

percent tax credit for all transit benefits provided to employees, up to \$115 per employee per month. Current law allows businesses, governments, non-profits and employees to purchase tax-free transit benefits. Under the COMMUTER Act, employees could receive up to \$1,380 in free mass transit funds each year, with the employer receiving \$690 in tax credits per employee. This legislation is supported by the American Public Transit Association and all of Chicagoland's public transportation service boards—the Regional Transportation Authority, the Chicago Transit Authority, Metra and Pace.

Forbes recently estimated the average commuter's gasoline cost in the Chicago metro area to be \$6.23 per day. Should businesses take advantage of the tax incentive and provide transit benefits, they would save each of their participating employees an average of roughly \$1,620 per year. As family budgets continue to tighten, an extra \$1,600 to \$3,200 could help ease the burdens of health care and education or help bolster retirement savings.

A new study by BusinessWeek Research Services estimates that 53 percent of employees in Chicago, San Francisco and New York would take public transportation if their employer provided access to current transit benefits. Out of the respondents, 60 percent said their company doesn't provide tax-free commuter benefits.

I believe we must also work to provide long-term solutions to our energy crisis, such as passing long-term tax incentives for research and development of renewable and alternative energy, fuels and vehicles; eliminating the so-called boutique fuels and offering the nation one clean burning fuel; financing energy development projects in China, central Asia and the Gulf to meet Chinese energy needs apart from oil; and increasing fuel economy standards.

But Americans cannot wait ten, twenty or thirty years for the entire restructuring of our energy policy—they need relief at the pumps now. I am proud to offer the COMMUTER Act with Representatives JUDY BIGGERT (R-IL) and PETER ROSKAM (R-IL) and CHRIS SHAYS (R-CT) to help provide that immediate relief. I hope Congress will act swiftly and in a bipartisan manner to pass this important legislation.

#### REMARKS IN RECOGNITION OF JAMES IKEDA

#### HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today to honor and praise one of America's truly fine teachers, James (Jimmy) Ikeda. Mr. Ikeda teaches Biotechnology at San Mateo High School and today was awarded one of six Amgen Awards for Science Teaching Excellence.

Mr. Ikeda has dedicated himself to his students and has led the San Mateo Biotechnology Career Pathway since 2003. Under his leadership, the program has become one of the finest in the Nation. Educators from across the country visit Jimmy's program with hopes of duplicating his success in their communities.

Jimmy Ikeda has a wonderful rapport with students, teachers and parents alike. His enthusiasm for science is infectious and his patience with the young people in his program inspires confidence and encourages them to take on further academic challenges.

The Amgen Award comes with a \$5000 grant for Mr. Ikeda, plus an additional \$5000 for San Mateo High School to use for the expansion of their science program, additional science resources, or professional development of science teachers.

Madam Speaker, our country has a tremendous need for more scientists. Teachers like Jimmy Ikeda are a valuable national resource. Our Nation owes him a debt of gratitude and our highest hopes for his continued success.

#### HONORING DR. NGUYEN QUOC QUAN

#### HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Nguyen Quoc Quan, an American citizen who was arrested and detained by the Government of Vietnam on November 17, 2007 while preparing to distribute pro-democracy leaflets. Earlier today, Dr. Nguyen and two others were convicted in a Vietnamese court under the catchall charge of "terrorism" in a trial lasting less than 6 hours. Dr. Nguyen has received a sentence of 6 months time served and will be allowed to return to the United States within 4 days.

I commend Dr. Nguyen Quoc Quan for his courage and dedication to the peaceful cause of spreading democracy to Vietnam, a country in which the government believes that all those who dare to peacefully speak out against it deserve to be classified as "terrorists." His courage and dedication should be an inspiration to others pursuing the same peaceful goals.

#### CONGRATULATING THE STATE CHAMPION ARGYLE HIGH SCHOOL UIL TEAM

#### HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Argyle High School UIL Team for winning the overall state championship among 3A schools in Texas. In addition to the great team effort put forth by Argyle High School, there were many outstanding individual scores that deserve equal recognition.

The science team took first place while the calculator team finished second overall. Nick Strelke, Erik Katzen, and Thomas Quintana placed second, fourth, and fifth, respectively, in math, while the math team won first place overall. The number sense team also took top honors, with individuals Quintana in first place and Strelke in second. Robbie Ehlers placed second in calculator, and Strelke took fifth. David Graf came in first in biology and third in science, and Kristen Gill took third in computer

applications. Quintana rounded out the team's brilliant showing with a second place finish in both the science competition and the chemistry and physics event.

