition, participants get an opportunity to finally present their findings after an exhaustive and critical analysis of facts and figures

relating to their chosen topic. Monica presented her research on a famous St. Cloud, Minnesota resident, early abolitionist and women's rights advocate, Jane Grey Swisshelm. Presenting her research through an acted performance, Monica gave an account of Jane Swisshelm's life and contributions from the perspective of her daughter.

Thank you, Monica, for your hard work and passion for our Nation's history. You have paid a great honor to our American heritage, and your very own contributions have ensured that this early patriot's contributions to our Nation will never be forgotten. Minnesota thanks you and wishes you the best during the competition. We are all proud of you, Monica, and we look forward to seeing all that you do with your God-given talents in years to come.

TRIBUTE TO COMMANDER R. TREVOR KING, U.S. NAVY

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, let me take this opportunity to recognize Commander R. Trevor King, United States Navy, for his service to the House Armed Services Committee as a member of the Navy's congressional liaison team.

A native of Thousand Oaks, California, in 1991, Commander King earned an economics degree from the U.S. Naval Academy. Since that time, he has served his country well in various posts and in numerous operations. He has received the Commander Naval Surface Forces Battle Efficiency "E" for excellence award two years in a row.

In August, Commander King will begin the curriculum at the National War College during which time he will complete his Joint Professional Military Education. Following that assignment, he will likely be assigned as commanding officer of one of the Navy's surface combatants.

I am certain that the Members of the House will join me in honoring Commander R. Trevor King, his wife, Robynn, and his daughters, Erika and Caitlynn, for their outstanding and continued service to our country.

INTRODUCTION OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK MOUNT HOOD WILDERNESS ACT OF 2008

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to join my Oregon colleagues in introducing the "Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness Act of 2008."

In 2003, we held the first Mt. Hood Summit at Timberline Lodge, inviting local stakeholders to share their vision for the challenges and opportunities facing the Mt. Hood National Forest. Over the past five years a committed group of citizens, organizations, Native Americans, local, state and federal jurisdictions, and private interests have spent countless hours negotiating a long term stewardship and protection plan for Mt. Hood's forests and rivers.

Today, this legislation designates over 132,000 acres of Wilderness, almost 80 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers, and 34,000 acres of National Recreation Areas in the Mt. Hood National Forest. It would create a long term transportation plan to address the challenges of getting to and from the mountain, establish a special watershed protection area for the Crystal Springs Watershed, focus on a forest-wide vegetation management strategy which includes biomass utilization, establish a working group to advise the Forest Service on recreation enhancements, respect Native Americans' treaty reserved gathering rights and honor the United States' cultural foods obligations to those Tribes. Lastly, the bill directs the Forest Service to participate in three land conveyances. These exchanges will provide additional protection for the North side of Mt. Hood, the Pacific Crest Trail, and a parcel of land that is critical to the community in Clackamas County.

In keeping with the spirit of our well-established and participatory process, I look forward to working with our stakeholders as the legislative process moves forward. I hope that this bill is not the last word when it comes to protecting Oregon's most beautiful, scenic and at-risk places. I hope that the Natural Resources Committee will quickly schedule a hearing on it so that we can pass and implement it and begin working towards protection for other "Oregon Treasures" in the years to come.

HONORING GLENDA GRAY ON HER RETIREMENT

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an employee of the U.S. House of Representatives who has touched the lives of countless people across northern Michigan over the past quarter century. Glenda Gray will retire on June 30 after more than 25 years of dedicated public service to the residents of the 1st Congressional District of Michigan.

Glenda, known as "Glink" to her friends, has worked in my Marquette, Michigan, district office since I was sworn into office in 1993. The decision to hire her was an easy one. Having worked for my predecessor, former Congressman Bob Davis, for 10 years, Glenda brought to the job experience and know-how that couldn't be matched.

A lot has changed in the more than 25 years Glenda has served the people of Michigan's 1st Congressional District. As a matter of fact, even the borders and designation of this district have changed. She has seen the transition from business conducted largely on paper and by typewriter, to a system where computers, copy machines, Blackberrys and video conferencing dominate.

Throughout her tenure, Glenda has handled casework on postal and passport issues throughout the expansive 1st District. She has been responsible for casework on Medicare, Social Security, disability and other senior's issues for six of the 31 counties in the district. She has evolved into an expert on Social Security and is proud of the individuals and families she has been able to help through difficult situations over the years.

