

## TRIBUTE TO ROBIN TORELLO

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 25, 2009*

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Robin Torello, a resident of San Leandro, California. Ms. Torello has been selected as the 2009 Woman of the Year for the 10th Senatorial District, represented by California State Senator Ellen Corbett.

Since 1987, in conjunction with Women's History Month, California Senators and Assembly Members invite one woman from their respective districts to the Capitol in Sacramento to be recognized as Woman of the Year in a formal ceremony on the floors of the Senate and Assembly. I am proud to share with my colleagues in the House of Representatives that Robin Torello was so chosen.

Robin Torello continues to serve as a role model for women in her community and generations to come. She has distinguished herself professionally in the area of employee benefits. She has vast knowledge and experience in this area and currently serves as a Senior Associate Consultant in the San Francisco office of Mercer. Ms. Torello identifies client-employee benefit program needs and works with clients for appropriate solutions. Ms. Torello utilizes her exemplary skills, expertise and experience in such specific areas as plan design development and implementation, renewal negotiations, financial analysis, legislative compliance, project management, and strategic planning.

In addition to her professional responsibilities, Ms. Torello is active in the community and serves as an executive board member and chair of several organizations. She has given much of her time and effort in fostering participation in the political process, engaging the public on important issues, developing candidate recruitment and training programs, and increasing voter education.

Ms. Torello earned a Bachelor of Science degree in history and political science from Central Connecticut State College in 1974 and received a Master of Public Administration degree from California State University, Hayward in 1986. She also holds a life agent license issued by the California Department of Insurance.

I am pleased to recognize the achievements of Robin Torello as she receives the California Woman of the Year award. I join California State Senator Ellen Corbett in commending Ms. Torello on her outstanding record of professional and civic leadership.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. JOHN SULLIVAN**

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 25, 2009*

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam Speaker, I rise to state for the record that I intended to vote "nay" on rollcall vote 140 to H.R. 1388 taken on March 18, 2009. The CONGRESSIONAL RECORD currently lists me as an "aye" vote on this measure. As a conservative, I cannot support the federal government paying individuals

to volunteer their time, especially in a period of record federal deficits and budget constraints facing American families.

## CLAIRTON BEARS WPIAL CHAMPIONS

**HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 25, 2009*

Mr. DOYLE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Clairton Bears on a stellar high school football season.

For the first time in their school's history, the Bears reached the State championship game. This accomplishment topped an undefeated regular season and a WPIAL title.

These great accomplishments were the result of fantastic coaching and consistently outstanding performances by the team's staff and players.

The staff consisted of head coach Tom Nola and assistant coaches Mike LeDonne, Demonje Rosser, Remondo Williams, Tim Borkowski, John DeMarco, Tony St. Angelo, Tony Ferrare, and Wayne Wade.

The players consisted of 9 seniors—Malcolm Ford, Troy Webb, Andrew Currington, CJ Hammonds, Kailon Lyons, Eyan Johnson, Lance Meade, David Spence, and Taylor Wright as well as underclassmen Kevin Weatherspoon, Deontae Howard, Josh Page, Brandon Small, Eddie Ball, Remondo Williams, Desimon Green, Trenton Coles, Julian McLean, Bishop Neal, Geron Johnson, Devante Dockery, Kevin Poindexter, Devante Gardlock, Marcus Nash, Antwon Thompson, Brian Boyd, Carvan Thompson, Donzel Daniels, Chanze James, Keith Craven, Devonte Doss, Marquis Norris, Shawn Thomas, Ezekial Williams, and Wesley Sutton. The hard work, dedication, and teamwork these young men displayed throughout the season produced a once in a lifetime opportunity for the graduating seniors to play in the big game before leaving their high school.

Pittsburgh once again has lived up to its name as the "City of Champions" producing a great team like the Clairton Bears. I wish the Bears and their program success in the seasons to follow and congratulate them once again on a fantastic season.

## TRIBUTE TO THE BELL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM 2008–2009

**HON. HAROLD ROGERS**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 25, 2009*

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 2008–2009 Bell County High School Football Team, who captured the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Class 4–A State Championship Title. The tremendous athletes should be proud of their talent and ability, and know that I am honored to recognize their athletic achievement.

