

and pregnant teen mothers and train young males in responsible decision making.

This week, Planned Parenthood affiliates around the country are sponsoring grassroots events to raise awareness about the need for comprehensive sex education. A majority of voters strongly support comprehensive sex education and want public schools to teach it to keep our youth healthy and safe.

These parents are just looking to Congress to eliminate funding for dangerous abstinence only programs and instead fund comprehensive sex education programs.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LATINO COMMUNITY IN HONOR OF HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, in observance of Hispanic Heritage Month, I rise today to pay tribute to the growing, enterprising and dynamic Latino community.

Today, you need only look at recent statistics to recognize the growing influence of the Latino community.

This year, the Latino population has grown to more than 45 million people in the United States. By 2050, the Latino population is projected to go up to 132 million, constituting 30 percent of the Nation's population.

Economically, Latinos own more than 1.6 million businesses in the country, generating \$222 billion in revenue at a growth rate that is triple the national average. In addition, by 2010, the purchasing power of the Latino community is projected to skyrocket from 600 billion to a trillion dollars. Clearly, this proven work ethic and an entrepreneurial spirit will enable Latino businesses and workers to play an even bigger role in sustaining and strengthening our Nation's economy in years to come.

Politically, Latinos are making significant gains, especially as representation in elected offices at all levels of government continues to increase. Currently, according to the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, more than 6,000 Latinos are providing leadership in elected and appointed offices throughout the country.

While I am very proud of the many Latino leaders who are standing up for their communities by assuming important positions of leadership, we must keep working to increase our representation. According to a new report compiled by the University of Denver, the number of Latinos holding public office is disproportionately low given that the Latino population is the largest minority group. The report states, "Very few Latinos have ever been appointed to serve in high-ranking posts or cabinet positions. No Latino has ever been appointed to the Supreme Court. Only during the last twenty years have Latino leaders begun to occupy cabinet positions . . . A handful of Latinos have held such positions . . . Still, the participation of Latinos in the administration is below what should be expected relative to the population."

Without question, the commitment of Latino leaders to equity in this country has inspired all of us to do the work that we do with heart and compassion. I am inspired by the words

of the late Chicana author, Gloria Anzaldua, who wrote, "The possibilities are numerous once we decide to act and not react."

On May 1, 2006, Latinos came out by the millions and took to the streets stating, "Today we march, tomorrow we vote." They kept their promise and in the November 2006 election, the country saw the largest turnout of Latino voters for a midterm election. This November, with the growing population and increased numbers of registered voters, the Latino community will have a vital role in selecting the new president of the United States. According to the University of Denver report, 93 percent of Latino registered voters plan to vote in the upcoming election.

With increasing political clout in the halls of State legislatures and in the voting booth, Latinos will continue to be agents of social and political change in this country.

For example, since the start of the 110th Congress under the leadership of the new Democratic majority, Congress has passed key legislation that directly benefits the Latino community. Congress authorized Recovery Rebates that went out to 130 American households—including many Latino households—to help revitalize the economy. Congress increased in the minimum wage, directly benefiting 2.3 million Latinos over the next several years. Congress increased unemployment benefits at a crucial time when the Latino unemployment rate was at 8 percent. More recently, Congress reauthorized the Higher Education Act, an important piece of legislation that will help many Latino students pursue a higher education.

Under Democratic leadership, Congress has made strides in addressing the needs of Latino families. But we must not rest. This election cycle provides all of us in the Latino community with a critical opportunity to move our agenda forward. With responsive representation in all levels of government including the Executive Branch, the Latino community can better use its leverage to make progress on key priorities. These priorities include increased access to high quality education, greater access to quality health care and comprehensive immigration reform.

As we observe Hispanic Heritage Month, I ask my colleagues to please join me in recognizing the growing political empowerment and activism in the Latino community. Now more than ever, we must work together, organize, and, above all, vote, to make our voices heard this November.

TRIBUTE TO ST. BONIFACE CATHOLIC CHURCH

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate St. Boniface Catholic Church of Garner, Iowa, on celebrating their 125th anniversary as a congregation.

The history of Catholicism in the Garner community dates back to the time neighboring priests of Charles City, Mason City, and Algona would come together once a month to celebrate Mass and administer the Sacraments in homes and in the public school. On December 21, 1883 the deed for the land,

which was purchased for \$100 in 1882, was recorded. Father Hanley was appointed pastor of Clarion, Hampton, and Garner and had the church erected. It was the first Catholic Church in Garner and Mass was celebrated in the church in August of 1883.

