

and volunteering in her church as a Sunday School teacher, choir director and pianist.

On December 15th, her friends and family will celebrate her birthday in her room at Talladega Health Care in Talladega. Today I would like to wish Mrs. Ruby Hartley Barton a very Happy 98th Birthday.

PROMOTING JOBS FOR VETERANS ACT OF 2009

HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Mr. BUYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Promoting Jobs for Veterans Act of 2009.

Last week the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that during the month of November there were over one million unemployed veterans in this country. The report also showed that the unemployment rate among our newest cohort of veterans ages 18–24 remains extremely high at 20 percent. Moreover, 700,000 of that million are between the ages of 35 and 64, the years of both the highest earning power and the highest financial needs to pay mortgages and tuitions. I ask unanimous consent that the relevant page from the December Bureau of Labor Statistics Report be included in the RECORD with my remarks.

These numbers paint a very disturbing picture of the obstacles veterans face. These men and women have put their lives on the line in the defense of freedom and democracy around the globe, so we must do a better job of helping these warriors find suitable employment opportunities when they return home.

That is why I have introduced the Promoting Jobs for Veterans Act of 2009. The first title of this bill focuses on providing funding and incentives for veterans to pursue training and education that would provide employment opportunities for them in the new economy. It would create a new troops to teachers program to pay new teachers who are veterans and are teaching in a rural area \$500 a month stipend. It would also provide a zip code based housing stipend for unemployed veterans who are participating in a VA approved OJT/Apprenticeship Program.

The second title of the bill focuses on promoting and expanding veteran owned and service disabled veteran owned small businesses. It would reauthorize the VA Veteran Owned Small Business Loan Guaranty Program which would guarantee loans for veteran owned small businesses up to \$500,000. It would also allow VA to enter into sole source contracts with veteran owned small businesses in the same way they can with 8(a) firms.

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, firms with fewer than 500 employees accounted for 64 percent—or 14.5 million—of the 22.5 million net new jobs between 1993 and the third quarter of 2008. I firmly believe that veteran owned small businesses can become a driving force in this nation's recovery and this bill will help make that a reality.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to co-sponsor this needed legislation.

HONORING ERROTABERE RANCH

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Errotabere Ranch upon being the recipient of the 2009 Baker, Peterson and Franklin Ag Business Award by the Greater Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Dan Errotabere of Errotabere Ranch will be recognized at the annual Agricultural Awards luncheon on November 18, 2009 in Fresno, California.

Errotabere Ranch is a family operated farm in Riverdale, California and was first established in the 1920's by Mr. Jean Errotabere. By 1979, when Mr. Errotabere passed away, the farm had expanded to include 800 acres of cotton. Today, brothers Dan, Jean Jr., and Remi operate a six thousand-acre diversified farming operation which includes pima cotton, almonds, pistachios, tomatoes, garlic, onions, alfalfa seed, wheat, lettuce and cantaloupes in the Riverdale and the Five Points areas. Each brother is responsible for a specific facet of the business including the finances, crop production and farm equipment. Over the years the family has applied progressive water techniques and technology to better utilize the scarce water resources on the ranch.

The Errotabere family has a long history of community involvement. They have held many leadership roles in the agricultural industry and community organizations. Dan has been an advocate for agricultural water issues, serving on several water-related boards. Dan is also heavily involved with the Fresno County Farm Bureau, currently serving as president. All three brothers are actively involved with Riverdale schools and the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology at California State University, Fresno. The family supports Community Medical Centers, Children's Hospital Central California and has been active in the local United Cerebral Palsy Association.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Errotabere Ranch upon being honored as the 2009 Baker, Peterson and Franklin Ag Business Award. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Errotabere Ranch many years of continued success.

INTRODUCTION OF THE "NO SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS FOR PRISONERS ACT OF 2009"

HON. JOHN S. TANNER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Mr. TANNER. Madam Speaker, today, I have introduced legislation that will treat retroactive Social Security and Supplemental Security Income payments due to prisoners consistent with the way ongoing monthly payments are treated.

