

HONORING THOSE KILLED IN THE KHOJALY MASSACRE

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 26, 2008

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor those killed during the Khojaly Massacre on the 16th anniversary of that terrible event. On February 26, 1992, 613 Azerbaijanis lost their lives. I ask that this Congress remember those who were killed that tragic day.

HONORING THE RECIPIENTS OF THE OUTSTANDING AWARD FOR THE SPRINGVILLE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. THOMAS M. REYNOLDS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 26, 2008

Mr. REYNOLDS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 2008 recipients of the outstanding award for the Springville Area Chamber of Commerce in New York State. Grace Gentner, the Johnson Family of Dealerships, and Meals on Wheels. Their dedication and commitment to the community should be applauded. The awards are presented to individuals, businesses, and non-profits that exemplify outstanding service and involvement in the Springville area.

As one of western New York's outstanding citizens, Grace Gentner is a role model for Americans. Grace's kind spirit and dedication to helping others has made her community a better place. Grace has spent countless hours volunteering at several organizations in the Springville area as well as serving as a leader in the community. Due to her commitment to community service Grace was honored with this year's Citizen of the Year award by the Springville Chamber of Commerce. Among the many service organizations Grace spends most of her time contributing to the Historical Society, Bertrand Chaffee Hospital, Springville Food Pantry, Meals on Wheels and she served as an Extraordinary Minister at St. Aloysius Catholic Church. In addition, Grace has been an elected leader by serving many years as Town Clerk and tax collector for the Town of Concord as well as president of the Senior Citizens. As someone who has blessed me with her friendship I am fortunate to have been a beneficiary of Grace's wisdom, counsel and guidance. I am pleased that her hard work helping people has been recognized by the Springville Area Chamber of Commerce.

Springville's Johnson Family of Dealerships takes great pride in its tradition of contributing to the community. The family dealership was founded by Bob and Bernice Johnson in 1951, and continues to be run and operated by Mike and Tom Johnson along with General Managers Darin and Derek Johnson. The Johnson Family of Dealerships has been a cornerstone of the Springville business community. This family owned and operated business and its employees have contributed countless hours of community service from helping with the Dairy Festival, to the Annual Golf Tournament which benefits Chaffee Hospital. A true neigh-

borhood business, they host annual Christmas and Halloween parties, events that all members of the community look forward to. It is because of their long standing tradition of service to the community that they have been awarded Business of the Year by the Springville Chamber of Commerce.

Meals on Wheels is a non-profit organization whose volunteers are the unsung heroes of the Village of Springville and the Town of Concord. This organization specializes in bringing warm meals to the citizens of Springville and the Town of Concord who are unable to leave their homes. The Meals on Wheels volunteers also provide much needed companionship and deserve the recognition of Not-for-Profit Organization of the Year awarded by the Springville Chamber of Commerce.

Thus, Madam Speaker in recognition of their service to the Springville Area, I ask that this honorable body join me in honoring Grace Gentner, the Johnson Family Dealership, and Meals on Wheels.

HONORING ELNORA GEORGE

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 26, 2008

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Elnora George upon her retirement from John C. Fremont Healthcare District. Mrs. George will be honored at a reception to be held at the Mariposa Senior Center in Mariposa, CA, on February 27, 2008.

Mrs. George began her career with the John C. Fremont Healthcare District in 1998 as the interim Chief Executive Officer and Chief Financial Officer. The district was facing financial difficulties when Mrs. George started. The district was facing substantial debt problems that were affecting the operations and livelihood of the district. That was before Mrs. George started with the company and began to make changes.

Mrs. George began her tenure by negotiating payment plans on existing debt, renegotiating purchase plans with various suppliers, and she found a way to complete a remodeling project that was already in the works. She applied for and was awarded grants to assist in purchasing new equipment. With this additional funding the district was able to complete the renovation of, and expand, the emergency department. This was just the beginning of the expansion.

John C. Fremont Healthcare District, with the guidance of Mrs. George, has been able to expand their services across the board. They are currently contracted with Mariposa County to provide medical services to the County Adult Detention Facility. A joint effort between the district and the County Health Department has made it possible for the establishment of a County Medical Services Program through a MediCal Wellness Grant to provide psychiatry services to the poor and underserved in the county. The surgery department has been reopened for outpatient surgeries and procedures. New imaging services have been added along with the most up-to-date technologies including CT, ultrasound, and MRI equipment. Mrs. George was able to achieve accreditation as a Critical Access

Hospital and had the area designated as a Healthcare Physician Shortage Area. This accreditation and designation have allowed the district to expand the education department to include community classes and a nursing assistant program.

More recently, under Mrs. George's leadership, a Private Duty department was created. This department provides nursing, home-making and handyman services. Telemedicine is now in use for physician consultations in the clinics and for in-home units for personal health monitoring. Finally, the Northside Clinic in Greeley Hill was opened for family practice care.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate the accomplishments of Elnora George upon her retirement from John C. Fremont Healthcare District. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mrs. George many years of continued success.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACT

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 26, 2008

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I am proud to introduce the "Public Health Preparedness Workforce Development Act of 2008." This much-needed legislation will help provide the critical workers that our public health community so desperately needs.

These skilled public health professionals include the nurses, epidemiologists, lab technicians, and others who keep our communities healthy and safe. They deliver our vaccines, ensure that our drinking water is safe, test for infectious diseases, and serve as our front-line defense against biological and chemical attacks. The responsibilities of our public health workers reach into our daily lives.

Unfortunately, our country has underinvested in this critical area for decades, and our public health workforce is near the breaking point.

We are simply not producing or retaining enough public health workers to meet the increasing demand for their essential services. Nearly a quarter of the public health workforce is set to retire by 2012.

As a result, the Association of Schools of Public Health estimates that our country's public health schools would have to train three times the current number of graduates over the next 12 years just to maintain current levels of preparedness.

We cannot continue to underestimate or undervalue the importance of a strong public health system. As we focus on preventing outbreaks and attacks through preparedness and vigilance, we will rely ever more heavily on our public health workers.

However, public health positions are often not economically competitive with those offered by the private sector. We must create the proper incentives offered for our Nation's brightest public health graduates to serve in the public sector, and the Public Health Preparedness Workforce Development Act is a strong step toward doing so.

It offers scholarships, loan repayment programs, and mid-career training grants to recent public health graduates and to current

public health employees looking to supplement their education. It also creates an electronic clearinghouse to make it easier for workers to find available public health positions to the Federal Government.

Additionally, this bill will improve the training of public health workers and introduce many more of them to the field by spurring the creation of academic health departments. These departments, formed by the union of State and

local health agencies with schools of public health, will serve as training grounds analogous to medical schools and teaching hospitals.

Closer coordination between academia and the people we charge with protecting the public welfare is essential to keeping our constituents safe from threats like avian flu, staph infections, and other public health challenges. By melding the academic and the practical,

this legislation will significantly improve our ability to respond effectively to public health emergencies.

A strong and robust public health workforce is not a luxury, Madam Speaker. It is a necessity. The Public Health Preparedness Workforce Development all my colleagues to support it.