

Sanskrit as well—Dr. Schildgen has written five critically acclaimed books and edited four others, as well as authoring some three dozen scholarly articles and more than a dozen invited book or article reviews. An internationally respected authority on Dante, Chaucer and the gospel of Mark, especially in the context of Islam and Judaism, she has lectured throughout the United States, in India, the Middle East and Europe, and received numerous fellowships, grants and awards from the National Endowment for the Humanities and other prestigious organizations.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, it is appropriate at this time for us to acknowledge and thank Dr. Schildgen for her years of exemplary work as a scholar and educator, and congratulate her on receiving this well deserved award. Her commitment to inspiring and educating students has been unwavering, and she deserves our collective recognition and thanks.

TRIBUTE TO KENNETH E. STREET

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Committeeman Kenneth E. Street. On May 13, 2008, Mr. Street will be celebrated for his contributions as a member of the Hainesport Township Committee as he retires after more than forty years of faithful service to the citizens of South Jersey.

Kenneth has dedicated his life to serving the residents of Hainesport Township. First elected to the township committee in 1950, Kenneth was then appointed mayor in 1953. He served in that position for an impressive twenty-one years. During his time as an elected official, his contributions helped to shape the township into what it is today. Most notably, he worked on developing the township's zoning and property maintenance, as well as the master plan.

In addition to his responsibilities within Hainesport, Kenneth became involved in the League of Municipalities, a statewide organization dedicated to the cooperation of neighboring communities. He served as the league's president, along with various other positions, and remains active in the group today.

Madam Speaker, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for his leadership, commitment, and service as Kenneth celebrates his retirement.

ONE YEAR AFTER PASSAGE OF H. RES. 376

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today on the anniversary of the passage of H. Res. 376, a resolution recognizing the work of our Nation's classified school employees and their continuing contributions to education and to the students of our Nation.

By passing H. Res. 376, the House recognized the National Classified School Employee

of the Year and urged the Department of Education, all States, State education agencies, local education agencies, community colleges, and members of the public to join in this observance. H. Res. 376 congratulated all classified school employees across the Nation for their ongoing contributions to education, and for the key role they play in promoting and ensuring student achievement, student safety, and well-being.

I look forward to working with the National Association of Classified School Employees and other education groups to continue to honor the important work of school classified employees.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN BARROW

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Mr. BARROW. Madam Speaker, on May 1, 2008, I was unavoidably detained and missed roll No. 234, H.R. 493, The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

CONGRATULATING CHARTER SCHOOLS

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN J. HALL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 5, 2008

Mr. HALL of New York. Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that the faculty and staff employed in America's charter schools are working hard to educate their students and give them the tools needed to succeed, I respect their efforts, as well as the overall goal of charter schools to pursue innovative approaches to education that will allow children throughout our Nation to reach their potential. However, in an era when the funding shortfalls under No Child Left Behind have created a burdensome unfunded mandate on public schools and property taxpayers, I am extremely concerned about any diversion of funds, to charter schools or otherwise, from public schools across the country that are already struggling to maintain a diverse curriculum and serve their students. I voted present on H. Res. 1168 in order to make sure that this concern was acknowledged.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Mr. ANDREWS. Madam Speaker, I was not present on May 5, 2008. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on the following rollcall votes: rollcall No. 240; rollcall No. 241; rollcall No. 242; rollcall No. 243; rollcall No. 244.

WORLD AIDS ORPHANS DAY

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Mr. WEXLER. Madam Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in Congress as well as the entire international community in recognizing World AIDS Orphans Day. This is a critically important day because we are reminded of our collective responsibility to address the needs of the world's most vulnerable population—millions of orphans and vulnerable children who need desperately need our support, care, attention and resources.

