

moral growth of thousands of low income and disadvantaged youth in our country.

Madam Speaker, sports figures, through their perseverance, discipline, and good behavior, can serve as examples of excellence, dedication and devotion to our youth.

Chi-Chi Rodriguez was born in Rio Piedras, PR, on October 23, 1935, and rose from the most humble of circumstances as the fifth of six children of an agricultural laborer and a housekeeper. These hardships did not harden him, but motivated him to become a great sportsman, humanitarian and role model.

Chi-Chi joined the ranks of golf professionals at the age of 24, reportedly standing at 5'7" and weighing 117 pounds and has had a stellar career in the sport of golf, earning an impressive record of 38 professional wins, including 8 PGA Tour wins and 22 Senior PGA Tour wins. His Senior PGA Tour records for most consecutive victories, at four, and most consecutive birdies, at eight, still stand.

In 1979, Chi-Chi Rodriguez helped create the Chi-Chi Rodriguez Youth Foundation, and the Chi-Chi Rodriguez Academy in Clearwater, FL, which have collectively raised more than \$4 million to help thousands of low-income and disadvantaged youth reach their life potential through educational opportunities and support programs, including a public partnership school, a community service program, a nine-hole golf course and others, which has been recognized by receiving the 1986 National Golf Foundation Award for best Youth Program in the United States, becoming the 758th President Bush's Point of Light, and receiving the Robie Award for Humanitarianism presented by the Jackie Robinson Foundation, among others.

His devotion to others knows no bounds. In addition to all he already does, he also joined with the FBI Agents Association to lead the Chi-Chi Rodriguez G-Man Desert Shootout Tournament devoted to raising funds for College scholarships for the children of FBI agents killed in the line of duty.

In 1989, the United States Golf Association, founded in 1894, granted Chi-Chi Rodriguez its highest honor, the Bob Jones Award, in recognition for his distinguished sportsmanship in golf and in 1994, Chi-Chi was inducted to the first class of the World Sports Humanitarian Hall of Fame for "world class athletic ability," for being "a role model in his community" and for having "a strong record of humanitarian efforts."

In 1992, Chi-Chi Rodriguez was inducted to the World Golf Hall of Fame, "Golf highest honor" and in 1973, he was a member of the U.S. Team that won the Ryder Cup in Muirfield, Scotland.

Chi-Chi Rodriguez has received countless other distinguished awards and recognitions such as the 1974 Charlie Bartlett Award of the Golf Writers Association, the 1981 Richardson Award of the Golf Writers Association of America, the 1982 Father of the Year Award, the 1986 Card Walker Award (Outstanding Contribution to Junior Golf), the 1986 Salvation Army Gold Crest Award, the 12th Roberto Clemente Cup (1986), the 1986 Byron Nelson Award, the 1986 Hispanic Achievement Recognition Award, the 1987 Byron Nelson Award, the 1987 Senior Tour Arnold Palmer Award, the 1988 Fred Raphael Golf Achievement Award, the 1989 Old Tom Morris Award, the 1990 "Caring for Kids" Award, the 1991 Jackie Robinson Humanitarian Award, the

1993 Civilian Meritorious Service Medal presented by the Department of Defense, the 1997 International Network of Golf Award, the 1998 Ford Achievement Award, and the 2003 Paul Runyan Memorial Recognition Award, among others.

He is also a published author who has authored and co-authored several books and articles about golf, such as Chi Chi's Secrets of Power Golf in 1967, Everybody's Golf Book in 1975, Chi Chi's Power Pack, in 1982, Every Golfer's Guide to Lower Scores by Chi-Chi Rodriguez, in 1990, and Chi Chi's Golf Games You Gotta Play, in 2003, among others.

He is very proud of his philosophy on life, which can be summarized by his personal expressions "For me, satisfaction comes from knowing that I was put on this planet to leave it better" and "A man never stands taller than when he stoops to help a child."

Please join me in recognizing that Chi-Chi Rodriguez embodies the spirit of generosity and humanism of his fellow Puerto Rican, Roberto Clemente and that as a native of Puerto Rico, Chi-Chi has proven to be an important role model and source of pride for all Puerto Ricans, as well as all Latin Americans and all immigrants to the U.S. from across the globe.

My resolution congratulates and commends Chi-Chi Rodriguez: (1) for his successes in golf in the United States and throughout the world; (2) for his exemplary conduct as a private citizen; (3) for a life devoted to service to others, in particular, for his help to low income and underprivileged youth, and to the children of FBI agents killed in the line of duty; and (4) and in gratitude for his service as a role model and an inspiration for our youth, the people of Puerto Rico, and the United States.

Madam Speaker, let me conclude with this. One of the great honors of the Members of this House is to recognize our fellow citizens who stand out as exceptional individuals.

It is my great honor to present this legislation for consideration in the House of Representatives with the hope that the example of Chi-Chi Rodriguez can be known across our Nation and that he may serve as a role model for us all.

