

friend, Bob Segal, by entering his name in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, the official record of the proceedings and debates of the United States Congress since 1873. Today, I pay tribute to Bob Segal for his advocacy on behalf of cancer patients.

Bob was diagnosed with cancer in 2005 and has undergone extensive treatments to combat the disease. Following his diagnosis, Bob resolved to not only fight his own personal battle with cancer, but also assist other suffering from the disease, ease the suffering of cancer survivors, and advocate for funds for cancer research.

Bob volunteered to join the Lance Armstrong Foundation's fight against cancer and has participated in several LIVESTRONG Challenges since 2006. The LIVESTRONG Challenges allow individuals and teams to help raise money for the Foundation by holding cycling events. Bob participated in his first 100-mile fundraising effort in Orange County, California, in June 2006. That year Bob raised over \$15,000 for the Lance Armstrong Foundation and was invited to the Ride for the Roses, the Foundation's main fundraising event, in Austin, Texas.

Following his first LIVESTRONG Challenge, Bob joined the Cyclists Combating Cancer Team and has been riding with them ever since. Bob has also participated in the Moad Skinny Tire Festival in both 2007 and 2008, a 4-day 200-mile event, the Portland LIVESTRONG Challenge, in 2007 and the Ride for the Roses in 2007. Bob also plans to participate in the Portland Challenge in October and next year he and his team are planning a ride that will start in a number of locations in the United States with all of them meeting in Washington, DC and culminating in the participants talking with their Members of Congress about cancer research.

In 2007, Bob rode over 4,800 miles and plans to complete 3,500 miles this year as well as raise over \$20,000 for the Lance Armstrong Foundation. Bob attributes his success to his grassroots methods, which include personal solicitation and sponsorships.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor my friend, Bob Segal. His advocacy on behalf of cancer research and treatment is commendable and his accomplishments with fundraising for the Lance Armstrong Foundation as well as riding over 7,000 miles the last 2 years are truly inspiring. I applaud Bob for all his success and wish him the best in his future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING DR. REGINA BENJAMIN FOR WINNING A JOHN D. AND CATHERINE T. MACARTHUR FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise today to congratulate Dr. Regina Benjamin of Bayou La Batre, Alabama, for winning a 2008 John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship. As one of 25 recipients of this year's prestigious "genius grant," Dr. Benjamin's star is rising on the national level even as she continues to work daily to

improve the lives of the people of south Mobile County and the State of Alabama.

Dr. Benjamin, a lifelong resident of Alabama, has dedicated herself to serving the underserved—providing high-quality medical care to shrimping communities of the Alabama bayou. When Bayou La Batre was devastated by Hurricane Georges in 1998 and again in 2005 by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Dr. Benjamin rode from house to house in a pickup truck, caring for her patients one by one until her clinic could be rebuilt. Her dedication to serving her community stands out as an example for us all, and I am so glad she has been recognized by one of the world's truly prestigious foundations.

The MacArthur Fellowship is awarded annually to individuals recognized for "extraordinary originality and dedication in their creative pursuits and a marked capacity for self-direction." Fellows are awarded \$500,000 with absolutely no strings attached, a complement to the virtues of creativity and self-direction recognized by the foundation. Though Dr. Benjamin has not yet decided how she will use her grant, she is considering a program to help lower-income students pursue careers in medicine. It would be a worthy use of this award and truly a gift that would keep on giving.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the proud citizens of the First Congressional District and the entire State of Alabama, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Dr. Benjamin on her MacArthur Fellowship. I know I speak for all my colleagues in the House of Representatives when I say we can't wait to see what she does next.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FREDERICKTOWN

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker: Whereas, the dedicated people of the First Presbyterian Church of Fredericktown celebrate the church's 200th anniversary with great joy; and

Whereas, occasions such as these illustrate the resiliency and determination of spirit a congregation such as this can have over such a long period of time; and

Whereas, it is the fond wish of this body that you will continue to be a model for worship and a beacon for hope to the destitute and that your presence over these two centuries has made the community a better place to live due to the contributions made by members of the congregation both past and present, therefore, be it

Resolved that along with friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend the congregation for your unwavering commitment to the residents of Fredericktown and recognize the tremendous impact the church and members of the congregation have had on the community over two centuries. With great appreciation and respect, we express great appreciation for your 200 years of service to the community and to the lives of those people you have touched.

