

Today, Nagorno Karabakh continues to strengthen its statehood with a democratically elected government, a capable defense force, and an independent foreign policy.

I stand with the people of Nagorno Karabakh in celebrating their continuing freedom and democracy.

EXPRESSING THE CONDOLENCES
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTA-
TIVES ON THE DEATH OF THE
HONORABLE TOM LANTOS, A
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

SPEECH OF

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 12, 2008

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to offer my deepest condolences on the passing of Congressman TOM LANTOS, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and my respected colleague from California.

As news spread on Monday of Chairman LANTOS' passing at age 80 due to complications from cancer, a great sadness resonated throughout the House of Representatives and all of Washington. This House, the Nation, and especially the people of California have lost a great champion for human rights, a very personal cause of Representative LANTOS. He was the only Holocaust survivor to ever be elected to Congress and his own experiences enlightened his service and enriched his service in this body.

Throughout his 14 terms in the House of Representatives, Representative LANTOS conducted himself with dignity, grace, and a passion for human rights. As co-chairman and founder of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, a group that highlights human rights violations worldwide, he was able to provide a platform and a voice for persecuted peoples around the globe.

My thoughts and prayers go out to Representative LANTOS' wife Annette, their two daughters, their 18 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren in their time of mourning. It was an honor and a privilege to serve with TOM LANTOS these last 28 years in the House of Representatives. I know that he will be remembered in the hearts of his family and friends for all the love and support he has given to them and so many others throughout the years.

HONORING AND PRAISING THE
NAACP ON ITS 99TH ANNIVERSARY

SPEECH OF

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2008

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, as an original cosponsor, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 289, which honors the NAACP on its 99th anniversary.

I want to thank Congressman AL GREEN, who served as president of the Houston Branch of the NAACP for over 10 years, for once again introducing this important resolution.

I also want to recognize the outstanding job that NAACP Chairman Julian Bond has done in leading the organization.

Almost a century ago, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded in New York City during this month of February that we now recognize as Black History Month.

As a child of the civil rights movement, I witnessed first hand the leadership of the NAACP in fighting for human rights.

I remember vividly, the role the NAACP played in shattering segregation in my birthplace of El Paso, Texas.

We all know their great contributions:

From the victory in Brown vs. Board of Education, to the non-violent sit ins at segregated lunch counters, to passage of the Voting Rights Act, the NAACP has played a central role in every great civil rights battle of the last century.

Today, the Nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization continues to be a powerful voice in the ongoing struggle against injustice, oppression, and war.

The NAACP has been a dedicated and constant partner as I have worked with my colleagues to end the war in Iraq, stop the genocide in Darfur, and eradicate the global HIV/AIDS pandemic.

They opposed the Iraq war from the beginning and support our efforts to end the occupation and bring the troops home.

They led the charge in support of my bill authorizing divestment from Sudan and they worked with faith, activist and student groups to ensure that it got signed into law at the end of last year.

And on HIV/AIDS, they have consistently been on the frontlines advocating for increased funding to help end the devastation this disease has caused in the African American community.

In short, the NAACP continues to demonstrate their commitment to stand on the battlefield and lead the charge for what is right. They deserve this honor and our praise and they deserve our thanks.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

HONORING STEVEN J. BREEZE

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2008

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Centralia, Illinois native Steven J. Breeze on being awarded the United States Air Force Distinguished Flying Cross and upon his promotion to Lieutenant Colonel.

Lt. Col. Breeze was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his role in a March 22, 2003 mission during Operation Iraqi Freedom. His low level flight lasted 3 hours, covering 590 miles. His skills saved 58 lives and delivered an assault force on time to their destination.

I am proud to recognize Lt. Col. Breeze for his service to the United States of America. I join a grateful Nation in thanking him for his service and congratulating him on this award.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBIN HAYES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2008

Mr. HAYES. Madam Speaker, on February 13, 2008, I was unable to participate in the following votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows;

Rollcall vote 43, I would have voted "yea."

Rollcall vote 44, I would have voted "yea."

