

HONORING WILLA DELLUMS

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 8, 2008*

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor one of the most inspiring and compassionate individuals in the rich and vibrant history of Oakland, California. On Sunday, August 17, 2008, Willa Dellums, the mother of my dear friend and predecessor in the U.S. House of Representatives, the Honorable Ronald V. Dellums, passed away at the age of 89. Although Willa lived a full and beautiful life, this is a tremendous loss to our community. Her presence will be sorely missed.

Willa Mae Terry was born December 11, 1918 to the union of Willie Terry and Estelle Poole in Houston, Texas. Willa was the youngest of three children born to this union, including siblings Bessie Blount and James Terry, who preceded her in death. At the age of 5, her parents moved west to California in search of a better life.

Willa lived in Oakland for 85 years, where she was known for her independence, ease of making friends, and unlimited kindness. Her compassion was one of strength, however, and she became equally known for her bravery and steadfast resiliency.

Willa Dellums was the first African American to be hired at the J.C. Penney store in downtown Oakland, California. Full of determination and resolute, Willa eventually became a clerk in Oakland's central government offices. Daily, Willa was faced with the incredible challenges of being a woman of color at a time when the glass ceilings of racism and sexism were blatant and unapologetic. Rather than cower in the face of harrowing prejudice, Willa used every challenge as an opportunity to reinforce her strong character, morals, and humanity toward others.

Willa, who was unable to attend college, was an unwavering advocate of the importance of education. She closely mentored her children throughout their school age years, and was a constant advocate for their continued learning and growth, even when they were well into their careers and were successful leaders in their own right. Throughout their lives, her children continuously credited Willa with instilling a sense of pride and responsibility in them. Many other members of our community, including myself, were also able to look up to Willa to solidify these values within our lives—in this way, we were all members of her family.

Mrs. Dellums was my friend and confidant for many years. She guided me through many troubling moments in my life. I will always remember her as a kind and brilliant woman who was non judgmental, yet totally honest with her feedback and insights. We talked for hours on the telephone and I was always amazed at her energy and clarity.

I have many personal wonderful memories of Mrs. D. She knew I needed more exercise and invited me to walk with her on many occasions. Those walks were invigorating. She walked very fast and I could hardly keep up with her. After our walks we'd go eat, and my last meal with her was at a sandwich shop on Lakeshore Boulevard. We both had half a sandwich and a cup of soup.

One day we went to the farmer's market at Jack London Square and then drove around

West Oakland. I drove by her former home on Wood Street where she raised her son Ron and daughter Theresa. I told her that I thought this house should be designated as an historic site and she was excited about the idea.

Mrs. D. loved to travel. Oftentimes she would invite me to go with her and Theresa on one of their adventures in far off lands, generally on a boat cruise. My one regret is that my life was so hectic, I could never find the time for a vacation. She always wanted me to slow down and take a break, and it was out of her love and concern that she recognized I needed more rest and balance in my life.

Many have spoken of Mrs. D's culinary abilities. She was a wonderful cook and I loved her chili. Some of my most fond memories are going by her house, eating chili and looking at photo albums. I have had the privilege to visit many countries, primarily on official business, and would take photo albums of these trips to Mrs. D. She was especially interested in the ones from Africa and Israel.

There are very few people who have touched my life in such a magnificent manner. Mrs. Dellums was a shining light in my life and was a great role model for me and other African American women. She was brilliant, kind, sensitive, loving and tough.

It is with deep sorrow, yet gratitude that we say good-bye to Mrs. Willa Dellums. However, her legacy lives through her loving children, Mayor Ron Dellums and Ms. Theresa Simmons. Countless Oaklanders benefited from her love and mentorship and on their behalf, I say thank you.

Mrs. Dellums was married to Vernie Dellums for 43 years. He preceded her in death in 1978. Our deepest condolences go out to her children Ron and Theresa, grandchildren, and her entire family.

On behalf of the residents of the 9th Congressional District, I salute the incredible life of this remarkable and courageous woman. May her soul rest in peace.

HONORING DARWIN SHEBELUT

**HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, September 8, 2008*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the achievements of Darwin Shebelut and to congratulate him upon being honored with the "Lifetime Achievement Award" by the Madera Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Shebelut was honored at a reception on Thursday, August 21, 2008, at the Fourth Annual Lifetime Achievement Awards and Board of Directors Installation Dinner.