This list does not do justice to the thousands of phone calls and walk-in visitors Glenda has spoken with about their problems or their views on a particular issue. I have known her to give each individual's concern the time it deserves and treat every person with courtesy and respect.

Since 1997, my district director has been stationed out of my Marquette office, making it the de facto headquarters for my district operations. This has placed increased responsibility on Glenda, who—in addition to continuing to handle casework and assist constituents in Marquette and the surrounding counties—is tasked with the duty of covering the busy office alone when my district director, Tom Baldini, is away.

Evident from her seamless transition from working for a Republican Congressman to a Democrat, Glenda never viewed casework as a political or partisan issue. For her, it has always been about helping the individual. Over time, Glenda has seen other staff members come and go. Throughout, she has been a valuable asset in helping new staff with her sound and kind advice on assisting constituents—even the challenging ones—while maintaining a sense of humor.

Shortly after I took office, we lost one of our young staff people, Brian Schlientz, to brain cancer. This was a difficult loss for all of our staff, but especially for Glenda, who had trained Brian and mentored him during my first year in office. Glenda provided untold support to Brian both in the office and throughout his courageous battle.

Glenda can relate to the unique challenges facing my constituents in northern Michigan—and particularly the Upper Peninsula—because it is has long been home for her. She was born and raised in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan in 1943, one of 11 children raised there by her father, Harry, and stepmother, Eva Gilroy. She attended and graduated from Sault Area Schools before marrying her husband of 45 years, Joe Gray, who is also a Sault Ste. Marie native.

Joe and Glenda moved south to Dearborn, Michigan, where they lived for 8 years and began to raise two children, Joe Jr. and Kelly. They returned to Marquette in the Upper Peninsula in 1970 and have resided on Lakewood Lane in Chocoley Township for the past 38 years. Before going to work for Congressman Davis, Glenda worked for 7 years at Silver Creek Elementary School in the Marquette Public School District.

After more than 25 years of devoted service, Glenda plans to enjoy her retirement with her husband, children, grandchildren, extended family and friends. And while I know she is looking forward to spending more time with her family and friends, she will be greatly missed by those who work with her day in and day out and by the countless Michiganders who have come to turn to Glenda when they need assistance.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues here in the United States House of Representatives join me in thanking Glenda Gray for her outstanding quarter century of service and in wishing her well as she embarks on a well-deserved retirement.

EXPRESSING THE SUPPORT OF THE PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support of the Paycheck Fairness Act introduced by Congresswoman ROSA DELARÓ on March 6, 2007.

The first step towards the achievement of equal pay for women was made with the passage and signing of the Equal Pay Act by President John F. Kennedy on June 10, 1963. President Kennedy understood the importance of addressing the "unconscionable practice of paying female employees less wages than male employees for the same job." As a result of the enacting the Equal Pay Act, the wage gap between women and men has shrunk significantly. At the time the Equal Pay Act was signed, women's average wage was roughly a half of what men earned. At the present time, women earn around ¾ of the wage paid to men. Undoubtedly, the gap is narrowing consistently, but the rate of such improvement is quite slow. The inequality of payments between women and men not only affects American families, but also American society and the American economy. Despite the fact that the enforcement of the Equal Pay Act and many other civil rights laws contributed to narrow the wage gap, many important disparities remain and need to be addressed. The enactment of the Paycheck Fairness Act creates the opportunity for the Federal government to be more active in preventing and fighting wage discrimination.

I hope that many Americans understand how crucial it is to have equal workplaces with equal opportunities for workers and equal pay for comparable jobs, regardless of gender. The American government should take firm actions in delivering concrete steps proposed by the Paycheck Fairness Act in narrowing the unequal wage gap.

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 12, 2008

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill H.R. 6063, to authorize the programs of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes:

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Chairman, I am proud to support H.R. 6063, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Authorization Act of 2008. As NASA celebrates its 50th anniversary this year, I would like to express my strong support for a program that has contributed so much to our Nation's educational, scientific, and economic interests.

H.R. 6063 authorizes \$20.21 billion in funding for NASA in FY 2009, including \$1 billion in augmented funding to reduce the five year