Argyle High School is well known for having a strong showing in UIL academic competition. This is the second time in three years that Argyle High School has triumphed in its quest for the Texas 3A state championship. Additionally, Argyle High School sent nine students with their team this year, the most they have ever sent to the UIL state academic competition. Before the state competition, Argyle High School placed first overall at both their district and regional meets.

Madam Speaker, it is truly an honor to rise today and commend these students—their commitment to education and competition is apparent. I would also like to thank Argyle High School's teachers and UIL coaches for ensuring that these students have every resource possible to succeed. I am proud to represent these students and teachers in the 26th District of Texas.

#### THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

#### HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, on May 21, 1881, the American Red Cross was founded by Clara Barton. Ms. Barton was a former schoolteacher, clerk in the U.S. Patent Office, and hero during the Civil War where she was nicknamed the "Angel of the Battlefield" for her service to wounded troops.

After successfully lobbying Congress to join and found the American chapter of the International Red Cross and to sign the Geneva Convention, Barton became the organization's first President. She led the American Red Cross for 23 years.

Just over three months after its founding, the Red Cross was called into action. The first major disaster relief operation occurred on August 22, 1881, when the American Red Cross responded to devastation caused by major forest fires in Michigan.

On June 6, 1900, the American Red Cross was given a Congressional charter that mandated the organization to fulfill the provisions of the Geneva Convention, by rendering aid to those wounded during war, providing communication between family members and members of the U.S. military, and administering relief to those affected by disasters during peacetime. The charter also reserves the Red Cross emblem for use only by the Red Cross.

Even though the organization has a Congressional mandate, it is not a federally funded organization. It is a non-profit, charitable organization that receives its funding from public donations.

Today, the American Red Cross is more important than ever in helping Americans who are in need of aid and who are affected by disasters. The organization has six major areas of work that it focuses on today: Disaster relief, community services that assist the needy, communications services and comfort for military members and their family members, collection processing and distribution of blood and blood products, educational programs on health and safety, and international relief and development programs.

Each year, more than a million volunteers and 30,000 Red Cross employees mobilize relief efforts to the victims of more than 63,000 disasters nationwide through a network of more than 700 chapters.

One of the most important and successful roles of the Red Cross has been the organization's role as the primary supplier of lifesaving blood for more than 50 years. As a leader in blood collecting and screening techniques, the Red Cross has helped to develop new techniques that have assisted in providing safer blood to those who need it which helps to lessen complications and transmittable illnesses.

As the Red Cross moved into the 21st century, it has begun to spread out into other life-saving areas. It has concentrated training and public awareness in the fields of First Aid, Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), the use of Automated External Defibrillators (AED), and water safety training.

Although I hope I shall never need the American Red Cross's emergency services and aid, it is good to know that we have such an outstanding organization there if such a situation should arise. The vision of Ms. Barton has come to fruition to the benefit of all Americans, and for this I want to recognize both Clara Barton and the organization that she founded, The American Red Cross.

RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF  
MARJORIE L. POSEY PFAFF

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, I proudly rise today in recognition of the honorable, compassionate, and influential life of the late Marjorie L. Posey Pfaff of Missouri's Fifth Congressional District which I proudly represent. Marge leaves behind a legacy of a life dutifully fulfilled and a state proudly served. Throughout Marge's lifetime, her love of living, enthusiasm for her relationships with the many friends she held so dear, and unwavering devotion to not only her career in real-estate, but also to Missouri politics revealed Marge as an unequaled, exemplary leader in this great state.

Born to Clyde O. and Crystal V. Alexander, Marge began what became an honorable, dignified life on October 10, 1926 in Chillicothe, Missouri. Married to the late Francis Leon (Toby) Pfaff on December 19, 1977, Marge began a family that would go with her from Chillicothe to Independence, Missouri, the hometown of President Harry S. Truman and Marge's hallowed resting place. Her son, Robert Posey and his wife Dana remain in Independence, continuing to share the gift of generosity which their mother so dearly possessed.