Mr. Shebelut was born on August 8, 1920, in Madera, California. He graduated from Madera High School in 1938 as the senior class president. After high school he attended Stanford University and received a degree in mechanical engineering. He also served in the United States Army for 4 years during World War II. Upon returning to Madera, Mr. Shebelut became a businessman and an opportunist. His father owned and operated a Chevrolet dealership in Madera that he eventually took over. Under his leadership the dealership grew to include Oldsmobile and Toyota. Mr. Shebelut purchased 182 acres of subdivided land in what is now the center of

Madera. He formed a water company through the public utilities commission and developed the area into a residential and commercial area. He built Madera's first shopping center in 1954 on that land. During the late 1970s Mr. Shebelut purchased 50 more acres of land and rezoned the area to include residential, multiple housing and commercial properties. He developed another shopping center and was the co-owner of an adjacent apartment complex. He also owned and operated the Credit Bureau during the 1940s and 1950s. Mr. Shebelut was the president and director of American Standard Life Insurance Company, was the director of the Northern California Automobile Dealers Association for 20 years and a member of the National Automobile Dealers Association.

Outside of owning and operating numerous businesses, Mr. Shebelut was very involved in the community. He served the city of Madera as a director of the development agency and in the early 1950s he served as a Madera City councilman. In the County of Madera he served as a director of the joint development agency, commissioner of the Juvenile Justice Commission and was the director for 18 years of the Transportation Authority. He served as the director for numerous organizations, including Madera Businessmen's Association, Madera Industrial Development Corporation and Boy Scouts of America Sequoia Council. He has served as trustee for the University of California, San Francisco's Fresno Foundation, California-Nevada Methodist Homes and Hospitals, San Joaquin River Conservation Trust and the Queen of the Valley High School. Mr. Shebelut was one of the founders of Madera Community Hospital in 1964 and later served as a trustee and chairman of the board. He has also been involved in Madera Noon Rotary for 42 years (and served as president), Elks Lodge 1918 (charter member), the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Fresno Chapter International Wine and Food Society, Fresno Chapter of Skat International, Fresno Owls Club and Madera Golf and Country Club (member of organizing group).

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Darwin Shebelut upon being awarded with the "Lifetime Achievement Award." I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mr. Shebelut many years of continued success.

WATER USE EFFICIENCY AND  
CONSERVATION RESEARCH ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. JIM MATHESON**

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 30, 2008*

Mr. MATHESON. Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize Chairman OBERSTAR of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for working with the Science and Technology Committee in such a cooperative and constructive manner on this bill, and I will insert an exchange of letters between the committees into the RECORD.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, July 22, 2008.

Hon. BART GORDON,  
Chairman, Committee on Science and Technology,  
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN GORDON: I write to you regarding H.R. 3957, the "Water Use Efficiency and Conservation Research Act." This legislation authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a research and development program to promote water use efficiency and conservation technologies and practices.

H.R. 3957 contains provisions that fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. I recognize and appreciate your desire to bring this legislation before the House in an expeditious manner and, accordingly, I will not seek a sequential referral of the bill. However, I agree to waive consideration of this bill with the mutual understanding that my decision to forego a sequential referral of the bill does not waive, reduce, or otherwise affect the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure over H.R. 3957.

Further, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure reserves the right to seek the appointment of conferees during any House-Senate conference convened on this legislation on provisions of the bill that are within the Committee's jurisdiction. I ask for your commitment to support any request by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for the appointment of conferees on H.R. 3957 or similar legislation.

Please place a copy of this letter and your response acknowledging the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure's jurisdictional interest in the Committee Report on H.R. 3957 and in the Congressional Record during consideration of the measure on the House Floor.

I look forward to working with you as we prepare to pass this important legislation.  
Sincerely,

JAMES L. OBERSTAR, M.C.,  
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,

Washington, DC, July 22, 2008.

Hon. JAMES L. OBERSTAR,  
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure,  
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN OBERSTAR: Thank you for your July 22, 2008 letter regarding H.R. 3957, the Water Use Efficiency and Conservation Research Act. Your support for this legislation and your assistance in ensuring its timely consideration are greatly appreciated.

I agree that provisions in the bill are of jurisdictional interest to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. I acknowledge that by forgoing a sequential referral, your Committee is not relinquishing its jurisdiction and I will fully support your request to be represented in a House-Senate conference on those provisions over which the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has jurisdiction in H.R. 3957. A copy of our letters will be placed in the Committee Report on H.R. 3957 and in the Congressional Record during consideration of the bill on the House floor.