In 1924, a purchase of two more lots gave St. Boniface ownership of the entire block and the rectory was moved to this location. In 1940, a new church was constructed for an estimated cost of \$37,000. While growing as a congregation, St. Boniface Church saw many liturgical changes take place over the years but the community always came together and remained steadfast and united.

St. Boniface Catholic Church is dedicated to benefitting the lives of those in Garner, and for this I offer my utmost congratulations and thanks on a prosperous history. It is an honor to represent all the parishioners of St. Boniface Catholic Church and the current pastor Reverend Henry Huber in the United States Congress, and I wish them continued success, grace, peace and celebration as a community.

IN HONOR OF VOCALESSSENCE SEPTEMBER 26, 2008

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor VocalEssence in honor of its 40th season. On September 14, 2008, VocalEssence kicked off its anniversary year with a community concert celebration featuring Garrison Keillor.

During its distinguished history under the direction of the internationally renowned director Philip Brunelle, VocalEssence has become one of the largest and most prestigious choral organizations in the country. Founded by Brunelle in 1969 as the Plymouth Music Series, the choral organization became VocalEssence in 1992, and has steadily grown in reputation along with Mr. Brunelle. Mr. Brunelle himself is an institution in the choral music community, and an outstanding artist. VocalEssence has earned praise for its innovation among the music community by working to spotlight lesser known compositions from all time periods, as well as the work of contemporary composers. By 1991 the organization enjoyed international recording success, as well as international recognition as a leader in choral music performance.

VocalEssence has been actively involved in community engagement in the Twin Cities through programs such as WITNESS, an initiative that honors and celebrates the contributions of African Americans to our cultural heritage. Through concerts and recordings featuring African American composers and artists and educational outreach designed to inform students of the historical role of African Americans in our culture, WITNESS has enriched our community and the musical world, reaching more than 115,000 students in more than 55 schools in the Twin Cities area.

VocalEssence has brought great distinction to the Twin Cities arts community, earning numerous recognition and awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, as well as the Margaret Hillis Achievement Award for Choral Excellence, an

outstanding achievement and an unparalleled honor in the choral music community.

Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to honor VocalEssence, and to celebrate the 40 years it has enriched the culture of the Twin Cities.

IN RECOGNITION OF FRANK W.
BUCKLES

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize Frank W. Buckles. Mr. Buckles, at the age of 107, is the last known remaining veteran of World War I.

Having joined the Army at the age of 16, Mr. Buckles fought bravely for his Nation in World War I. During the Second World War, as a civilian he was imprisoned by the Japanese and spent 39 months in captivity.

The freedoms we enjoy today and the prosperity our nation has enjoyed throughout its history are due in large part to the sacrifice and courage of men and women like Mr. Buckles. As the son of a World War II veteran and a former member of the National Guard and Reserve myself, I know firsthand and am grateful for the tremendous legacy of patriotism shared by our military. I am the proud to be the father of four sons who serve in our nation's military, including two sons who served in Iraq.

In honor of his sacrifice and dedication to his country, Frank Buckles was recognized by President George W. Bush earlier this year during a ceremony honoring World War I veterans. On September 24th, the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction honored Mr. Buckles by bestowing upon him the Scottish Rite honor and rank of Knight Commander of the Court of Honour. As a fellow mason, I am proud of the tradition of brotherhood and dedication to freedom that masons embody.

I congratulate and thank Frank Buckles for his service to our Nation.

TRIBUTE TO THE TEXAS AIR NA-
TIONAL GUARD 147TH RECON-
NAISSANCE WING

HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. LAMPSON. Madam Speaker, I am privileged to recognize the men and women of the Texas Air National Guard 147th Reconnaissance Wing of Houston, Texas for their outstanding service to the community in helping 5,943 constituents in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike.

Forty-two members of the Texas Air National Guard 147th Reconnaissance Wing were tasked with providing support for the congressional mobile office in a variety of ways; including traffic control, translation assistance, security, technical support, parking and bus operations. Commander Col. McNeely and Vice Commander Col. Horn provided excellent leadership in the recovery ef-

forts along with Lt. Col. Cooper, Lt. Col. Allinson, and Lt. Col. Garner.

In addition to supporting the operation and function of the congressional mobile office, these service members immediately transitioned into supporting units for the FEMA Disaster Recovery Center at Ellington Field where they have continued to serve thousands of individuals.

