

region in Shanxi, we instituted the relevant administrative proceedings, and the court just refused to take the case. Such phenomena are quite widespread. Although some cases were filed and the litigation fees were paid, the courts kept postponing the hearings. Four years ago, when I started administrative proceedings in the Hanyin area in Shaanxi, I was told by the local political and judicial commission that there wouldn't be any court hearings. Even now there still hasn't been any court hearing.

III. BASED ON THE ABOVE FACTS, WE ARE MAKING THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS

As the aforementioned facts mainly include the harm directly brought upon house churches by the judiciary or law enforcement, we hope that the international community can give more attention so as to increase surveillance and reduce such harm. We hope that the U.S. government will carry out more specific implementations in the following areas:

1. Urge and help the Chinese government to draw up the Religious Freedom Law, which should be consistent with universal values.
2. Have more American officials or those at the U.S. embassy in China attend worship services in house churches in China.
3. Have American government officials or staff at the U.S. Embassy in China periodically communicate with human rights lawyers to learn about their situations.

H.R. 3585, THE SOLAR TECHNOLOGY ROADMAP ACT

HON. DANIEL B. MAFFEI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Mr. MAFFEI. Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak on H.R. 3585, the Solar Technology Roadmap Act. By establishing a road mapping process for solar research, development, and demonstration, the bill provides essential aid for the solar industry. I offer my enthusiastic support.

Solar technology presents one of our most promising renewable energy sources. In fact, in my own district, the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF), is conducting innovative research pertaining to solar energy and putting it to use. Several of the buildings on campus have solar panels that provide electricity for the school. The 40-kilowatt photovoltaic array on the roof of Walters Hall, made possible by state incentives, has the ability to generate electricity even on overcast days.

Thin film PV technology and molecular PV technology are of particular importance as they are the future of photovoltaic technology. By using this second generation of solar technology, we will be able to significantly lower costs while increasing conversion efficiencies.

I also specifically encourage demonstration projects in the 1 to 2 megawatt range. Increasing the energy productivity on these technologies, I believe, will have the greatest impact on the solar industry.

I congratulate Representative Giffords on her innovative legislation and look forward to seeing its effect on our renewable energy future.

HONORING THE LIFE OF BILLY HINDS SMITH

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, Bill's family asked me to say a few words about my memories of him as I first knew him and as so many of you knew him as you worked with him.

If I were talking about someone else, I would say something like "those of you who knew him in his professional position" or something like that, but that would be such a wrong idea of what Bill Smith was and why we all have such wonderful memories of him.

He was Bill Smith—Principal, Superintendent, friend, cohort, buddy.

I've often wondered if when people are experiencing the "best of times" if they knew it was the best of times.

I didn't know those early years at Richland High School would be some of the best years of my life, the best years of many of our lives, but I knew it was great fun and great excitement and Bill Smith made it so.

His own creativity brought out the creativity of the rest of us.

Whether you were on the ball field

On the stage

In the science club

Or the yearbook staff

He made it important to be a winner and enjoy the role you played.

His own sense of what was important and what was trivial infected us all and has stayed with me for years.

The trivial was treated by him as amusing. He just got a kick out of people and events.

He was a great storyteller and did some very good impersonations, but he didn't have a mean or petty bone in his body.

He loved what he did and he loved that school. The newness of a school can be exciting in and of itself, but the establishment of traditions, the development of an identity, those stay with a faculty, graduates, and a community forever.

He just had so much joy in it all. He was unabashedly proud and loyal to the school—and encouraging of all of us who were a part of it.

The whole community was in such a period of growth, and Bill was such a part of that so that the school and the community couldn't be separated.

It was as if the future were all in front of us, and he had found himself leading the band.

Paula Good said it so well after we talked and shared some memories. She said, "You know, I often felt he was a little bit surprised to find himself in his position."

I agree. And that added so much to the energy and enthusiasm he had.

He was never about his position or title.

And that is what helped him look at it so as to enjoy and soak up every day.

He approached life with such humor and such humanness.

He was funny and fun-loving and wouldn't take himself too seriously or let any of us around him.

He was so positive about everything. The smile never left his face, and the humor was always right on the surface.

I made so many mistakes in those years as a young teacher.

I finally decided to ask permission and seek some advice, but in the beginning, I just came up with an idea and did it!

And when it didn't work out exactly as I had planned, he would walk down to my room, he would put his hands behind his back, sort of lean back, grin and say, "Well, Ms. Granger, what have we been up to now?"

The time that remains vivid in my mind was a day when the school was closed but the yearbook staff was trying to meet a deadline.

They all trooped to the school to meet me but we had never checked to see if the school was unlocked, just assumed it would be.

It wasn't, but one of the kids said, "No problem, Ms. Granger, I can let us in."

He did and we were hard at work, when I walked Mr. Smith, the principal!

Same stance, same words, except he was accompanied by some of the city's finest—in blue uniforms.

A neighbor had reported a break in of the school. They had called Bill and all came to see who had come into the school from the roof.

Ooooh. Not good . . .

From Bill . . .

Same grin. Same question, and some advice he gave to me more than once: "Try it once. If it doesn't work, don't do it again."

That was the way he managed.

He never doused the enthusiasm. Never stopped the flow of energy. Always encouraging and believing anything was possible

With his teachers

With the students

With the community.

There are so many memories of that time and all are good ones.

And every picture in my mind has him smiling and finishing with his chuckle, and he is probably still thinking: "Ms. Granger, what are you up to now?"