The "No Social Security Benefits for Prisoners Act of 2009" would prevent retroactive Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefit payments from being issued to individuals while they are in prison, along with beneficiaries in violation of conditions of parole or probation, or who are fleeing to avoid pros-

ecution for a felony or a crime punishable by sentence of more than one year.

The Social Security Act already bars payment of current monthly benefits to such individuals. This bill ensures this prohibition applies to retroactive benefit payments as well, and allows payments to be paid once the beneficiary is no longer prohibited from receiving payments under the provisions of this bill.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH IN ROANOKE, TEXAS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I stand today to recognize and congratulate St. Peter Lutheran Church in Roanoke, Texas, as they celebrate the groundbreaking for their first facility.

St. Peter Lutheran Church was founded in September of 2006, when a small group of 37 families from Roanoke and surrounding cities in North Texas decided to plant a new church in their rapidly growing community. The congregation met under the guidance of Pastor Robert Baldur in a school gym, and later in the Roanoke Recreation Center.

The church's small beginnings did not stop them from reaching out to the community. Members of St. Peter Lutheran Church actively contribute to their community in many ways, such as participating in Habitat for Humanity, providing free games and activities for local children at city events, holding food and supply drives for local food pantries, among countless other acts of generosity. The church even has its own barbequeing team—the Holy Smokers—who use their grilling and smoking talents to serve others.

The church now encompasses over 100 families, and is still growing. Their rapidly increasing size has led them to purchase 11 acres of land in Roanoke, where they will break ground on Sunday, December 6, 2009, and build their first multi-use church facility. Future plans also include a school, Concordia Academy, which will one day serve and educate children throughout North Texas.

Madam Speaker, St. Peter Lutheran Church is a shining light in Roanoke, Texas. I am extremely proud to represent Pastor Baldur and the entire church congregation in the 26th Congressional District. Their service to the community is valued and appreciated, and I look forward to watching the church grow, and observing the positive impact they will continue to have in North Texas.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TUSCO COMPOSITE SQUADRON OH-277, CIVIL AIR PATROL, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE AUXILIARY

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, the Tusco Composite Squadron, founded in 1989, is celebrating 20 years of commendable service in Tuscarawas County, and

Whereas, three founding members—Lt. Betty Turnbull, Lt. Marilyne Shanks and Lt. Wayne Shanks—have served their unit since its inception, and

Whereas, the Tusco Composite Squadron has assisted the community by securing crash sites, helping with disaster relief efforts, and other services, and

Whereas, the Tusco Composite Squadron has been the recipient of numerous awards pertaining to their work and services; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that along with the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend the Tusco Composite Squadron OH-277 on 20 years of service to the community and the Air Force.

**NORTHWEST STRAITS MARINE
CONSERVATION INITIATIVE ACT
(H.R. 1672)**

SPEECH OF

HON. RICK LARSEN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 7, 2009

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative Reauthorization Act, H.R. 1672.

Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s the marine waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the San Juan Islands and northern Puget Sound, collectively known as the Northwest Straits, experienced substantial environmental decline. This was concerning because local communities rely on the resources of the Northwest Straits to create good-paying jobs and many iconic and endangered species, including orca whales and Pacific salmon, rely on the Northwest Straits for food and habitat.

In 1997, Senator PATTY MURRAY and Congressman Jack Metcalf convened a blue-ribbon commission to examine ways to reverse this trend and restore the health of the Northwest Straits. In 1998, Congress adopted the Murray-Metcalf Commission's recommendations when it authorized the creation of the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Commission, a grassroots organization which does not exercise regulatory authority but harnesses the energy of local communities to develop and implement conservation and restoration projects.

For the last 11 years, the Northwest Straits Commission has done great work to restore the Northwest Straits. Their projects have helped create jobs and protect endangered and threatened species.

The Northwest Straits Commission has demonstrated the ability to implement challenging recovery projects. The Commission used \$4.5 million of funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to remove hundreds of acres of abandoned fishing gear from the seafloor. This project created jobs for out-of-work fisherman and saved the lives of endangered species.

