

votes due to unforeseen circumstances. Had I been present, the record would reflect the following votes:

H. Res. 981: Recognizing March 6, 2008, as the first-ever World Glaucoma Day, "yes";

H.R. 5151: Wild Monongahela Act: A National Legacy for West Virginia's Special Places, "yes"; and

H.R. 831: Coffman Cove Administration Site Conveyance Act, "yes."

RECOGNIZING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 322.

Following the allied victory in World War II, the United Nations voted to partition the British Mandate of Palestine, leading the way for the people of the region to create, on May 14, 1948, the State of Israel. United States recognition of the State of Israel came within hours of Israel's creation. Since that historic day in 1948, the United States and Israel have remained steadfast allies and friends. On May 11, 1949, the Government of Israel was officially admitted as a member of the United Nations.

Since the creation of the State of Israel, enemies of freedom and peace have persistently attempted to undermine Israel's right to exist. The very day after the creation of Israel, rogue Arab forces from surrounding Middle Eastern countries invaded the land given to Israel based on the U.N. partition. Though less than 24 hours old, the nascent country staved off the invasion, and on June 7, 1949, a ceasefire was called, resulting in Israel acquiring western Galilee, a broad corridor through central Palestine to Jerusalem, and part of modern Jerusalem.

Subsequent attempts to undermine Israel's security have all failed, and Israel has become stronger at each turn. In 1956, 1967, 1973, and 1982, attacks on Israel by her neighbors in the region were met with fierce resistance and resounding defeat for Israel's enemies.

In 1988, Yasir Arafat, then leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organization—a group which had for decades fiercely opposed Israel's right to exist—officially acknowledged Israel's sovereign right, and announced his willingness to enter negotiations for peace. Although peace talks have yet to produce a lasting accord, discussions between the relevant parties have met with progress. It is my firm belief that peace can and will be achieved in the region. It is clear that Israel's right to exist is fully established. The United States will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with her friend until and beyond that day when peace is established.

Israel is a shining example of the success that a democracy can produce. Because of the freedom that Israelis enjoy, Israel has been at the forefront of innovation. Israeli scientists have made significant contributions to genetics, medicine, electronics, engineering, and the high-tech world. Indeed, the very cell phones that the world over has become ac-

customed to using were first invented by Israeli entrepreneurs.

Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to congratulate the State of Israel on her 60th Anniversary. I encourage my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 322.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE REEF

SPEECH OF

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to express my support of H. Res. 1112, a resolution recognizing 2008 as the International Year of the Reef.

I have the great honor of representing the Florida Keys, an area rich in natural wonders including two national parks, four national wildlife refuges, and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary—one of the most diverse marine ecosystems in the Nation. The natural and cultural resources and environmental setting of the area make it among the most diverse in North America. Within the surrounding waters are resources deserving of special consideration and protection, including America's only living barrier coral reef.

This designation is part of a global effort to raise public awareness of the value of coral reefs, the significance of the threats faced by coral reef systems, and to mobilize action to develop and implement innovative solutions and strategies to protect and conserve these important natural resources. Coral reef systems provide economic, environmental, and cultural benefits to millions of people around the world and are vital in protecting shorelines and supporting coastal economies. Coral reefs are some of the most valuable and spectacular places on earth. Covering less than 1 percent of the planet's surface, coral reefs and their associated mangrove, sea grass, and other habitats are the world's most biologically diverse marine ecosystems.

Last September, I had the distinct opportunity of participating in a dive to the Aquarius Undersea Laboratory in the Florida Keys. While in Aquarius, I participated in a live, underwater question and answer session with schoolchildren on topics such as coral reef conservation and the dangers of offshore drilling. This visit demonstrated how the Aquarius facility plays a direct role in improving our youngsters' understanding and appreciation of the marine environment.

As part of my passion for preserving the environment, I am proud to serve as co-Chair of the National Marine Sanctuary Caucus along with my colleague Congresswoman LOIS CAPPS. The National Marine Sanctuary Caucus is a bipartisan coalition of Members dedicated to increasing awareness and strengthening commitment to our Nation's cherished marine sanctuaries. The caucus promotes understanding of how national marine sanctuaries help to safeguard our natural heritage and economic well-being. It also serves to inform local communities about the importance of maintaining these ecosystems for future generations to enjoy, educates Members of Congress on the importance of sanctuary protection and management, and ensures that

adequate resources are directed to foster and restore these vital habitats.

