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The Commission presents awards annually in celebration of National Women's History Month in March. This year there are 17 women being honored, including entrepreneurs, educators and hometown heroes whose community service is considered extraordinary.

This year's Education Award winner is Karyn Malinowski of Manville. Karyn is the director of the Rutgers Equine Science Center at the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station in New Brunswick.

Karyn has been a faculty member at Rutgers University since 1978. She is believed to be the first female equine-extension specialist in the nation.

I am pleased to congratulate Karyn Malinowski for her outstanding efforts and share her good work with my colleagues in the United States Congress and the American people.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INCLUSIVE HOME DESIGN ACT

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 10, 2009

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to announce the introduction of the Inclusive Home Design Act. This critical legislation will make more new homes accessible, or inclusive, for people with disabilities. I want to thank my colleagues SAM FARR, MADELEINE BORDALLO, and JIM MCGOVERN for joining me today as original cosponsors of this legislation. I would also like to thank Eleanor Smith of Concrete Change and Beto Barrera and the staff of Access Living for their tireless efforts to move this legislation forward. This legislation is supported by the Paralyzed Veterans of America and many other national and local disabilities rights organizations.

Currently, only five percent of new single-family homes and townhouses built with federal assistance require any design features that make it possible for people with mobility impairments to live in or even visit the homes. The remaining 95 percent are built with unnecessary architectural barriers.

The Inclusive Home Design Act is based on the concept of integrating basic accessibility features into newly-built homes and builds on the movement of establishing "visitability" standards. Visitability is an affordable, sustainable, and inclusive design approach that will improve the availability of accessible housing for individuals with mobility impairments, including disabled veterans and seniors.

Specifically, the legislation would require all newly-built single-family homes and townhouses receiving federal funds to meet four accessibility standards:

First, there must be at least one accessible, or "zero step," entrance into the home.

Second, the doorways on the main level of the home must be wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair.

Three, at least one bathroom on the main floor must be wheelchair accessible.

And finally, light switches and thermostats must be at a reachable height from a wheelchair.

Adopting these standards for a single family home is not prohibitively expensive. The average added cost for homes built with accessibility features is between \$100 and \$600. Retrofitting a home, on the other hand, can cost several thousand dollars.

Architects and builders would also have latitude in how they comply with the act. For example, the zero step entrance can be placed at the front, side, or back of the home. The accessible route can even go through an attached garage. In addition, the zero step entrance requirements can be waived if the terrain makes compliance impractical.

When homes are accessible, it benefits not only today's disability community but also all of us who have friends and family members with disabilities. Accessible homes also benefit many people who are not currently disabled but may experience a temporary injury or permanent disability during their lifetimes. In fact, 3 out of 10 people will face a disability before age 67.

In addition, by making more new homes accessible, we also make it possible for more seniors to age at home—an issue that is increasingly important as the population grows older. In 2000, there were 30.5 million people between 65–84 years old; that number will grow to 47 million by 2020. 58 percent of people over the age of 80 suffer from some kind of physical impairment. Often, the prohibitive cost of making existing homes accessible deprives seniors of their independence and pushes them into nursing homes. Allowing more people to age at home will both save taxpayers money and help improve the quality of life for our seniors.

Many towns and states have already incorporated visitability standards. This list includes Chicago, Naperville, Bolingbrook, and Urbana, Illinois; Atlanta, Georgia; Iowa City, Iowa; St. Petersburg, Florida; Pima County, Arizona; Vermont; Texas; Kansas; Minnesota; and others. The United Kingdom also passed a law in March 1998 mandating that every new home become accessible. A federal law in the United States will build on the momentum that has already been created.

Passage of the Inclusive Home Design Act would mean that all homes built with federal dollars would be accessible, and the number of homes available for people with disabilities would be greatly increased. I am looking forward to working with my colleagues to pass this legislation, the Inclusive Home Design Act, into law.