The legislation under consideration on the House floor today would extend the legislative authorization of the Northwest Straits Commis-

sion for an additional five years. It will increase tribal participation in the Commission and improve oversight of its activities.

H.R. 1672 has earned the support of our local community—I have received letters of support for this legislation from elected officials, businesspeople and environmentalists in every county in which the Northwest Straits Commission operates.

Similar legislation has been introduced in the United States Senate by my friend Senator PATTY MURRAY. I hope that our joint effort will help to protect and restore the Northwest Straits for the people, fish, and threatened wildlife which rely on it.

**CELEBRATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF THE
BERLIN WALL**

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, it was 20 years ago November 9, 1989, that the most notorious symbol of the Cold War, The Iron Curtain, came crashing down. When the Berlin Wall was opened for "private trips abroad", thousands lined up at check points demanding passage. In the following days and weeks, hundreds celebrated by physically tearing down the concrete division so completely that very little of the actual wall remains.

The Berlin Wall was erected by the German Democratic Republic in 1961 separating Eastern and Western Germany to stop migration of East Germans trying to escape communism. The wall had many deterrents for those looking for escape. Its total border length around West Berlin was ninety-six miles with forty-one miles of wire mesh fencing, sixty-five miles of anti-vehicle trenches, and seventy-nine miles of contact or signal fence. It has been reported that between 136 and 192 people were killed on the Berlin Wall and about 200 persons injured by shooting while attempting to escape between 1961 and 1989.

November 9, 2009, two decades later, thousands cheered as colorfully decorated mammoth dominos set along a mile-long route were toppled; symbolizing the wall coming down and the fall of communist countries in Eastern Europe. On this day, we remember those brave, proud people who stood up to say no more!

HONORING ANDREW SCOTT RICE

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor an amazing boy from Texas. His name is Drew Scott Rice, and he is a cancer survivor and amputee. Drew has experienced some difficult times, but his strong character has made it possible for him to live a healthy active life.

At the age of six, Drew was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma Cancer on April 30, 2004. His treatment consisted of fourteen rounds of

chemotherapy and the amputation of his left leg.

Drew returned to school on crutches after missing nine months for treatment. Even with missing so much school, he was able to continue his academics at the same grade level.

Even more surprisingly, Drew began playing baseball only three months post treatment. Drew has successfully adapted to his prosthetic leg as if it was second nature. He has played a total sixteen seasons between two leagues as a 1st baseman, 3rd baseman, and pitcher.

Drew has also shared his strength with other patients. He has visited cancer victims and amputees at San Antonio area hospitals and homes to offer encouragement and hope that they too can overcome their hardships.

As of December 10, 2009 Drew has been cancer free for five years. I am honored to speak of Andrew's strength here today and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Drew as an inspiration and role model to those who suffer from cancer and or amputation.

HONORING MARIA GROVNER

HON. JACK KINGSTON

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in order to recognize Georgia's Middle School Counselor of the Year, Maria Grovner. A native of McIntosh County Georgia, Ms. Grovner is the middle school counselor at Creekland Middle School in Gwinnett County Georgia. Before receiving the honor of being named Middle School Counselor of The Year, Ms. Grovner was recognized as Gwinnett County's Counselor of the Year and as the Region II Middle School Counselor of the Year.

As a result of Ms. Grovner's hard work and numerous undertakings, it is no surprise that she has received these accolades. In addition to implementing numerous student activities and promoting diversity and early college awareness at the middle school level, Ms. Grovner coordinates a Peer Leadership Conference for approximately 600 middle school peer leaders. Additionally, the Georgia School Counselors Association is fortunate to have Ms. Grovner serving as the Mentoring Program Co-Chair and as the Middle School Worksetting Vice-President. As Worksetting Vice-President, Ms. Grovner assists other middle school counselors throughout the state in implementing the best practices in their counseling programs.

Ms. Grovner's dedication to her profession and the students she serves is admirable and exemplary. Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Maria Grovner as the State of Georgia's Middle School Counselor of the Year.

VILLAGE OF ARGYLE IN MISSOURI

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Village of Argyle,