TRIBUTE TO RUDY GARCIA-TOLSON

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, I stand here today to congratulate an amazing athlete who broke the world record time, winning him a gold medal, in the 200m individual medley in addition to winning a bronze medal in the 100m breaststroke at the Beijing Games of the XIII Paralympiad this summer. He was awarded 2 of the 99 medals the United States proudly won.

By the age of five, this brave young man had already undergone 15 surgeries as a result of having been born with pterygium syndrome, resulting in a clubbed foot, webbed fingers on both hands, a cleft lip and palate, and the inability to straighten his legs. However, having endured so much at such young age, he decided to have both legs amputated above the knee.

Mr. Garcia-Tolson took it upon himself to embrace these new prosthetic legs and began running, cycling and swimming. By 1999 at the age of 10 years, he had become the youngest bilateral amputee to ever complete a triathlon on his own. Within that same year, he also set his first national record in swimming.

In 2000 and 2001, Mr. Garcia-Tolson finished in first place in the Silver Strand Marathon. In 2002, he was a recipient of the Casey Martin Award which honors individuals with a disability fighting for the right to compete in sports. In 2004, Teen People Magazine names him one of "20 Teens Who Will Change the World."

In 2004, having just turned 16 years old, Rudy Garcia-Tolson received his first gold medal at the Paralympic Games by breaking the 200m individual medley world record. He continued his training as well as passion for sports by completing the Ford Ironman World Championship 70.3 in 2006. Not long after, he broke the world record swimming the 200m individual medley at the 2007 U.S. Paralympics Open Swimming Championships.

As an athlete myself, I recognize the necessary courage, strength and dedication one must possess to triumph all that Mr. Garcia-Tolson has accomplished. Turning 20 years old earlier this week, he is to be celebrated not only for achieving the most impressive awards in his sport, but smashing world records along the way. More than anything, he is an inspiration to us all, conquering so much despite what hurdles laid in his path.

God Bless Rudy Garcia-Tolson for his talent, passion and love of country and mankind.

LOCAL HEROES

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with great appreciation and sincere gratitude that I take this time to honor three local men whose recent selfless acts have made them heroes to grateful communities in northwest Indiana. This exceptional group of heroes consists of

Chet Newsome, of Lowell, Indiana, and John and Mark Thanos, both of Chesterton, Indiana, whose bravery and self-sacrifice are an inspiration to us all.

On Saturday, August 9, 2008, at 5:30 a.m., Chet Newsome, a local truck driver, was awakened by the sound of what he has described as a blood-curdling scream from one of his neighbors. After hurrying outside to see what was happening, Chet saw his neighbor's garage engulfed in flames. He could hear the screams of two men who were trapped inside, so Chet ran to his garage for his ax, and without hesitation, began to hammer away at the door. After breaking through the door, Chet could see that one of the men was able to escape through a side door, but the other man remained trapped inside. Again, without hesitation and without thinking of himself, Chet reached in and was able to grip the severely burned man's belt and pull him to safety. Without Chet's quick thinking and immediate action, the outcome of this tragic event would have seen a very different outcome. For his bravery, the town of Lowell and the entire First Congressional District owe Chet Newsome their respect and gratitude.

On Sunday, September 14, 2008, at approximately 10:30 a.m., John and Mark Thanos were alerted by screams in their neighborhood. They soon learned that two young boys had fallen into a nearby ditch that had filled with rain. By the time they arrived, one of the boys had managed to escape the waters, but the other was being pulled into a culvert under the street. In a truly selfless act, Mark, an English teacher for the last 20 at Wheeler High School, and his father, John, a retired custodian who worked for many years for the Merrillville Community School Corporation, realized something needed to be done. They plunged into the ditch to save the 10-year-old boy, but the waters were too strong. While the boy was rescued, neither John nor Mark survived the ordeal. To those who knew John and Mark Thanos, it was no surprise that when called upon in such a horrific situation, they would answer without hesitation and would put the safety of others ahead of themselves. There is no greater sacrifice than to give one's life to save another, and John and Mark Thanos made the ultimate sacrifice to save the life of a child. For their heroism, they are to be forever remembered by the people of northwest Indiana and beyond.

These real-life heroes represent true courage and bravery, and they are the greatest example of the valor and strength of our country and its citizens.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in commending and acknowledging these outstanding heroes of northwest Indiana. Their bravery while putting aside personal safety to ensure the safety of others is worthy of the highest honor and respect. I am grateful and am truly honored to recognize these astonishing individuals and their remarkable acts of heroism.