Marge began her long career in real-estate in Chillicothe, where she owned the Gaslight-Pfaff Realty Company. From this small operation in Chillicothe, Marge would later work for ReMax and finally Reece and Nichols in Independence. Marge began her long career as nearly one in a million women who would later come to compose a much larger contingent of our real-estate industry. Marge let her light of experience and charm shine, earning the Missouri Association of Realtors salesperson of

the year in 1997 and as the Kansas City Association of Realtors salesperson of the year in 1996. As a female pioneer in her craft, Marge tirelessly sought to make possible the success and equality of opportunity for women in not only the real-estate industry, but also in politics.

Serving as a president of the Independence Young Matrons and the Independence Sanitarium and Hospital Auxiliary, Marge found a voice amongst equals who would come to herald her as a leader not only for her deep connectivity to influential individuals in her state, connections she earned through her sharp wit and unforgettable personality, but also because of her steadfast dedication to the success of her ideals. She forged ahead in all of the many political activities in which she was involved, never for personal gain, but for the greater potential of providing equal opportunity for all. Her service as the president of the Women's Council of Realtors and beloved participation in the Real Estate Political Action Committee afforded not only the great state of Missouri, but also our Nation an opportunity to share in the historical breakthrough of a unique and powerful woman to the apex of both respect and heroism in whose likes few before her have been held. As Federal political coordinator for the Fifth Congressional District, Marge proved only what I knew to expect from her since the first time she and I met, nothing but excellence and caring commitment.

We rejoice in the life of Marge today not only because she, like so many, sought to share in the American dream of the equality of opportunity for all of our neighbors, but because she tirelessly endeavored to make it a reality. Overcoming the adversity that once lay before her, a woman whose very heart and soul worked to shake the male-dominated establishment around her, Marge creates for not only all women, but all those held behind by the oppression of myopia, a bastion of hope and a model of success to guide them all to a promise of equality that we too often find neglected.

Madam Speaker, please join me in expressing our appreciation to my dearly departed friend, Marjorie L. Posey Pfaff, for her loving devotion and limitless dedication to serving the residents of Kansas City, the State of Missouri, and our Nation. Strong, sustainable societies are built upon a foundation of goodness and dedication. It is our hometown heroes, like Marge, the well revered and benevolent, who ensure the longevity of, and strengthen, our free and democratic way of life. May God continue to bless Marge as she lives on forever in our memories.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN BARROW

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Mr. BARROW. Madam Speaker, on May 8, 2008, I was unavoidably detained and missed Roll No. 295, on agreeing to the Hensarling amendment to H.R. 5818. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. JERRY BEASLEY'S SERVICE TO CONCORD UNIVERSITY

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 13, 2008*

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Jerry L. Beasley and his 23 years of service to the students and faculty of Concord University. Concord University is home to over 2700 of West Virginia's best and brightest students and one of the finest public universities in the Nation. Since 1985, Jerry has led the faculty and staff of Concord University as President of this great institution and is now set to retire on June 30, 2008.

Born and raised in Hinton, West Virginia, Jerry has devoted his life to improving our State's educational opportunities. He earned his bachelor's degree from Harvard College in 1966 and his master's in education degree in 1969. He worked at Harvard as an assistant to the admissions committee for the college before joining the West Virginia Commission of Higher Education. In 1972, he came to Concord College as a special assistant to the President before being hired by Waynesburg College as Vice President for Planning and Development from 1974-1982 where his efforts more than tripled gifts and grants for operations.

In 1979, he was awarded a Ph.D. from Stanford University where his doctoral research focused on innovations in State government. His last stop before returning to Concord was at West Virginia Wesleyan, where Jerry served as Vice President for Planning and Development. In 1985, Jerry became President at Concord, and in what would be the first of many signs of his lifelong dedication to the institution of higher learning, he decided to forgo the traditional inauguration and instead devoted the funds and efforts for the ceremony to the support of student scholarships.

During his tenure, Jerry has been a godsend to Concord University, helping it to expand and flourish, and has played a powerful role in developing one of the largest endowments of any West Virginia public college. At close to \$23 million, the Concord University Foundation is number one among small public colleges and universities in the state. He also oversaw major changes and improvements to the campus from the physical plant, Marsh Hall, the science building and new technology centers on campus. From special assistant to the President to being installed as President himself, Jerry has left his mark on virtually every aspect of the University and touched countless lives around him.

Jerry's list of accomplishments far exceeds his years of service. He has nurtured generations of young minds and helped shape the higher education system in West Virginia. His dedication to his work and commitment to helping others are examples for us all.

I again congratulate Jerry on his 23 years of dedicated service to Concord University and wish his wife Jean and himself continued success in all their future endeavors here in Athens.