According to the U.S. Agency for International Development, highly vulnerable children include those who receive inadequate adult support because of abandonment, economic distress, or chronic illness; have HIV/AIDS or are suspected of having HIV; are directly affected by armed conflict; live outside of family care; or in some other way have suffered from a collapse of traditional social safety nets in their communities. Disease, conflict, violence, natural disaster, and severe economic strife leave millions of the world's youngest people orphaned or otherwise vulnerable. Globally, an estimated 132 million children in the developing world have lost one or both parents, while an additional, larger number of children are highly vulnerable, facing serious risks to their survival and wellbeing. According to UNAIDS, by 2010, 20–25 million children could be orphaned by HIV/AIDS alone.

These children face a number of challenges, including finding money for school fees, food, clothing, and access to basic healthcare. Their desperate plight makes them more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, ultimately making them more susceptible to contracting HIV. To that end, Congress along with the international community and non-governmental organizations must be prepared to assist those communities where these orphans live and receive most of their assistance. Today less than 10 percent of orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) receive any kind of international support—the majority of the support they receive comes from their own communities. I support the sentiments of such organizations as Global Action for Children and other leading NGO's who believe that an effective response to the challenges facing these children must be to strengthen the capacity of families and communities to continue to provide care, protection, and assistance to them in, at a minimum, meeting their basic needs.

According to UNAIDS, an \$800 million U.S. investment in 2009 is needed to provide universal HIV treatment, care, support and prevention services by 2015 to 19 million orphans and vulnerable children. Under the United States leadership against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Act of 2003, 10 percent of all resources devoted to HIV/AIDS have been designated for programs to meet the needs of orphans and vulnerable children. While the U.S. contribution over the past several years has been significant, it will only be successful if we continue to provide the necessary assistance and renew our commitment to pass the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) reauthorization bill.

It is clear that Congress must do its part to meet America's international commitment to

assist orphans and vulnerable children. In that vein, I urge all of my colleagues to recognize World AIDS Orphans Day and join me in supporting swift passage of PEPFAR so that we can continue to meet the needs of millions of children around the world who desperately need our help.

COMMEMORATING PRESIDENT
HEYDAR ALIYEV

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, on May 10, we commemorate the 85th Jubilee of the late President Heydar Aliyev. President Aliyev's significant contributions to the country of Azerbaijan provided a fertile ground for the seeds of democracy to flourish after Soviet rule and have paved the road for Azerbaijan's regional and international success.

Azerbaijan is the gateway to Central Asia. It is on the modern Silk Road which transports goods and services from China through Central Asian countries, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Remarkably, with only 19 years of independence, Azerbaijan has become a key player in this region. After brief independence from 1918–1920, Azerbaijan fell under Russian domination for 70 years. When Soviet troops invaded Baku on January 20, 1990, many died, including innocent civilians, thereby giving birth to the independence movement in the country.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the emergence of a democratic Azerbaijan Republic, the first few years were not easy. While Azerbaijan became the first former Soviet Republic outside the Baltic States with no foreign troops on its soil, it was a small country with powerful neighbors. Mindful of its geography, Azerbaijan developed close ties with the United States, Western Europe, Turkey, and Israel.

In 1993, Heydar Aliyev became President of the Republic, first by appointment under the constitution, then through direct election. A cease-fire in the war with Armenia over the Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan was negotiated and implemented in 1994. During this time, the country's economy was wrecked by war and burdened by the effects of communism. Parliament began enacting laws to make the country friendlier to foreign investment and a member of the international market economy.

In 1994, the "Contract of the Century" was signed between American and western companies and Azerbaijan. The Contract was designed to allow Azerbaijan to develop its energy resources in order to diversify western energy supplies. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline (supported by both the Clinton and Bush Administrations) is now fully operational, and helps to bolster the political and commercial independence of the countries in the region, while diversifying Europe's energy supplies.

President Aliyev was clear regarding Azerbaijan's western orientation. Azerbaijan joined NATO's Partnership for Peace Program in 1994, and has consistently integrated into the Euro-Atlantic security architecture; further

deepening U.S.-Azerbaijani military to military cooperation.

Azerbaijan works with the U.S., both bilaterally and multilaterally, through the GUAM framework (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova) to prevent illegal trafficking and to secure borders. A strong friend of the United States, President Heydar Aliyev offered support for the fight against terrorism immediately after 9/11. Today Azerbaijani troops are in Iraq and Afghanistan with the coalition.

