

In its annual report on remittances to Caribbean and Latin American nations in 2007, the Inter-American Development Bank's Multilateral Investment Fund stated that Jamaicans, Haitians, Guyanese, Trinidadians, Surinamese and Belizeans in that order sent a record amount of funds to their relatives and close friends last year.

And while the MIF didn't cite a specific sum for Barbados, the United Nations and the World Bank had previously estimated that Bajans abroad had sent more than \$140 million to their country.

Overall, remittances to the Caribbean and Latin America rose by seven per cent in 2007 over the figure for 2006, the first year for which there wasn't a double digit increase stated the Fund.

The importance of the remittances, the MIF explained, could be seen in "the significant contribution to the region's economy. For instance, Jamaicans remitted \$1.9 billion to relatives, accounting for 18% if country's gross domestic product while Haitians' \$1.8 billion in remittances represented 35% of the GDP. Guyana's was by far the largest single contributor to the GDP. The \$424 million may have been about 16 per cent if Jamaicans' flow but the money was 43% of the economy.

The smallest contribution was the \$125 million repatriated to Trinidad and Tobago. It represented one per cent of the economy while in Suriname's case, the \$115 million was 5%.

The Dominican Republic was the largest single recipient of remittances in the larger Caribbean region, receiving \$3.1 billion.

Belize's receipts of \$105 million were the equivalent of 8% of the GDP.

A closer look at the figures for 2007 and prior years showed that remittances to:

Jamaica rose from \$983 million in 2001 to almost \$1.5 billion in 2004.

Haiti, they skyrocketed from less than \$900 million in 2001 to just under \$1 billion in 2005, rising to last year's record level of 1.5 billion.

Guyana are considered a "crucial source of income."

The Caribbean and Latin America as a whole reached \$66.5 billion, about seven per cent more than in 2006.

Mexico amounted to almost \$24 billion, and was virtually unchanged, rising barely by one percent. Apparently Mexicans "appear to be less inclined to send money home, citing concerns about stricter enforcement of immigration laws and a slowing economy in the United States," the MIF reported.

Brazil, totaled \$7 billion, a decline of 4%. The reason: "increasing opportunities at home and a strengthening local currency, the 'Real,' has appreciated 14 percent against the dollar over the past 12 months.

The various countries pay for "basic expenses such as food, shelter, clothing and medicines but some of them are saved.

The region, about 75 percent of them "come from the United States, Spain and Japan."

Jamaica, the Dominica Republic, Guyana, Haiti and Trinidad and Tobago have risen every year since the beginning of the 21st century.

STATEMENT OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 4, 2008

Mr. COSTELLO. Madam Speaker, I am pleased today to honor the 60th anniversary of

the state of Israel and to honor the people and accomplishments of this great nation.

From its inception in 1948, Israel has had a long and painful struggle to sustain itself. On May 14, 1948, the United States was the first Nation to extend its formal recognition of Israel as a state, and our two states have since maintained a strong relationship through shared values and interests. Israel has a great deal to be proud of. It has built itself into a strong democracy with an advanced industrial, market economy in one of the most volatile regions of the world. While facing many challenges, it places a great emphasis on quality of life and leads the region in regards to education, democratic participation, and having a free press. The United States and Israel have had a strong relationship throughout their history, sharing these values. Our own country has benefited from Israel's prosperous economy, and in 1985, Israel and the United States concluded a free trade agreement. Israel's Silicon Wadi, an area comparable to the U.S.'s Silicon Valley, is one of the most robust telecommunications and technology industry areas in the world. As testament to this fact, important American companies have research and development facilities located there.

As we honor Israel's accomplishments, we also recognize the continued security threats the country faces from terrorist organizations and aggressive neighbors. Innocent Israelis are attacked with rockets and suicide bombings while belligerent leaders of other nations call for nothing short of Israel's destruction. The American people and Congress have consistently condemned these attacks on our friends. In the most recent example—rocket attacks from Gaza—the House passed a resolution strongly condemning these attacks, as well as the organizations and states supporting them. We have also provided aid for Israel's defense and for the security of the Middle East and will continue to support Israel's right to defend itself. While the challenges remain, the Israeli people have endured and persevered throughout history, and they will continue to do so, and the United States will remain a stalwart ally.

Madam Speaker, I again congratulate the people of Israel on this historic anniversary and wish them a peaceful and prosperous future.

A TRIBUTE TO LISSA LAYNG REYNOLDS

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 4, 2008

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Lissa Layng Reynolds of South Pasadena, California. Every March we celebrate Women's History Month in recognition of the contributions and the sacrifices made by our Nation's women. Accordingly, it is my privilege to highlight Mrs. Reynolds as a woman whose extraordinary efforts are vital to my district.