I value your cooperation and look forward to working with you as we move ahead with this important legislation.

Sincerely,

BART GORDON,  
Chairman.

ON THE RETIREMENT OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL DONALD S. CHAMPION

HON. ROSCOE G. BARTLETT

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 8, 2008

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the career and achievements of a great military officer and constituent of the Sixth District of Maryland—LTC Donald S. Champion. After over 29 years of long and distinguished service Colonel Champion will retire from his present position as Chief, Congressional Outreach Program in the Office of Air Force Reserve, Policy Integration Directorate, AF/REI, Pentagon, Washington DC. For the past 3 years Colonel Champion has been responsible for all legislative outreach as well as all legislative matters concerning Reserve Plans and Programs and Operations for the Air Force Reserve and Air Force Reserve Command.

Colonel Champion graduated from Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University receiving a bachelor of arts degree in communications and public relations. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1979. He attended undergraduate navigator training at Mather Air Force Base, California. Following graduation he attended F-4 Replacement Training Unit at Homestead Air Force Base, Florida, where he was a distinguished graduate. In 1984 he was selected to attend undergraduate pilot training at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas.

After earning his wings he attended lead-in fighter training at Hollman Air Force Base, New Mexico, where he was selected as Air to Air Top Gun. He was assigned to Langley Air Force Base, Virginia following training to fly the F-15C. There he served as a flight commander. He returned to the training world where he served as a T-37 Instructor Pilot at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas. He went on to become a T-38 instructor pilot at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi.

Throughout his distinguished career, Colonel Champion was consistently recognized for his outstanding performance and dedication to duty. For the past 3 years Colonel Champion has served as a liaison to the United States Congress where he well and faithfully represented the Air Force Reserve to the House and Senate. He was personally helpful to me and my staff during his tenure on the Reserve Staff at the Pentagon. His military awards include the Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster and the Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters.

On behalf of a grateful Nation, I thank Colonel Champion, and his daughters Kelsey and Lindsay, for their commitment and sacrifices made throughout his honorable military career. Congratulations on completing an outstanding and successful career in service to our great Country.

HONORING ASBAREZ NEWSPAPER

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 8, 2008

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Asbarez newspaper upon the celebration of their 100th anniversary.

Asbarez newspaper began publication in August of 1908 in Fresno, California. The publication began as a weekly paper that was committed to providing news and information to the Armenian-American community. In 1908, the focus of this community was the instability of the homeland. Throughout the years, Asbarez has reported on the ever-changing, and fragile, conditions of the Republic of Armenia. The paper covered the tragedy of the Armenian genocide, the triumph of the first independent republic, the growing pains of a community, the catastrophic earthquake, the fall of the Soviet Union, the Nagorno-Karabakh liberation struggle, the rise of the independent Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and the realities of the people of Javakhk in southern Georgia. Asbarez provides news, information, commentary, criticism, and thought.

On May 1, 1970, Asbarez began publishing its English section. During the early 1970s the offices and publishing headquarters moved to Los Angeles. Today, Asbarez is the largest and only bilingual newspaper serving the 750,000 plus Armenian-Americans in the western United States. It is published five times per week, Tuesday through Saturday. The newspaper also serves as voice for the community and is a source of information for Congress, libraries around the Nation and newsrooms of major media outlets. In 1997 Asbarez launched its Web site, keeping Armenians even more up to date with the issues that interest them the most. Asbarez has become a trusted source for news about the evolving Armenian realities.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Asbarez newspaper on 100 years of business. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Asbarez newspaper many years of continued success.

A TRIBUTE TO BOB THOMAS, SR.

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 8, 2008

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Madam Speaker, I rise today to draw our colleagues' attention to a gentleman and outstanding citizen who has demonstrated that long-term success is possible in America if one has a vision and is willing to work hard to turn it into reality. This gentleman has also devoted himself to the principles we celebrate here in our country—freedom to build a successful business, and loyalty to family and community.

Today I pay special recognition and honor to Bob Thomas, Sr., of Baker County, OR, a genuine "up by the bootstraps" livestock producer who never lost his vision for what the Angus cattle breed could become; a dedicated husband to his wife, Gloria, with whom he raised four very successful children; a leader