COMMENDING THE OUTSTANDING WOMEN OF SOMERSET COUNTY

HON. LEONARD LANCE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 10, 2009

Mr. LANCE. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of National Women's History Month, and I would like to congratulate a number of outstanding women who will be recognized at the Somerset County's Commission on the Status of Women awards in New Jersey's Seventh Congressional District.

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Month in March. This year there are 17 women being honored, including entrepreneurs, educators and hometown heroes whose community service is considered extraordinary.

This year's Education Award winner is Helen "Chickie" Haines of Hillsborough. Chickie has helped educate thousands of students in her 38 years with the Bound Brook School District.

She started as an elementary school teacher, and in 2004 became principal of the Lafayette and LaMonte elementary schools, earning the "Who's Who Among America's Teachers" award in 2002. Chickie has served on Hillsborough's Township Committee, Zoning Board, environmental commission and open space committee.

I am pleased to congratulate Helen Haines on her outstanding efforts and share her good work with my colleagues in the United States Congress and the American people.

STOCK MARKET RECOVERY ACT, H.R. 1406

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 10, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, the stock market's loss over the last six weeks suggests that the policies of this Congress are magnifying the depths of this recession, not aiding its recovery. Let's look at recent events:

1. Stocks are now traded in a bear market that declined 20 percent since the President's inauguration. This decline is faster than any other President since the First World War. The decline is steeper than Presidents Hoover or Roosevelt experienced. In fact, by this point in the Roosevelt administration, the market showed gains.

2. The market decline accelerated as the Congress and President promulgated their policies:

a. From the year's-end to the inauguration, the market fell 5 percent.

b. From inauguration to Secretary Geithner's speech, the market rose 2.5 percent in anticipation of good economic policies.

c. From Secretary Geithner's speech to the budget release, the market fell 12 percent.

d. From the budget release to March 6, the market fell another 11.2 percent.

As details of congressional legislation and the Administration's plans were published, the market accelerated its fall. A number of "recession-proof" industries lost value after the President released his budget. Oil prices rose nearly 4 percent, but the value of American energy companies fell by the following amounts up to 20 percent.

In other words, Americans are paying higher gas prices while the American companies that hire our people for this sector expect to see lower returns on capital. This is not a good trend and sends a strong market signal to serve the U.S. market (where prices are higher) from offshore facilities (where costs are lower).

Congress should consider more than just spending and borrowing from abroad. Key policies that would make stocks more attractive include:

Suspending the Mark-to-Market rule that makes banks look less valuable than they actually are.

Reinstating the Uptick rule so that short sellers do not have an advantage in driving down the value of stocks.

Today, I am introducing the "Stock Market Recovery Act of 2009," mandating the SEC to implement these reforms. I am confident this will be a first step continuing the 4 percent rise we have seen today.

THRIFT SAVINGS FUND IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 10, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Thrift Savings Fund Improvement Act. This legislation expands the investment options available to congressional and other federal employees by creating a precious metals investment fund in the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Adding a precious metals fund to the TSP will enhance the plan's ability to offer congressional employees a wide range of investment options that can provide financial security even during difficult economic conditions.

The Thrift Savings Plan is one of the most important benefits offered to congressional employees. A strong TSP can obviously play a key role in attracting and retaining talented individuals to serve in the legislative branch. Adding a precious metals option will strengthen the TSP. In the last year, the price of gold rose by 5.5 percent while the Dow Jones experienced one of its worst years ever, falling by 33.8 percent, while the NASDAQ declined by 40.5 percent!

Recent gains aside, precious metals have a number of features that make them a sound part of a prudent investment strategy. In particular, inflation does not erode the value of precious metals is not eroded over time. Thus, precious metals can serve as a valuable "inflation hedge." Precious metals also maintain, or even increase, their value during times of stock market instability, such as what the country is currently experiencing. Thus, investments in precious metals can help ensure that an investment portfolio maintains its value during times of economic instability.