It is my distinct honor to recognize the remarkable efforts of the Texas Air National Guard 147th Reconnaissance Wing for their outstanding service to their community and country. Southeast Texas is grateful for the efforts and leadership provided by the commanders, senior enlisted leaders, and guard members, and I am proud of their noble service to the victims of Hurricane Ike.

The following members of the 147th Reconnaissance Wing joined in the recovery efforts: SMSgt Glenn Boutte, SMSgt Richard Williamson, MSgt Mali Cornitius, MSgt Howard Williams, MSgt Rodolfo Robles, MSgt Patrick Hurley, TSgt Andres Cabrera, TSgt Leanne Bates, TSgt Terry Matheson, TSgt Joel Agtang, TSgt Burdette Deyo, TSgt Lex Paxton, TSgt Hugo Torres, TSgt Nathan Kelley, TSgt Sonya Bond, SSgt Klaus Riel, SSgt Nakeia Mitchell, SSgt Stacie Sandoval, SSgt Kevin White, SSgt Lindsey-Lumpkin, SSgt Erin Calhoun, SSgt Kevin Dupree, SSgt Marshall Nettles, SSgt Vanessa Chase, SSgt Carlton Newkirk, SSgt Efen Almaro, SrA Carlos Suazo, SrA Jana Phillips, SrA Tameka McCray, SrA James Kyaw, SrA Juan Rosales, SrA Winnett Knox, SrA Clifton Smith, SrA Jessica Mosley, SrA Justin Gaskill, SrA Francisco Mendez, A1C David Hartmann, A1C Isaac Saldivar, A1C Bronson Woods, A1C Shuan Guthrie and A1C Michael Tran.

CONGRATULATING LOVING
CHOICES PREGNANCY CENTERS
OF NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

HON. JOHN BOOZMAN

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate Loving Choices Pregnancy Centers of Northwest Arkansas. The centers provide critical services for women who are faced with life changing decisions.

Employees in the Rogers and Fayetteville centers have a difficult task counseling and educating one thousand women annually on the choices they have. Their job is made easier with the help of 30 volunteers who collectively spend more than one thousand hours serving the needs of women in a reproductive health crisis. Offering a listening ear, helping expectant mothers prepare for their baby and using their sewing skills are just a handful of services volunteers provide.

In recognition of their efforts, Loving Choices Pregnancy Centers of Northwest Arkansas received the 'President's Volunteer Services Award.' This honor is given to Americans who demonstrate their commitment to volunteerism and inspire others to do follow their example.

I am thankful Northwest Arkansas residents are so willing to help their neighbors in need and share their time and resources to benefit the greater good of the community. Volunteers

are a critical component of ensuring the continued success of Loving Choices Pregnancy Centers of Northwest Arkansas.

TRIBUTE TO RAYL ROBBINS

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Rayl Robbins of Huxley, Iowa for his service at the Wesley Community Hospice.

Rayl is the hospice chaplain at Wesley Community Hospice, where he is able to incorporate his love for music at work. A self-taught musician, he sometimes plays on his guitar and sings hymns to some of the clients. He hopes to help others find peace in the midst of the chaos in their lives. Rayl's commitment to his job and his clients has earned him admiration, trust and friendship from the staff and from those residing in the hospice. Great service goes a long way, and I am honored to see fellow Iowans like Rayl providing service second to none.

I know that my colleagues in the United States Congress join me in commending Rayl Robbins for his service at Wesley Community Hospice. I consider it an honor to represent him Congress, and I wish him the best.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. URSULA
VILLERE

HON. STEVE SCALISE

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. SCALISE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Mrs. Ursula Villere who will be 90 years old on November 30, 2008. She was born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana, and has lived in Metairie, Louisiana, since 1955. Mrs. Villere had seven children: five boys and two girls. Six out of the seven still live in Louisiana and one daughter moved to Texas after Hurricane Katrina. She also has 14 grandchildren: 12 boys and two girls; and six great-grandchildren: two boys and four girls. Mrs. Villere graduated from Dominican High School and Dominican College with a B.S. in education. Mrs. Villere taught school both in New Orleans and Jefferson Parish. She retired from Jefferson Parish School System in 1980. She is still an active member of KKI Sorority, Lakeshore Golden Age Club at Lakeshore playground, and is a parishioner of St. Angela Merici Church.

IN HONOR OF REPRESENTATIVE
JOSEPH E. MIRO AND JOANNE
MIRO

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize Delaware State Representative Joseph E. Miro and his wife, Joanne. On October 17, the