

I would urge all of my colleagues to take full advantage of the resources available to the public on the web site of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China—www.cecc.gov—and to make use of the Commission’s analysis of developments as they unfold in Tibetan areas, and across China. The Commission monitors and reports continuously on human rights and the rule of law in China, and I encourage all to check the Commission’s web site regularly for updates, to subscribe to the on-line newsletter, and to rely on the Commission’s published reports to keep up with developments in China.

Finally, the resolution of Tibetan grievances can occur only with direct talks between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama. As China plays an increasingly important role in the international community, other countries will appropriately assess China’s fulfillment of the commitments it has made in both Chinese and international law, including legal and constitutional commitments to ethnic minorities. The international spotlight remains on China. We hope that the Chinese government will welcome such attention with a full commitment to openness, and to the implementation of basic human rights.

YEAR OF THE MILITARY FAMILY

SPEECH OF

HON. MARTIN HEINRICH

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 11, 2009

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in full support of making 2009 the Year of the Military Family.

It is an honor to support this measure and to express my heartfelt appreciation, and that of our entire congressional district, for the families of our men and women who serve in the military.

For so many New Mexican families, military service has been in our blood for generations.

Our state has often had the highest rate of military volunteerism in the country and the 1st congressional district is home to countless veterans, not to mention the large number of proud service members stationed at Kirtland Air Force Base.

Yet we know all too well that with each individual who generously gives their service to their country through our military, there is a significant impact on those closest to them.

Each time a service member leaves home, they leave behind caring husbands and wives, loving sons and daughters, worried parents and whole communities that remain concerned for their safety.

There is no question that these affected families are also serving our country—by courageously enduring long separations from loved ones and the demands of deployments abroad.

So today, I proudly honor the commitment, sacrifice, courage and steadfast support that have been provided by our country’s military families, allowing our service members to serve and I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

TRIBUTE TO BILL GHENT, INC.

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a community institution in Harrisburg, Illinois, celebrating its 100th birthday.

Bill Ghent, Inc. began business in 1909 as J.C. Robertson, and boasted as its slogan, “Friends may sympathize, but we pay cash.” Bill Ghent joined the business in the late 1930s, and in 1957, Bill Ghent, Inc. was established. In the early days, the only worries this small-town insurance agency was concerned with were fire and lightning. “Now, we’ve got all kinds of perils to deal with,” Bill Ghent, II, told the local newspaper.

These days, Bill Ghent, Inc. insures not just private citizens and their property, but also looks after the schools of the area. Insuring schools is something of a tradition for Bill Ghent, Inc. In Mr. Ghent’s office, behind glass, is the 1909 to 1911 policy for the Bramlet School in Raleigh, Illinois. It insured the school building for \$500 and the contents for \$100.

Bill Ghent, Inc. has served the residents of Harrisburg and southeastern Illinois from the days of horse and buggies to today’s modern world. I want to congratulate Bill Ghent and all the employees of Bill Ghent, Inc. on one hundred years of service to the community, and to wish them one hundred more.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT BRIAN SCHAR

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, Albert Caswell is one of the finest tour guides in the United States Capitol Guide Service. But what many may not know about Albert is that he is also a gifted poet.

Oftentimes, when I run into Albert in the Capitol, he shares his work with me. Recently, he gave me a poem about a man from my District in East Tennessee, Sergeant Brian Schar.

Sergeant Schar served our Nation valiantly during the War on Terror, and in doing so made a sacrifice only few could imagine.

Albert’s poem is a tribute to Sergeant Schar’s courage and strength as he adjusts to life as a double amputee. While we often hear on the news of the lives lost in the War, we also need reminding of the thousands more who suffered life-altering injuries.

Madam Speaker, I would like to call Albert’s poem to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD, and I pray many will be inspired by his words.

Everyday, magnificent men and women like SSG Schar go off to war and leave their loved ones behind. All for the greater good, putting themselves last while putting their nation first. Many lie in graves as the ultimate sacrifice. While, others like Brian . . .

must come home and fight another battle. While all the time teaching and inspiring us, with their undying faith and courage to inspire us.

ONE THING . . . FOR SCHAR

Throughout the course of our nation’s history . . .

There have come so many fine patriots who have blessed her so indeed . . .

And many all from this great state of Tennessee . . .

Men like Crockett all in their glory . . .

And Sargent York, all the more he . . .