I would like to also take this time to recognize the incredible National Marine Sanctuary officials in my district, including Billy Causey and Commander Dave Score, as well as Sanctuary System Director Dan Basta, for all of their work on behalf of our underwater ecosystems.

Once again, I would like to express my support for designating 2008 as the International Year of the Reef. Through this designation, it is my hope that it will encourage further research and development efforts to preserve coral reefs around the world.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, on April 22, 2008, I missed rollcall votes numbered 205, 206, and 207. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 205, 206, and 207.

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF SPACE-BASED OBSERVATIONS OF THE EARTH BY LANDSAT SPACECRAFT

SPEECH OF

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House yesterday passed my resolution, H. Res. 891, on Celebrating 35 Years of Space-Based Observations of the Earth by Landsat Spacecraft. I would like to thank my colleague, Representative REGULA from Ohio, who has joined me as an original cosponsor of this resolution.

It is only fitting that we celebrate Landsat and its thirty-five year record of space-based observations of the land at a time when we are beginning to address the current and future implications of climate change. The U.S. Climate Change Science Program recently recognized Landsat noting that "Landsat data are invaluable for studying the land surface and how it affects and is affected by climate." I thank my colleagues in Congress for continuing to support Landsat and for enabling the development of these long time-series data that are so important for research on climate variability.

The data collected by Landsat satellites are being used by almost all Federal agencies, by state, regional, and local governments, by researchers and private industry. I held a field hearing earlier this month in Colorado on the important ways in which remote sensing data, including Landsat imagery, can help our state and local officials carry out their responsibilities more effectively. The broad application of these data to provide scientific and societal benefits testifies to the nation's sound investment in space technology. We owe our thanks and appreciation to the talented and dedicated scientists, engineers, and professionals who have contributed to Landsat and its success.

Mr. Speaker, there is more to be gained from the data collected by Landsat satellites, and there are still issues to be resolved to ensure that the nation can get the best return on its investment in Landsat's capabilities. However, I have no doubt that through support for the research, technology, and education required to improve Landsat data collection and applications, the returns from this national investment will continue to multiply. I urge my colleagues to join me in ensuring that the benefits derived from this important record of civil observations of the land, as collected from Landsat satellites, continue to expand for another 35 years.

URGING PRESIDENT BUSH TO SIGN INTO LAW H.R. 1922, A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING THE JUPITER INLET LIGHTHOUSE AND THE SURROUNDING FEDERAL LAND IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA AS AN OUTSTANDING NATURAL AREA AND AS A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL LANDSCAPE SYSTEM

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my deep appreciation for the House and Senate for passing H.R. 1922 and S. 1143, resolutions which designate the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and surrounding areas as an Outstanding National Area. As a proud cosponsor of this legislation, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the efforts of my good friend from Florida, Congressman TIM MAHONEY, for introducing this important legislation and for the House leadership for bringing it to the floor for a vote on March 4, 2008. The Senate version of the bill, S. 1143, was introduced by Senator BILL NELSON and was passed by the Senate on April 10, 2008.

This legislation helps to promote the environmental and historic preservation of this important site and is a valuable step toward promoting these ideals throughout America. The historic significance attached to this lighthouse is truly remarkable. Besides guiding sailors through the nearby waters, it has also served as a symbol of local history and, indeed, our Nation's history as a whole.

The need for a lighthouse in Jupiter arose because of coastal reefs which made nautical activity very dangerous in the region. The lighthouse was designed by then Army Lieutenant George Mead, who would later lead the Union Army to victory as a general at the Battle of Gettysburg. Not only did its designer win a decisive Civil War battle, but the lighthouse was also later used extensively by Union sailors, further aiding the fight against secession. However, preliminary construction of the lighthouse proved to be an arduous task, with malaria, other diseases, and raids from some of the local populations taking a significant toll.

This lighthouse has served not only as a beacon for Florida's sailors but also as a reminder of the importance of our history. We must always remember the special circumstances concerning the history of the lands around the lighthouse. For centuries,

Native Americans lived and flourished in that area. On numerous occasions, they quartered runaway slaves and welcomed them into their communities. Today, the influence of these native peoples can still be felt. In fact, both Jupiter and Hobe Sounds' names were derived from the Hobe Indians who once lived in the region.