TRIBUTE TO RALPH KLAASEN

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, San Clemente, California has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. I rise today to recognize and honor one of those individuals: Mr. Ralph Klaasen. On Friday, October 16, 2009, Ralph passed away. He will be deeply missed.

Ralph, a San Clemente resident since 1946, was a strong advocate for the south Orange County senior community for decades, serving as president of South County Senior Services and helping raise funds to build two San Clemente senior centers.

Ralph Klaasen, along with Rex Tyner, co-chaired a successful campaign to build the current senior center at 242 Avenida Del Mar in 1982 and then another campaign to build its larger successor, the Dorothy Visser Senior Center, now under construction at 121 Avenida Victoria.

Ralph also helped rally support to build Casa de Seniors, an affordable senior-housing complex. Through his work with South County Senior Services, he helped establish and administer other senior centers and programs from Dana Point to Laguna Hills.

Born in San Diego and raised in Whittier, Ralph attended Whittier College before enlisting in the Navy during World War II. He served in the Pacific Theater from Guadalcanal to Okinawa. "There were 13 major battles and I was in 12 of them," he once recalled. "It was a long ordeal."

When the war ended in 1945, Ralph Klaasen returned to his parents' house in Dana Point. He went to work in San Clemente and worked for the city for a short period in the 1940's but spent most of his career working in banking for Bank of America, Laguna Federal Savings and Great American while raising a family in town.

As Laguna Federal's longtime branch manager, Ralph was involved in community events and local charities. In 1975, the San Clemente Chamber of Commerce saluted him as the city's Citizen of the Year.

He retired in 1985 but continued to contribute to his community. In 2001, the city honored him on San Clemente's Wall of Recognition.

Ralph's dedication to his community is a testament to a life lived well and a legacy that will continue. I extend my condolences to Ralph's family and friends; although Ralph may be gone, the light and goodness he brought to the world remain and will never be forgotten.

MILITARY HONORS FOR OUR
NATION'S HEROES

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, please join me in supporting a bill which I have introduced, "Providing Military Honors For Our Nation's Heroes Act," H.R. 3886, to reimburse expenses of volunteers who provide military funeral honors at veterans' funerals.

Because thousands of service members are deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan while thousands of World War II and Korean War veterans die each day, there is simply not enough military available to provide a proper funeral detail for these funerals. Some families of veterans have had to "make do" with a CD playing taps. I am saddened by this outrageous situation and determined to provide proper military funeral honors for all families who request them.

This bill will allow reimbursement to volunteers from members of veterans' service orga-

nizations, VSOs, and other organizations approved by the Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Affairs, VA. Transportation costs and other expenses, such as cleaning uniforms, incurred in providing funeral honors details will be reimbursed. A second change will allow reimbursement to details that are requested by funeral homes and the VA, as well as the Department of Defense.

Currently, members of VSOs and other volunteers can assist the military by providing a color guard, pallbearers, a bugler or firing party, but the law does not address ceremonies in which VSOs render honors without military representation. My bill will allow volunteers to be reimbursed even when no military person is a part of the honor guard. This change will increase the number of honors details available to families.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 2996—Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010.

Requesting Member: Congressman KEVIN BRADY, Texas 8th Congressional District

Bill Number: H.R. 2996—Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2010

Project: Big Thicket National Preserve
Account: National Park Service, Land Acquisition

Requesting Entity: The Conservation Fund, Texas Office

Address of Requesting Entity: 101 W 6th Street, Suite 601, Austin, TX

The Big Thicket National Preserve is one of America's ecological treasures. It is an unusually shaped preserve whose boundaries include land once owned by major timber companies. This funding represents the final year in a seven year land acquisition program. This request enables the National Park Service to acquire critical land within the congressionally authorized boundary of the Big Thicket National Preserve to diversify the economic potential of southeast Texas through increased tourism opportunities. This project works only with voluntary, "willing-seller" landowners.

The \$5,000,000 for this project included in this final conference report combined with previous funding will allow the National Park Service to purchase over 2500 acres of land on 23 tracts acquired from willing sellers or by voluntary donation.

H.R. 3619, COAST GUARD
AUTHORIZATION ACT

HON. DANIEL B. MAFFEI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 29, 2009

Mr. MAFFEI. Madam Speaker, I would like to express my support for H.R. 3619, the Coast Guard Authorization Act. This is an important bill with many essential provisions, and I would like to thank the Chairman and Ranking Member for all of their hard work. This legislation authorizes \$10 billion in Fiscal Year 2010 funding for the Coast Guard, while also including several important provisions such as cruise vessel safety and port security. Congress has instructed the Coast Guard to do more and more in recent years, yet has not provided them the funding necessary to accomplish these objectives. This legislation provides the Coast Guard with the resources to meet Congressional directives. Unfortunately, I was unable to vote on this legislation, as I was on official business back in my district with HUD Secretary Donovan. I assure you that, if I was able to be here in Washington, I would have voted for this important legislation.

H.R. 3619 does a great deal to improve national security. The legislation improves on port security, and directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to submit a report on the threat of a terrorist attack on gas or chemical cargo shipments. Additionally, the Coast Guard Authorization Act combats alien smuggling by authorizing punishment for anyone who is bringing in people who are considered to be in the United States illegally. Provisions such as these are important for protecting our country from the threat of terrorism and ensuring our citizens are safe.

Once again, I would like to commend Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman OBERSTAR and Ranking Member MICA on this strong legislation, and voice my support for H.R. 3619, the Coast Guard Authorization Act.