Who, fought and died . . . all so we could be free . . . their story . . .

Men, who went straight into that face of hell . . .

With hearts of courage full, which swelled . . .

Who all in that moment of truth . . .

Have so showed us the proof . . .

That on this earth, angers dwell . . .

For there have been so many Tennesseans, such fine lives would create . . .

Men who have so blessed our nation, and this their state . . .

But, One Thing For Schar . . .

The Tallest of All Tennessean’s by far . . .

Are but men like this young star . . .

Men who so bravely lived and died . . .

Who come home without arms and legs . . .

And don’t ask why? . . .

For they have a higher calling . . .

As they wipe those tears from their eyes . . .

For he won’t moan and he won’t beg . . .

As a new war he must wage . . .

As on this day he stands taller, than any other man with legs . . .

As he must go through hell and back, all so you can say . . .

I am free this day . . .

As one of The Tallest of Tennessean’s, he now stands . . .

As it’s his heart that which now so commands . . .

Teaching us . . .

Reaching us . . .

Into your our very souls to make us understand . . .

Why we are free, and how beautiful a heart can be . . .

Blessing us all, you and me . . .

As the high cost of freedom we so see . . .

As from his heart he speaks!

Saying, I will not be stopped . . .

I will not be slowed . . .

As a force of nature, as onward he goes . . .

As his fine heart climbs mountains tops . . .

And if I ever have a son . . .

I but hope and pray that he could but be like this fine one . . .

But, one thing I ask . . .

One, Thing . . . For Schar . . .

As you go home this night . . .

Holding, your family warm and tight . . .

As all in your world, all seems so right . . .

Remember, the great price of freedom paid . . .

Get down on your knee’s . . .

And thank this young man so brave . . .

And all of his brothers and sisters in arms, who now so lie in soft quiet graves!

Just, One Thing For Schar . . .

ALBERT CAREY CASWELL ©, 2009

FAOY This poem is dedicated to a real American Hero Brian Schar . . . he was injured on September 9th 2007 in an IED blast . . . SSG Brian Schar of A. Co. 9th Eng 1st ID The United States Army . . . Brian is a Combat Engineer from Sevierville Tennessee.

TRIBUTE TO KENT OLSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE PROFESSIONAL INSURANCE AGENTS OF NORTH DAKOTA

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor the distinguished career of Kent Olson. I am pleased to have known Kent Olson for the many years he served as the Executive Director of the Professional Insurance Agents of North Dakota working with him on important insurance issues for North Dakota farmers.

Kent Olson is a model of the highest standards of honesty, integrity and professionalism. As Mr. Olson prepares to begin retirement, I want to pay tribute to his leadership of the professional insurance agents in North Dakota focusing on the importance of quality continuing education for its members that translated into excellent service for families and farmers in North Dakota. Throughout the years, quality education for professional insurance agents has been known by one name: Kent Olson.

Among his many achievements, Kent Olson is an expert in crop insurance and has been passionate in support of the key role that crop insurance plays in the farming economy of our state and of our entire nation.

In addition to his work in our state, Kent has contributed his many talents to the national PIA agents association, putting on seminars and getting personally involved every year. His involvement typifies his belief in our democracy and embodies the motto of PIA as being, "Local Agents Serving Main Street America." Kent believes passionately in the value that local professional insurance agents always provide. And with equal passion, he believes that insurance should continue to be regulated by the State, not by the federal government.

I am pleased to note that although Kent will be retiring, he will never give up his passion—whether they are for the Main Street insurance agents, who have come to call him a close friend, or for his family, or for his music.

Kent Olson is one of those people whom everyone respects, and with many good reasons. I have had the pleasure of calling Kent Olson a colleague and a friend, and that will never change.

I am pleased to congratulate and commend Kent Olson on the occasion of his retirement as executive director of the Professional Insurance Agents of North Dakota.

RECOGNIZING AT&T FOR JOBS CREATION AND COMMITMENT TO CLEAN ENERGY

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, in this time of economic uncertainty, I rise to thank one company who is actively working to create new jobs and practice a clean, environmentally friendly business model, AT&T.

Through a new \$18 billion initiative, AT&T is pledging to increase its broadband capacity.

Not only will this initiative increase Internet speed and accessibility for customers, but perhaps more importantly it will create 3,000 new jobs.