Federal employees could greatly benefit from the protection against inflation and economic downturns provided by prudent investments in precious metals. I, therefore, once again urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Thrift Savings Fund Improvement Act.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

HON. CAROL SHEA-PORTER

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 10, 2009

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of International Women's Day. Globally, women have made great advances in recent years. Currently, there is the largest number of women serving in Congress in the history of the United States, including 9 new female members of the House of Representatives and 3 new female Senators. Between 1945 and 1995, the number of woman

parliamentarians internationally quadrupled. Women like Benazir Bhutto, the first woman prime minister of a Muslim country, are demonstrative of the truly universal role women are playing in leadership and the progress we have made.

While these numbers are encouraging, there is still a long journey to true global equality for women. Seventy percent of the 1.2 billion individuals living in poverty are women. Similarly, eighty percent of world's refugees are women. While women control \$14 trillion in assets, they only own 1 percent of the world's land. Women are responsible for two-thirds of the world's work, but are paid only 10 percent of the world's income. In third-world countries, women continue to be oppressed, mutilated, and trafficked and they do not have the representation to stand up to these injustices.

As a woman, I wanted to take the opportunity to speak to the progress we have made and the progress we have yet to achieve. I look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress to ensure the continued progress for women internationally and at home.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 10, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. 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. 1105;

Requesting Member: Congressman SAM GRAVES

Bill Number: H.R. 1105

Project expected to be included in the FY09 Omnibus Appropriations Act:

Description of Request: I am requesting funding for the Missouri Western State University, St. Joseph, MO project in fiscal year 2009. The entity to receive funding for this project is Missouri Western State University located at 4525 Downs Drive, St. Joseph, MO, 64507. The funding would be used for the acquisition of technology and equipment for Institute for Industrial and Applied Life Sciences. This funding is located in the Higher Education FIPSE account.

COMMENDING THE OUTSTANDING WOMEN OF SOMERSET COUNTY

HON. LEONARD LANCE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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This year's Education Award winner is Carole Payne of Boonton. Carole serves as the school nurse at Crim School. Carole helps develop health policies and procedures in the Bridgewater-Raritan School District. The New Jersey Department of Health asked her to come up with a manual on emergency care in the school setting for school nurses.

Carole is a certified EMT and active on the Boonton First Aid Squad. She also teaches at Beth Israel Medical Center in Newark and won the distinguished Johnson & Johnson School Nurse Fellowship.

I am pleased to congratulate Carole Payne for her outstanding efforts and share her good work with my colleagues in the United States Congress and the American people.

RECOGNIZING OUTSTANDING MILITARY FAMILIES OF OUR NATION

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 10, 2009

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, I join with my colleagues today the opportunity to recognize the outstanding military families of our nation. In Eastern Washington, I could not be more proud of the military families as well as our community that stands behind them. There is probably no other group more schooled in the art of patience than our military families. They have to learn to be flexible and to endure because they are apart of a system that for all its structure is still quite unpredictable.

Last August, the 81st Brigade from Washington State deployed to Iraq. Although it is challenging for the men and women who serve, it is sometimes harder for those at home. More often than not, as soon as the service member deploys, the spouse is faced with an unforeseen obstacle like their brand new car needing to go back to the shop or the refrigerator deciding not to work. Children often times go back to school and find it hard to understand why mom or dad has to miss their baseball game or piano recital. The families of the 81st Brigade have much catching up to do when they return home this summer. They will have a Thanksgiving to celebrate, Christmas presents to open, birthday candles to blow out, Easter eggs to hunt and many, many kisses and hugs to share.

A military spouse once wrote that "the cycle of deployments, missed holidays, lonely anniversaries, and long separations, isn't governed by any war or what's being debated on CNN. It is as much a part of our daily living as weekend business trips and conference calls are to the average business person. It is part of the job description." To all the military families in our nation, your character and bravery make you role models to us all and your service does not go unnoticed. Know that our nation is tremendously grateful for your commitment in standing beside your Soldier, Sailor, Airmen, or Marine so that he or she can fight to continue to protect our freedoms. Please accept my utmost and sincerest "thank you" for your honorable service.