

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

SPEECH OF

**HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 10, 2008*

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of 332, which commemorates the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

On December 10, 1948, only three years after the end of the intolerance, oppression, death and destruction of World War II, the United Nations General Assembly created the first universal statement on the basic principles of inalienable human rights. The Declaration, with its core values of non-discrimination, equality, fairness and freedom, was to reaffirm faith in the dignity and worth of the human person and save succeeding generations from the devastation of war.

Sixty years later, this document has become a standard to measure how nations govern. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has led to progress in banning torture and rape as weapons of war and protecting Children from economic and sexual exploitation. The Declaration has served as a means of achieving self-determination for millions under colonial rule and has moved nations to guarantee legal justice and racial and gender equality for all their people.

While the last sixty years have brought many advances in human rights, there is still work to be done. Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that 'motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance'. Such a right cannot be realized, however, when more than half a million women continue to die every year in childbirth having been unable to receive health care. Nor has it been guaranteed when over 28,000 children under the age of five die per day from easily preventable and treatable causes.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was created to ensure the human rights of all but, in particular, those with relatively little power in society. While ensuring the rights and prosperity of all peoples and all nations was once an aspiration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is now a necessary reality. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and is confronted with the new global challenges of pandemic disease, terrorism, and hunger, injustice anywhere endangers peace, prosperity and security everywhere. If we wish to combat these challenges, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights must be the foundation of our cooperation in this new century.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to renew their commitment to ensuring human rights for all people, everywhere and join me in supporting this Resolution.

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

**HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

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. MARKEY. Madam Chairman, I rise today in support of the Hodes amendment to H.R. 6063, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2008, establishing a scholarship program in honor of Christa McAuliffe, the teacher-turned-astronaut whose journey captivated a nation and sparked a renewed interest in space exploration. Chosen out of 11,000 educators to participate in the Teacher in Space program, Christa represented the hopes and dreams of every teacher and every student around the country. Despite the tragic *Challenger* explosion that claimed her life along with the lives of her fellow astronauts, Christa's courage, creativity and curiosity embodied the best values of our educational system and remain an inspiration to students around the world. Christa grew up in my congressional district in Framingham, Massachusetts and later attended Framingham State College, where the Christa McAuliffe Center promotes science education and teacher training. While Christa's inspirational life was tragically cut short, along with her fellow passengers on the Space Shuttle *Challenger*, her legacy lives on inspiring the next generation of space explorers. This scholarship will be established to promote women in space sciences, a fitting goal considering Christa's life work. While women have made significant gains in the last few years, they continue to be underrepresented in space sciences and aeronautics. There is no better way to honor a true pioneer that inspired millions while promoting education and space exploration than a scholarship to advance that very cause.

I urge my colleagues to support the Hodes amendment and I thank my colleague from New Hampshire for this fitting tribute to a true American hero.

HONORING MR. ARTHUR C. (SKIPPER) TONSMEIRE, III ON THE DEDICATION OF THE WEEKS BAY RESOURCE CENTER IN HIS HONOR

**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 18, 2008*

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Arthur C. (Skipper) Tonsmeire, III on the occasion of the Weeks Bay Resource Center dedicated in his honor.

Skipper Tonsmeire was born in Mobile and grew up in a house of eight boys on Dog River. Skipper loves the outdoors more than

anyone I know—he walks, runs, bikes, and swims at Johnson Beach Park every day, and he loves to fly. He received a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Auburn University in 1965 and a Master's in Business Administration from the University of Denver in 1967.

Skipper, who serves as president of the Coastal Land Trust and Weeks Bay Foundation, has been an integral force in land conservation and environmental stewardship throughout the United States and especially in southwest Alabama. The Weeks Bay Foundation supports the Weeks Bay Estuarine Research Reserve in its efforts to protect the pristine coastal area of Baldwin County, Alabama. Skipper actively serves in many other associations and organizations. For instance, he has been the director of the Boys and Girls Club in Baldwin County since 1997. Additionally, he is a founding member of the Rotary Boys and Girls Club of Fairhope as well as the Point Clear Rotary Club.

Skipper has also been extremely instrumental in the protection of 30,000 acres of property in the Mobile Tensaw Delta and has worked extensively with The Nature Conservancy of Alabama on land protection projects throughout the state of Alabama.

Skipper was honored with the 1994–1995 Calder Conservation Award for building alliances over the past 20 years between the local business community, public agencies, and nonprofit conservation groups to protect the environmentally and economically important wetlands of the Alabama Gulf Coast. He also received The Nature Conservancy Distinguished Service Award for Gulf Coast land preservation and was awarded the Gulf Oil Conservation Award and Conservationist of the Year by the state of Alabama.

The property on which the Weeks Bay Multi Purpose Classroom Building was constructed was purchased by the Coastal Land Trust and the Weeks Bay Foundation. In addition to this property, the foundation purchased the former Safe Harbor RV Park and numerous other parcels—all of which have been conveyed to the state of Alabama. As foundation president, Skipper took what was once only a dream and turned it into a reality for the Weeks Bay Reserve. His leadership on these land acquisitions was the driving force behind the success of the project.

Skipper's diligent efforts to preserve our natural resources have ensured that future generations will enjoy coastal Alabama for many years to come. While Skipper would vehemently deny this fact, we all know that had it not been for Skipper Tonsmeire's vision, there would be no Weeks Bay Reserve or Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge. His quiet unassuming way has served the treasures of Alabama and our coast well.

Madam Speaker, I cannot imagine a better person whom the Weeks Bay Resource Center should honor other than Arthur C. (Skipper) Tonsmeire, III. It will forever recognize his long-standing commitment to the reserve and to natural resources in the state of Alabama.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a dedicated community leader and friend to many throughout Alabama. I know his family and his many friends and colleagues join me in extending thanks for his service over the years. On behalf of a grateful community, thank you, Skipper, for everything you have done and continue to do for coastal Alabama.