Lissa is a professional theater, film, and television actress whose interaction with her community goes far beyond the stage and screen. As the president of the California Performing Arts Centre and co-artistic director of the award-winning Fremont Centre Theatre in

South Pasadena, Lissa will celebrate the theatre's 10th anniversary this year. She shares the milestone with her husband, James, who also serves as the theatre's co-artistic director and can be seen on NBC's "Days of Our Lives" as Commissioner Abe Carver. Together they have produced and co-produced over 30 plays during the Fremont Centre Theatre's decade of existence. Lissa and her family have lived in South Pasadena for over 20 years. Her son, Jed Reynolds, graduated from South Pasadena schools and now coaches the high school junior varsity basketball team. Jed is also pursuing a career as an actor and is currently starring in the Fremont Centre Theatre's hit show "Ravensridge."

In addition to the Fremont Centre Theatre, Lissa and James own and operate Classes Unlimited, an adult learning center, and Big Men Stuff, a clothing company that uses slogans to combat domestic abuse. The Reynolds' were selected as two of the most influential people in Pasadena by Pasadena Weekly and they received the Gold Crown Award from the Pasadena Arts Council for supporting local arts education and development.

Giving back to the community is a priority for Lissa. Her busy schedule is packed equally with volunteer, fundraising, and professional efforts. Examples include the Haven House Women's Shelter in Pasadena, the Pasadena Humane Society, the Foothill YMCA, and the South Pasadena Police Department. For many years Lissa has joined her husband on USO handshake and educational tours for the troops and for their families. To encourage students to become active in the arts, the pair frequently directs local elementary school productions of Shakespeare and hosts an annual charity celebrity basketball tournament to benefit South Pasadena schools. For her continued philanthropic efforts Lissa has been honored by numerous organizations, including Women at Work, the South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce, and the Tournament of Roses Association.

Lissa's stage is her community; rather than focus on herself, she works to make South Pasadena the star. Her selfless service to the South Pasadena community is an invaluable addition to the legacy of Women's History Month. With gratitude and admiration, I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring an extraordinary woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Mrs. Lissa Layng Reynolds.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING COACH MICHELLE MISHLER FOR COACHING THE HILAND HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM TO WINNING THE GIRLS' DIVISION IV STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 4, 2008

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker: Whereas, Coach Michelle Mishler showed hard work and dedication to the sport of basketball; and

Whereas, Michelle Mishler was a leader and mentor for the Hiland High School Girls' Basketball Team; and

Whereas, Coach Mishler has been a role model for sportsmanship on and off the court; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That along with her friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I congratulate Coach Michelle Mishler for leading the Hiland High School Girls' Basketball Team to winning the Girls' Division IV State Basketball Championship. We recognize the tremendous hard work and leadership she has demonstrated during the 2007–2008 Basketball season.

ASSESSING THE BURDEN AFRICAN AMERICANS FACE IN A SLOWING ECONOMY—AND WHAT CONGRESS HAS DONE TO ALLEVIATE IT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 4, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to underscore the unfortunate financial squeeze many African American families will face as a result of the slumping economy. African American families and other families of color will suffer the most from a recession because they are disproportionately poor and do not have the safety net enjoyed by others. They carry a significant and disproportionate share of the burden, victim to an economic downturn that will harm working- and middle-class Americans most—unless we offer fresh and bold solutions to cultivate an economy that works for us all. Not just the wealthy. Not just the politically connected. But us all.

The “New Direction” Congress has been swift in addressing this need. The stimulus package will provide much-needed tax relief to the tune of \$600 per individual, \$1,200 per married couple, and an additional \$300 per child. But it doesn't stop there. It goes on to protect the least among us, committing \$32 billion for those 35 million families who work tirelessly but do not earn enough to pay income taxes and guaranteeing rebates to seniors on Social Security, disabled veterans, and military widows. The package is estimated to create more than 500,000 jobs before the end of this year, of particular good news to African Americans, whose unemployment rate climbed from 8 percent in the fall to 9.2 percent just a few months afterwards.

A second phase of increases in the minimum wage will take effect this July, not a moment too soon for those two million African Americans who benefit from the hike, and the 1.1 million more African Americans now living in poverty since President Bush took office. Our work on behalf of small businesses has strengthened the 1.2 million of them owned by African Americans, with revenues eclipsing \$88 billion. That work has resulted in tax cuts for small business of \$4 million over the next 10 years, increasing their share of Federal contracts, and lowering their cost of financing. And in response to the subprime mortgage crisis—the result of bad lending practices that saddled African Americans and Hispanics two times as much as Whites with high-cost subprime loans—we've passed legislation providing some mortgage debt tax relief, cracking down on predatory lending, and expanding affordable loan opportunities.