IN HONOR OF DAVE PAVLICK

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Dave Pavlick

upon the completion of his second 600-mile walk throughout Ohio to promote the "Health Care for All Ohioans Act." As one of the key driving forces behind the Single Payer Action Network (SPAN), Dave is ending his 23-day quest for health care justice in Parma, Ohio.

Dave's years of unparalleled dedication and commitment to the highest-quality, uniform standard of care for all as a basic human right has garnered increased attention and support from people all over the State of Ohio. Through his walk, Dave has given his own time and energy in a profound way for the over 1 million uninsured Ohioans and the many more without adequate health care who seek an end to their plight and injustice.

As a career public servant with both the United States Marine Corps and the Cuyahoga County Sheriff, Dave learned a great deal about many ails of society, and he decided to commit himself to healing perhaps the biggest social ail in America, the lack of adequate and affordable health care for all.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honor of Dave Pavlick, whose outstanding and persistent contributions to health care justice for all Ohioans will someday lead to care for all. I, along with SPAN, the brothers and sisters of the United Auto Workers Local 1005, and all other supporters, welcome Dave back to Parma.

INTENT TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION IN THE NEXT CONGRESS TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF VACANT AND ABANDONED PROPERTIES IN OLDER, INDUSTRIAL CITIES

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, Youngstown and Akron, and nearby cities like Cleveland, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and Detroit, suffered severe job and population losses over the past 25 to 30 years. This has led to the loss of thousands of housing units to abandonment and decay. The subprime mortgage crisis has only worsened the problem in these cities, ravaging entire neighborhoods in its wake, leaving thousands of vacant and abandoned houses that attract criminal activity and trash, and are safety hazards to the families who remain. The abandoned properties also lower the property values of those who remain, and frustrate neighborhood improvement efforts.

Although the Housing and Economic Recovery Act we passed in July will provide some assistance to cities to demolish vacant and abandoned properties, a more comprehensive, regional, approach is needed to address this problem in the so-called "shrinking cities" and their metropolitan areas.

Youngstown, under the leadership of Mayor Jay Williams, has already taken a big step in this direction by adopting the Youngstown 2010 Plan, which envisions Youngstown, which once had a population of 170,000, becoming a smaller, but more vibrant city of about 80,000, with revitalized neighborhoods, and abundant green open space that will be used for parks, urban agriculture, and future economic development. Some of its land

might actually be reforested. Youngstown is also working with other local governments to develop a regional strategy to address vacant and abandoned properties, which are becoming more and more commonplace in suburban areas around Youngstown.

We need to unleash the creative energies present in Youngstown, and other cities and metropolitan areas, by assisting them to develop and implement plans to eliminate the blighting influences of abandoned properties, gain some control of the vacant land in their residential areas, and reposition themselves for the challenges of the 21st century as vibrant, livable communities.

To this end, Madam Speaker, I am working with my good friend, Congressman BRIAN HIGGINS of Buffalo, to develop legislation that would establish a new demonstration program within HUD, the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The program would be competitive. In order to successfully compete for assistance under it, a local government would need to partner with other jurisdictions within its metropolitan area. For example, a county government might be an ideal partner for its central city.

The partners would need to develop a plan that takes into account their population losses, and sets forth strategies to make better use of land and other resources within their boundaries. Grants awarded under the program could be used for, among other things, demolition, removal of old, antiquated infrastructure, the creation of parks and open space, code enforcement improvements, the development of real property information systems, and the creation and expansion of urban and regional land banks, which are widely recognized to be a key tool in efforts to promote investment and revitalization efforts in areas with very weak real estate markets.

Applicants would also have to submit detailed implementation plans, and would have to meet stringent accountability standards in carrying them out.

I would also like to mention that Mr. Stephen Cerny, who is currently serving in my office as a Brookings Institution Legislative Fellow, has provided me with tremendous help on this issue. Steve is an attorney at HUD and a former planner in Cleveland, and I am very grateful for the extensive professional experience he provides on this issue.

Finally, Madam Speaker, I look forward to working with you and the Committee to bring this program to fruition.

ALLIED VETERANS OF THE WORLD

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 26, 2008

Mr. CRENSHAW. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize an organization of military veterans that works hard to take care of its own by supporting the Veterans Administration's health care services. It is my privilege to introduce the work of the Allied Veterans of the World to my fellow Members of Congress.

Allied Veterans of the World was founded in 1979 as the 451st Bomber Group by Commander-in-Chief Harold Grossman. It became the first organized veteran group in Florida by