Rollcall vote 45, I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2008

Mr. Bishop of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I regret that I was unavoidably absent yesterday afternoon, February 13, on very urgent business. Had I been present for the five votes which occurred yesterday, I would have voted "aye" on H. Res. 976, rollcall vote No. 48; I would have voted "aye" on H. Res. 976, rollcall vote No. 49; I would have voted "aye" on H. Res. 976, rollcall vote No. 50; I would have voted "aye" on H. Res. 976, rollcall vote No. 51; and I would have voted "no" on Motion to Adjourn, rollcall vote No. 52.

COMMEMORATING THE OPENING
OF THE DENTON COUNTY AFRI-
CAN AMERICAN MUSEUM

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2008

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the opening of the Denton County African American Museum. This museum is being dedicated on Saturday, February 16, 2008, and will reflect the resilience and determination of the African American citizens of Denton County.

The museum is located in an original Quakertown house that was restored under the guidance of the Historical Park Foundation of Denton County. With its dedication, the Denton County African American Museum joins the Courthouse-on-the-Square Museum and the Bayless-Selby House Museum as part of the Denton County Museums.

The Museum's historical exhibits will feature African American families of Denton County as well as the Quakertown experience. It will also house the collection of artifacts from Dr. Edwin D. Moten, Denton's first African American doctor. The collection includes more than 600 letters written by Dr. Moten to family, friends, and professional colleagues as well as photographs, postcards, medical records, medicine cases, his medical shingle from in front of his office, prescription pads and narcotics register from Denton County.

As someone who practiced medicine in the Denton area for nearly 30 years, I am fascinated by the pieces in Dr. Moten's collection from both a medical and a historical perspective. My own grandfather, Dr. Harry Clifton

Burgess, was a contemporary of Dr. Moten. While it is interesting to think about how these men practiced before the advent of anesthesia and antibiotics, it is also inspiring to think of the courage that someone like Dr. Moten would have had to practice in such inhospitable conditions both personally and professionally. His perseverance during these harsh conditions is remarkable.

Madam Speaker, today I commend people like Dr. Edwin Moten for their inspiration and proudly rise to recognize the culturally rich addition of this important museum to Denton and the entire north Texas area. I also call on north Texans and all Americans to reflect and recall the courage, perseverance, and spirit of those honored in the new Denton County African American Museum. It is an honor to represent the 26th Congressional District of Texas and to commemorate this historical occasion.

HONORING HELEN LODGE, DR.
JOREA MARPLE, SARAH
STEBBINS, AND JENNIFER BAI-
LEY

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2008

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor four outstanding women in my district who are being honored for their commitment to their communities and for serving as role models to countless young women, empowering them to succeed. The Young Women's Christian Association of Charleston, WV named Helen Lodge, Dr. Joreia Marple, Sarah Stebbins, and Jennifer Bailey as the 2008 Women of Achievement Honorees.

Helen has spent her career as a dynamic leader and advocate for health and nutrition in West Virginia. Early in her career, she was integral in the West Virginia State Legislature passing legislation to require early detection testing for newborns for phenylketonuria, PKU, a simple test that can prevent mental deficiency in newborns. She has received numerous recognitions throughout her career and currently chairs the West Virginia Board of Licensed Dietitians. As active leader in her Charleston community, Helen assists with the fundraising efforts of the West Virginia Symphony League and Youth Symphony and the American Heart Association.

Dr. Joreia Marple represents one of the most noble professions, educating our young people. Her 30-year career includes stints as a teacher, reading specialist, graduate and undergraduate instructor, and a former superintendent of Kanawha County schools. Her most noteworthy achievement is authoring the book, *An Insider's Guide to Making School Systems Work*. Dr. Marple currently serves as Assistant State Superintendent of the West Virginia Department of Education overseeing curriculum and instruction.

Sarah Stebbins is a pioneer among women in the development of information technology in the aeronautics and astronautics industries. A graduate of WVU, she began her career in the development of early computers and later worked as an aerospace research analyst for the Air Force and as a project leader in the Naval Research Lab in the Space Systems

Development Department. Her most notable achievement is helping with the software development of the Global Positioning System, a technology that has revolutionized the way we view and navigate our world and beyond. Sarah retired in her hometown of Charleston, WV with her husband and family.

Finally, I would like to honor Jennifer Bailey, the recipient of the YWCA Women of Achievement Empowerment Award. Jennifer stands as a success story among the mission of the YWCA and is an inspiration to women in all walks of life for her ability to persevere and overcome numerous obstacles. The YWCA was there for Jennifer every step of the way in helping her overcome numerous personal obstacles. Jennifer now enjoys spending time with her son, working in retail, and maintaining a 4.0 G.P.A. in her classes.