As Americans endure the hardships of a sputtering economy, it is incumbent upon the

people's Government to get us through it and steer us back to the path of prosperity. We have been responsive—and so shall we remain—to the needs of those communities most harshly hit in times of economic calamity, and as a unified people, looking after our own, we will get through this stronger and far more prosperous.

TWIN OAKS ESTATE

HON. BILL SALI

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 4, 2008

Mr. SALI. Madam Speaker, atop a hill on Woodley Road in northwest Washington, DC is a 26-room mansion known as the Twin Oaks estate, which served as the official residence of nine ambassadors from the Republic of China between 1937 and 1978. During its heyday, the Twin Oaks estate welcomed to its 17.6-acre compound countless American dignitaries and friends in the local Chinese community, to meet with ROC ambassadors and representatives and chart a course of friendship and cooperation between our two nations. Among the more prominent guests to visit the estate were U.S. Secretaries of State, Senators and Congressmen and U.S. military leaders including General Dwight D. Eisenhower and General George Marshall. Distinguished visitors from Taiwan to the estate included Madame Chiang Kai-shek and the future Republic of China Presidents: Mr. Chiang Ching-kuo, Mr. Lee Teng-hui and Mr. Chen Shui-bian.

The Twin Oaks estate also played a role in the termination of official ties between the United States and the Republic of China, Taiwan, in the winter of 1978. During those uncertain days and weeks, ownership of the Twin Oaks estate was transferred to an American private organization; later returning to the ownership of the Taiwan government in 1982. Since then, the Twin Oaks estate has again become a popular spot in Washington, DC, hosting many social functions each year, at which Washingtonians continue to admire the estate's gorgeous peony gardens, its Georgian Revival architecture, and its priceless Ch'ing dynasty antiques.

The Twin Oaks estate was built in 1888 by the family of Mr. Gardiner Greene Hubbard, founder of the National Geographic Society. In celebrating this historic site's 120 year history we also celebrate the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act, which protects the Republic of China's legal ownership of the estate. May the Twin Oaks estate remain a symbol of United States-Taiwan friendship in our Nation's Capital for the next 120 years.

HONORING PASTOR HOWARD-JOHN WESLEY

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 4, 2008

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, it is an honor and privilege for me to celebrate the success of Pastor Howard-John Wesley. Pastor Wesley has accomplished a

great deal in his 10 years at St. John's Congregational Church. Increasing the membership from 40 to over 3,000 is a very impressive feat. It may be his impressive sermons that continue to bring people from all walks of life to this church. Or perhaps it is his willingness and ability to help people who need his guidance. Either way, he consistently gathers thousands of people every week to celebrate together and follow in God's path.

Pastor Wesley has brought Baptist influences to one of the oldest African American churches in the State, which tended to be very traditional and affluent. This uneasy path certainly came with a great deal of opposition. Nevertheless, he continued to encourage all citizens of the community to join his congregation as he stressed the need to closely follow the teachings of the bible.

While thousands gather at St. John's to hear Pastor Wesley, he has also brought his powerful influence and God's word into the community. He is on several boards in Springfield and has established several ministries within the church to deal with specific needs in education, youth, and the elderly. He welcomes many students from local colleges who consistently attend his services. He also influenced former residents of the York Street and Ludlow jail systems to become “Ministers In Training”. These accomplishments truly highlight his desire to give back and help those throughout the community.

I would like to close by thanking you for allowing me to speak on this wonderful occasion. I am so grateful to be able to honor this tremendous man, who has given almost 20 years proclaiming God's word. His service to the church and the community has not gone unnoticed. Although today marks the end of his time here in Springfield, he will continue to touch others through his eloquent sermons and teachings at Alfred Street Baptist Church in Alexandria, VA. Congratulations, good luck, and thank you for all you have done for this community.

A TRIBUTE TO ANGELINA LEVY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 4, 2008

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Angelina Levy of Temple City, California. Every March we celebrate Women's History Month in recognition of the contributions and the sacrifices made by our Nation's women. Accordingly it is my privilege to highlight Ms. Levy as a woman whose extraordinary efforts are vital to my district.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Angelina Levy began her career in fashion when she graduated from the Fashion Institute of Technology in 1954. After 20 years of experience in the New York fashion industry, she moved her family to California but was unable to find programs that catered to her son's special developmental needs. In response to the void, Angie established the School of Fashion and Design for the Developmentally Disabled in 1984 and embarked on a remarkable legacy of community service and leadership.

Angie's School of Fashion and Design for the Developmentally Disabled works to provide students with tools to become self-sufficient and to boost self-esteem. It proves that