Azerbaijan has excellent relations with Israel and a 2,000 year old Jewish community with representation in Parliament. As a secular country with a predominantly Shiia population, the participation of its troops in Iraq and Afghanistan sends the right message regarding international cooperation.

Because of the late President Aliyev's efforts, today Azerbaijan is a developing democracy with a growing and vibrant economy. There are no longer any doubts regarding the viability of this Republic. The future of U.S.-Azerbaijani relations is bright, as our two countries share values and interests in the region.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SYLACAUGA

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I respectfully ask the attention of the House today to pay recognition the members of First Baptist Church of Sylacauga, Alabama, who on May 25 will celebrate their congregation's 175th anniversary.

On May 25, 1833, George Hill sought the approval of the Tallasahatchie Church to establish a new branch in what would become Sylacauga, Alabama. The small wooden cabin that first served as a meeting place for the church's eight charter members became an independent church in 1835 with 33 members.

Since that time, the church has grown steadily becoming one of the many fixtures of the Sylacauga community. The celebration on May 25 will help pay tribute to the work of First Baptist Church on behalf of its members and community.

I am pleased to recognize the First Baptist Church of Sylacauga today for reaching this important milestone in the history of their congregation, and wish its members all the best in its next 175 years of faith and witnessing in the community.

HONORING DEAN TIPPS

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, today I rise along with my fellow Members of Congress ANNA ESHOO, SAM FARR, MIKE HONDA, BARBARA LEE, DORIS MATSUI, JIM MCNERNEY, GEORGE MILLER, JACKIE SPEIER, PETE STARK, ELLEN TAUSCHER, MIKE

THOMPSON, and LYNN WOOLSEY to congratulate Dean Tipps on his retirement and to honor a man whose career of over 40 years has been dedicated to empowering and bettering the lives of working men and women.

For the last 22 years, Dean Tipps has been executive director of the California State Council of the Service Employees International Union. In this capacity, he has directed the council's statewide legislative and political activities on behalf of the 650,000 California members of the Service Employees International Union. As the director of the largest union in California, Dean Tipps' impact has reached beyond SEIU membership as the growth, innovation, and persistent advocacy of the SEIU has served as an example to other unions in a variety of industries.

Mr. Tipps' vision, leadership, and strategic thinking have had a substantial impact on California's people and politics over the last few decades. Dean's ability to build coalitions and bring together the necessary resources has meant that working people have had a powerful voice in electoral and legislative arenas. Dean Tipps has been a leader in many of the labor movement's victories in California, including the defeat of State Proposition 226, the election of Gray Davis, and labor's special election victories in 2005.

He began his political work in 1976 as the first legislative advocate for the California Tax Reform Association and was deeply involved in the politics of California's property tax revolt. In 1979, he moved to Washington, D.C., to become the founding executive director of Citizens for Tax Justice. At CTJ, Mr. Tipps developed the successful campaign strategy that defeated Howard Jarvis' Proposition 9 in 1980 and was involved in initiative campaigns in Massachusetts, Ohio, and other States. He subsequently went to work for the Service Employees International Union where he became the Public Sector Division Director. In 1986, he returned to California to assume direction of SEIU's California State Council and has continuously led the council except for taking leave in 1988 to navigate the Assembly Democratic Campaign Committee.

In his many capacities and positions with various groups, Dean Tipps has remained constant in his dedication to helping our country fulfill its responsibility to the men and women who labor in service jobs that make our lives more comfortable. He leaves grateful colleagues and a grateful membership. We are proud to add our thanks for his many years of advocacy and our congratulations for all his achievements.

THE DAILY 45: PROMISING LOYOLA STUDENT SHOT TO DEATH

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, everyday, 45 people, on average, are fatally shot in the United States. The recent news of the death of an aspiring journalism student at Loyola University who was killed, May 4, when someone fired shots into her car on Chicago's South Side is tragic and sad. Twenty-year-old Ishma Stewart, a 2005 graduate of Oak Park-River Forest High School, was an intelligent