Over the next ten years, AT&T also plans to create or save an additional one thousand jobs through a plan to invest \$565 million in replacing its current fleet of vehicles with 15,000 domestically manufactured Compressed Natural Gas and alternative fuel vehicles.

Research shows that this new fleet will save 49 million gallons of gasoline over the next ten years. It also will reduce carbon emissions by 211,000 metric tons in this same time frame.

Madam Speaker, I applaud AT&T for its initiative in taking the lead in the movement to green our economy. Not only will these new initiatives help lead our nation out of its current economic downturn, but they also help to create an environmentally sustainable future for our children and grandchildren to enjoy. These actions set AT&T apart as an exemplary company, and I hope that others will soon follow their lead.

TRIBUTE TO THE OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize my fraternity, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated, the first African-American national fraternal organization to be founded at a historically black college, for their 7th Annual Florida Political Summit in Tallahassee, Florida.

For nearly 100 years, my fraternal brothers have faithfully carried out their mission of fostering the growth of men, both college and post college, by providing an outlet and opportunity to serve the community as set forth by our founders at Howard University, Edgar A. Love, Oscar J. Cooper, Frank Coleman, and Ernest Just.

Since its inception in 1911, Omega Psi Phi brothers have been advocates of taking leadership to prevent violence against women and children in the African-American community, supported efforts of the United Negro College Fund and the Congressional Black Caucus, and most recently partnered with the American Cancer Society and the National Association of Basketball Coaches in Coaches vs. Cancer in empowering basketball coaches, their teams and local communities to make a difference in the fight against cancer.

While attending Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, FAMU, in Tallahassee, Florida, I had the distinct honor of serving as Basileus of the Upsilon Psi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi. My experiences as Basileus have served as the cornerstone in my education and leadership skills that I have carried over into this esteemed Chamber in representing the 17th Congressional District of Florida.

In an esteemed effort to continue Omega Psi Phi's mission, I know the men of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity will discuss their legislative concerns ranging from civil rights, health care reform and veteran's affairs to public education, foreign policy, and economic issues while sharing their experiences and raising awareness of issues affecting our daily lives.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in wishing my brothers of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity a successful political summit as these men continue to build a strong and effective force of men dedicated to its Cardinal Principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and uplift.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF MUSIC IMPRESARIO RALPH MERCADO

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise to ask my colleagues to pause and remember the life of a good friend, Ralph Mercado, the legendary Latin music executive who recently passed away on March 10, 2009. As much an icon as the musicians that he worked with and promoted, Mercado was a visionary innovator who helped popularize tropical music worldwide, including New York's mixture of popular Latin rhythms know as "salsa."

Mercado etched his name in the history books by building a record label whose various components (from a publishing company to a video and film production arm) helped make and take salsa to some of the largest stages around the world. A catalog of award-winning international hits across three decades transformed the Latino music industry, bringing respect not only to talented artists but also providing young Latinos with a way to connect with their parents, their roots and their communities.

It all started in Brooklyn on Sept. 29, 1941. The son of a Dominican dockworker and a Puerto Rican factory worker, Mercado often commented that he learned merengue, the typical dance from the Dominican Republic, in the hallway of the family's fifth-floor walkup as soon as he could walk. He first fell in love with the rhythms while at the Palladium Nightclub when he was only 16, watching the big bands of Machito, Tito Puente and Tito Rodriguez. As a teenager, he was famed for producing "waistline parties" in apartment building basements where a couple's admission was a penny per inch of their dates' waistline.

Using the same concept, he then opened the 3 & 1 Club where he began booking local Latin bands such as Eddie Palmieri and Richie Ray & Bobby Cruz, among many others. This led to Mercado's first management, booking, and promotions company called Showstoppers. He promoted legendary R&B acts that included James Brown, Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knight & the Pips, the Stylistics, the Chi-lites, starting a salsa-soul music trend.

Mercado also continued to open many doors to up and coming artists. He helped to expand the Fania All-Stars, promoted dances at the Cheetah Nightclub, and presented Latin jazz at the Red Garter and, later, at the Village Gate and other downtown venues. His partnership with Jack Hooke, the late Tito Puente's longtime manager, helped create the Salsa Meets Jazz Series at the Village Gate and the Latin Jazz Jam as part of the JVC Jazz Festival.

A great judge of talent, Mercado opened RMM Management in 1972 representing Eddie