RECOGNIZING 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VALERO TEXAS CITY REFINERY

HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. LAMPSON. Madam Speaker, today we honor the 100th anniversary of the Valero Texas City Refinery. Over the past 100 years, Texas City, Texas, has established itself as a major center for our Nation's energy production. Texas City's history is a testament to hard work and the American Dream, in that such success has grown from the small refinery established by the Texas City Refining Company so long ago.

In 1908, J.C. Black, joined by more than 100 craftsmen, constructed a refinery consisting of just 11 stills, storage tanks, and a boiler house. In the beginning, the refinery had the capacity to process only 1,500 barrels of oil per day. Enduring a depression, technological revolutions, and the hardships all businesses experience, the Valero Texas City re-

finery now produces 243,000 barrels per day of ultra low sulfur gasoline and diesel.

Texas City matured with this refinery. When America entered World War I and then World War II, the refinery increased production to meet the Nation's petroleum demands, fueling America's victory. During this period the population of Texas City tripled as men and women answered the patriotic call to serve in the Nation's war efforts.

Today, the proud, hard working spirit is alive and well as the Valero Texas City refinery continues to play an integral role in the economic well-being of southeast Texas and the United States. I am proud to honor the thousands of men and women who have been working on our behalf throughout the past 100 years. Texas City's first refinery is indeed deserving of recognition from the United States House of Representatives upon its 100th anniversary.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "CREDIT CARD FAIR FEE ACT OF 2008"

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the "Credit Card Fair Fee Act of 2008," legislation that would help level the playing field for merchants and retailers negotiating with banks for the cost of certain fees, and ultimately reduce the costs of everyday goods for consumers. I am joined by Representatives CANNON, LOFGREN, SHUSTER, WEINER, DELAHUNT, PLATTS, WELCH, SULLIVAN, WILSON of South Carolina, GOHMERT, HALL of Texas, BOOZMAN, and PETERSON of Pennsylvania.

Every time a consumer uses a payment card—at the mall, at the grocery store, at a gas station, or on the Internet—the merchant is charged a fee. This fee gets divided up three ways—between the merchant's bank, the consumer's bank, and the credit card company. It covers processing fees, fraud protection, billing statements, and other expenses such as system innovations.

Almost 90 percent of this fee comprises a so-called "interchange fee," which is the payment made by the merchant's bank to the consumer's bank. The percentage is set by the credit card companies, generally Visa or MasterCard, and averages 1.75 percent of the total purchase. In 2006, interchange fees totaled approximately \$36 billion, an increase of 117 percent since 2001. In 2007, the fees amounted to \$42 billion, about 17 percent since 2006. These fees are ultimately passed on to all consumers in the form of higher prices for goods and services, whether the consumers purchase these items by credit card, check or cash.

These interchange fees are set by the credit card companies. The two largest, Visa and Mastercard, are associations composed of financial institutions and are owned and controlled by their bank member-owners. Together, Visa and MasterCard control over 73 percent of the volume of transactions on general purpose cards in the United States and approximately 85 percent of the cards issued. Banks that are members of the Visa association are often also members of the MasterCard association.

Merchants are forced to deal within this system because it is simply not an option to refuse to accept Visa or MasterCard from their customers. They are presented with take-it-or-leave-it options and are not part of the process by which the fees are set. Moreover, the card systems operate pursuant to comprehensive operating rules approved by the associations' member-controlled boards, but these operating rules are not accessible by the merchants.

This legislation is intended to give merchants a seat at the table in the determination of these fees. It is not an attempt at regulating the industry and does not mandate any particular outcome. This legislation simply enhances competition by allowing merchants to negotiate with the dominant banks for the terms and rates of the fees.

The bill creates a limited antitrust immunity for negotiating voluntary agreements and, if necessary, participating in the market-based proceedings. These market-based proceedings will determine the exclusive rates and terms merchants must pay for a 3-year term. No other fees, terms or conditions may be imposed on the merchants.

The rates and terms will be determined by Electronic Payment System Judges, who will be appointed by the Department of Justice Antitrust Division and the Federal Trade Commission. The judges will apply a market standard in their determinations designed to replicate the rates and terms of payment that would have been negotiated in a competitive marketplace between a willing buyer and willing seller, both of which have no market power. The judges will have full independence in making all determinations but may consult with the DOJ and FTC on certain matters.

It is time to level the playing field for merchants and consumers. I am hopeful that Congress can move to enact this worthwhile and timely legislation.

IN HONOR OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF PHEASANTS FOREVER

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate more than a quarter century of work by Pheasants Forever volunteers to preserve habitat for pheasants and other wildlife.

Founded in St. Paul, Pheasants Forever has grown to 700 chapters and 110,000 members nationwide. More than 22,500 of those dedicated volunteers are Minnesotans. Pheasants Forever members have completed over 370,000 habitat projects, improving more than 5 million acres since 1982. In Minnesota, that translates into nearly 200,000 acres of preserved habitat.