Again, I congratulate Helen Lodge, Dr. Joreia Marple, Sarah Stebbins, and Jennifer Bailey, who will be honored February 21, 2008. It is an honor to represent such distinguished and inspiring women in West Virginia's Second Congressional District.

HONORING ST. LOUIS PARK FOR
AWARD WINNING YOUTH PRO-
GRAMS

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2008

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, I rise today honor the great city of St. Louis Park, Minnesota for winning the America's Promise Alliance's 100 Best Communities for Young People competition for the third year in a row. St. Louis Park is one of the cities in the Fifth Congressional District of Minnesota.

St. Louis Park is an amazing community for young people because residents engage youth with meaningful artistic, cultural and civic opportunities. One such opportunity is the Friends of the Arts program, which pairs youth with donated musical instruments and offers creative writing classes for teens. A local church, the Lutheran Church of the Reformation, offers young artists the ability to improve their artistic skills and a platform to perform or display their work.

Residents of St. Louis Park's Lake Forest Neighborhood organize a program called "Arts Crawl" which sponsors family art programs and raises scholarship funds for youth. Additionally, the city government makes an effort to invite young people to community events and meetings.

The City of St. Louis Park and its residents are committed to a brighter future for their city, their state and their country. I applaud Mayor Jeff Jacobs, the residents of St. Louis Park and especially the young people for their hard work and dedication to improving their communities.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE
RUSSELL HAMMER

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 14, 2008

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the late Rusty Ham-

mer, a dedicated leader and advocate on behalf of the Los Angeles business community and a dear friend, who passed away recently after a long battle with cancer.

I had the privilege of working with Rusty during his 5 years as President and Chief Executive Officer of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce.

At the chamber's helm, Rusty dedicated himself to improving the quality of life and economic prosperity of the Los Angeles Chamber's 1,500 members and their more than 600,000 employees throughout the Los Angeles region.

Under Rusty's dedicated leadership, the Los Angeles Chamber successfully built partnerships between business, community, labor and civic organizations. Today, these partnerships have reestablished the Chamber as the Los Angeles region's premier business advocacy organization.

Rusty's talents, innovative strategic thinking and willingness to work with stakeholders on all sides of the political spectrum played an integral role in the Los Angeles area's economic growth. I observed this first hand during the chamber's annual trips to Washington, DC, which became immensely productive and influential under Rusty's leadership.

While we all deeply miss Rusty, I know his work and many contributions will continue to benefit the Los Angeles business community for many years to come. My thoughts and prayers are with Rusty's special wife, Pam, and their family during this difficult time.

Madam Speaker, in honor of Rusty's life, I would like to submit for the RECORD his obituary that appeared in the Los Angeles Times on January 30. It provides more insight into Rusty's full and accomplished life.

RUSSELL HAMMER, 54; HEAD OF L.A. BUSINESS GROUP

(By Elaine Woo)

Russell J. "Rusty" Hammer, former president and chief executive of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, died Monday at a hospice in San Jose. He was 54.

The cause was leukemia, according to a chamber spokeswoman.

Hammer was credited with revitalizing the Los Angeles business group, which he led for five years until 2006, when he stepped down because of his illness. During his tenure, chamber membership grew from 1,200 to 1,600 companies, and new initiatives helped to refocus the organization on local, state and national policy issues.

"He had a substantial impact on the chamber and also on the people he worked with," said George Kieffer, a Los Angeles attorney who was chairman of the chamber during the first few years of Hammer's presidency. "The chamber has an extraordinary legacy but . . . had become less active in the business community and the greater civic community. Rusty played a very big part in turning that around."

Born on May 12, 1953, in Orleans, France, Hammer grew up in San Jose. He received a bachelor's degree in political science at the University of Santa Clara in 1975 and a master's in public administration from San Jose State University in 1979.

He entered politics at an early age, organizing high school students for Sen. Robert F. Kennedy's presidential campaign in 1968. Hammer ran for office himself in 1972, becoming at 18 the youngest person elected to the Campbell, Calif., City Council. At 21, he became mayor and made headlines as the nation's youngest mayor.

After two terms as mayor, he entered business and served in a variety of management