I would be remiss to not mention the natural beauty of the region. We are lucky to have such a pristine example of what Florida can offer to our nation's environmental diversity. The river itself is home to countless species of plant and animal life which live together in harmony and help to define the entire region. We have a duty to work toward preserving this land and all the species that thrive there.

The lighthouse at Jupiter Inlet and the surrounding area have a deep historical connection to our country and are a testament to the necessity of conservation efforts in our nation's varied habitats. Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues in the House and Senate for passing this bill, and I urge the President to sign this into law and designate the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse as a National Landscape System.

PROTECTING THE MEDICAID SAFETY NET ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to be a cosponsor of the Protecting the Medicaid Safety Net Act of 2008 and very pleased that a bipartisan agreement was reached to bring the bill up under suspension of the rules because it's essential for the House of Representatives to pass this legislation as soon as possible.

Over 2,100 organizations across the country have told Congress that we have to stop the seven regulations issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS, over the last year because they threaten the loss of \$50 billion in Federal funding for key healthcare services. California's Governor Schwarzenegger has estimated that the regulatory changes will place an additional \$12.5 billion burden on California alone.

CMS has claimed these cuts are being imposed to eliminate waste from the Medicaid program. Far from addressing "inappropriate" payments, the seven regulations that CMS adopted will cut legitimate and necessary care for the most vulnerable in our society. Rather than using the power it already has to address waste, fraud, and abuse, CMS has taken the wrong turn by simply declaring that it will not pay for services.

CMS is saying "no" to rehabilitation services to help people with profound disabilities and medical conditions maintain or gain function.

CMS is saying "no" to case management services that help people get the medical care they need and are entitled to; this includes services for individuals with disabilities who are trying to move out of institutions and into the community.

CMS is saying "no" to specialized transportation to help children with disabilities get to and from school.

CMS is saying "no" to compensating safety-net hospitals for their critical services to the communities.

By adopting this bill, we will stop the implementation of these draconian regulations. The bill will require an HHS study and report on the regulations and their impacts on states, something CMS failed to do. For those concerned about waste, the bill provides additional funding for the Secretary to root out true fraud within the system. Finally, the costs of the bill are fully paid for by requiring electronic verification of assets for individuals applying for Medicaid.

With many of these regulations due to take effect very soon, it's critical that the House pass this bill today with a margin that will convince the President that a veto will not be sustained. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for this important bill.

FREEDOM FOR VICTOR YUNIER FERNANDEZ MARTINEZ

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 2008

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of Victor Yunier Fernandez Martinez, a prisoner of conscience in totalitarian Cuba.

Mr. Fernandez Martinez, a young man of only 24 years of age and a member of the Popular Republican Party, was not even charged with committing any crime, even by the Orwellian standards and whims that make up the "legal system" in that enslaved island. Instead, he was hauled away to the gulag simply under the pretext of being a "pre-criminal social danger."

Agents of the tyranny's secret police said that they suspected Mr. Fernandez Martinez was involved in a graffiti campaign in Havana to promote freedom of expression. In fact, there was no link between Mr. Fernandez Martinez and these actions, but that did not stop the oppressive forces from detaining him and testing him for paint residue, which they did not find. This incident was cited 2 years later when he was sentenced to 3 years in the gulag because of the paranoid perception of the dictatorship that Mr. Fernandez Martinez, a peaceful dissident, is a "dangerous man."

Madam Speaker, Mr. Fernandez Martinez's mother has visited him in prison and has reported that even though conscious of the profound injustice of his incarceration he was in good spirits, a true testament of the spirit and drive of the heroes who are confined in the Cuban totalitarian gulag.

It is unconscionable that the world simply stands by, in the 21st century, and silently acquiesces to the torture, oppression and denigration of a noble people only 90 miles from the United States of America.

Madam Speaker, Victor Fernandez represents the best of the new generation in Cuba; a generation that has known only oppression and misery but that will play a central role in the transformation of Cuba from a totalitarian nightmare to a representative democracy with the rule of law for all of its citizens. We must demand the release of all those who are persecuted for their democratic ideals. My colleagues, we must demand the immediate