The volunteers of Pheasants Forever are its lifeblood. It is a truly grassroots organization from its fundraising to its project development. Virtually all of the money raised by a chapter stays with that chapter, making Pheasants Forever one of the most efficient conservation organizations in the Nation.

These outdoor and conservation enthusiasts also spend much of their time and energy preparing the next generation of Pheasants For-

ever volunteers through its education programs. And, the results are outstanding, with youth membership growing nearly four-fold from 4,000 to 15,000 in just 7 years.

This weekend, hundreds to thousands of Pheasants Forever volunteers and supporters will gather for banquets in various locations in my Minnesota district. I commend these fine individuals—and their tireless leader, Howard Vincent of White Bear Lake, who has been an active part of Pheasants Forever for 20 years and president and CEO for the past 8 years—for their commitment to Minnesota's wildlife and natural beauty.

TRIBUTE TO NELDA C. AND H.J. LUTCHER STARK FOUNDATION

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the Nelda C. and H.J. Lutchter Stark Foundation on the reopening of Shangri La in Orange, TX.

In the 1930s, Lutchter Stark named his private gardens along Adams Bayou after the mythical mountain utopia in James Hilton's bestselling book, *Lost Horizon*. Hundreds of azalea bushes were planted along with other flowers and the gardens were sometimes open to the public and to birdwatchers. Shangri La drew thousands of visitors during those times.

Shangri La was closed in 1958 because of a devastating snowstorm that destroyed thousands of azaleas and the gardens remained closed for 40 years. In the book and later in a movie, a bell rings when a visitor enters Shangri La. The bell will once again ring on March 12, 2008 to announce that the 252 acre botanical garden and nature center is again open to the public.

Shangri La is a remarkable achievement and I predict that it will be a magnificent ecotourism attraction. It is divided into two sections—the designed botanical gardens that will have changing flowers with the seasons, and the nature center left in a natural state. Education is one of the main goals with various areas for learning for ages from pre-kindergarten to graduate university degrees.

Shangri La is the first complex in Texas, and only the 50th in the world, to be awarded the rare "platinum" rating by the U.S. Green Building Council. The rating recognizes the most ecologically "green" complexes in the world and is known as "LEED," for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. The president of the Council has said "Shangri La will be a showcase for high-performance, energy-efficient, healthy design, and an inspiration for others."

Buildings have been constructed using recycled materials, when available, and have been designed to be energy efficient. Thirty-six solar photovoltaic panels create electricity for the complex and its boats and carts. Boardwalks in the swamp are made of "boards" of recycled plastic and wood. A closed loop, geothermal heating and cooling system pumps water from an 800-foot-deep-well, allowing Shangri La to take advantage of the consistent temperatures deep within the earth. The roofing is designed to reflect heat and collect rainwater in large cisterns.

In 2005, Hurricane Rita devastated Shangri La at the beginning of its construction phase. Viewing the situation as an opportunity, the many fallen trees were incorporated into the construction of Shangri La facilities.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor to represent Orange, TX in the U.S. House of Representatives and I urge you to join me in congratulating Shangri La on its grand opening and their commitment to the environment and the community.

HONORING CHESTER ANDREW

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2008

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Chester Andrew, and the entire Andrew family, upon being honored with the "Friend of the Farm Bureau" award at the Third Annual Recognition Dinner to be held on March 6, 2008, at the Madera Municipal Golf Course.

Pete Andrew came to Madera, California, in the early 1900's from Greece. Mr. Andrew worked on a boat that frequently traveled into the San Francisco Bay ports. He decided not to get back on the boat and made his way to the central California town of Madera to begin his farming career. He met Agnes Oyler, they married and began farming beans and custom harvesting. They had two children, George and Lorraine, who helped with the farm and took over running the farm when the elder Mr. Andrew passed away.

George Andrew and his wife, Gladys, carried on the family's farming tradition. They had four children; Karen, Chester, Diane and Janice. Chester followed the path that was laid out for him, farming. Today, Chester and two of his three children still work on the family farm, with his oldest daughter farming in Washington. Andrew Farms currently focuses on almonds, grapes, pistachios and wheat.

For four generations, the Andrew family has been an important part of the Madera community. Three generations have attended the same elementary and high schools. Chester has been an active member of the Madera Farm Bureau Board for over twenty years. He served as president from 1992 to 1994 and continues to be a key member on many committees, including the scholarship committee and the water committee. He understands the importance of higher education for our future, and has even contributed to the scholarship funds with money out of his own pocket. On the water committee, Chester ensures that he is aware of the many different water issues that growers face. The Andrew family has been, and will continue to be, an important part in the Madera farming community and can truly be called a "Friend of the Farm Bureau".

Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Chester Andrew, and the Andrew family, for the positive impact they have had in Madera County and the surrounding areas. I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Andrew family and wish them continued success.