Bell County has a long history of great football teams. The Bobcats have defeated formi-

dable opponents in years pasts and gone on to win multiple championships, along with district and regional titles. This year's State Championship should come as no surprise given the drive and dedication in each of the team's players.

The Bell County Bobcats defeated a tough team from Bullitt East, winning 15–13 in the State final. More than six thousand fans filled the Cardinal Stadium to witness these focused young men put their athletic ability and knowledge of the game to the highest test. The Bobcats dominated the second half of the football game, scoring 15 unanswered points and stopping a two-point conversion attempt by the young men of Bullitt East with a mere ten seconds left.

This Championship Title reflects the wisdom of their coach, Dudley Hilton. Coach Hilton led the Bobcats to their first undefeated season with 15 straight wins and the team's second State Title. The team's unwavering determination was demonstrated in the last three games of this season's playoffs when each time they came back from behind to claim victory. These experiences and life lessons learned on the field will be carried on after the game and continue to shape these athletes into young men of promise and outstanding character.

It is my hope that this Championship will inspire not only young men on this team, but younger generations, to have the same determination when they face obstacles later in life. Commitment, courage and character was demonstrated by each and every one of these teammates and these qualities will bring continued success both on and off the field.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring coach Dudley Hilton and the Bell County High School 2008–2009 Football Team as the KHSAA Class 4A State Champions. Bell County's continued success has helped to shape the lives of so many students and members of the community, and I congratulate them and wish them all the best in the years to come.

## INTRODUCING THE FAMILY LEAVE INSURANCE ACT OF 2009

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 25, 2009*

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today with Representatives GEORGE MILLER, LYNN WOOLSEY, and CAROLYN MALONEY to introduce the Family Leave Insurance Act of 2009. This legislation will support our nation's working families by providing 12 weeks of paid leave for all workers to care for a sick family member, bond with a new child, deal with the military deployment of a family member, or recover from their own serious illness.

Sixteen years ago, Congress passed the landmark Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to provide job-protected leave for new parents and individuals caring for ill family members. Since then, more than 100 million families have benefited from this law. While the FMLA has proved vitally important for many families, it remains incomplete because it requires only unpaid leave and applies only to companies with 50 or more employees—less than half the workforce.

Millions of men and women are not protected by the FMLA or simply cannot afford to

take unpaid leave—especially in these tough economic times. A recent study found that about 75 percent of FMLA-eligible workers did not take leave because they could not afford it—and according to the Department of Labor, only 8 percent of private employers provide paid leave. This is taking a toll on families—a report in 1999 by the President's Council of Economic Advisers found that since 1969, children have lost 22 hours per week with their parents.

The United States is nearly alone in the world in not providing some type of paid family leave. Only three other countries—Liberia, Papua New Guinea, and Swaziland—fail to provide security for new parents or those caring for a loved one. The Family Leave Insurance Act would bring the United States up to date with the rest of the world and allow millions of workers to take care of their families while still being able to make ends meet.

Paid leave provides real benefits for children and families. A Harvard School of Public Health study found that the education and health of children improves substantially when parents have work flexibility and paid leave. When parents are able to act as caregivers for a sick child, hospital stays are reduced by 31 percent. Parental involvement is also associated with higher achievement in language and math, improved behavior, and lower dropout rates.

Paid leave is also a boon to businesses and workers. For workers, paid leave means employment and financial security and improved job satisfaction. For businesses, paid leave means less turnover and increased productivity. Research indicates that 98 percent of employees return to work for the same employer after taking family and medical leave.

My home state of California has led the country in providing access to paid leave (albeit only six weeks) and flexible use of sick days. This law has helped California's families and businesses. According to a Harvard study, California had a lower rate of foreclosures than other states due to income loss arising from a personal illness or the need to care for a sick household member. Despite initial protest by California's business community against the paid leave law, most employers now agree that this investment in their workers is also a wise investment for their business. The Family Leave Insurance Act builds on California's successful experience to enact a federal paid leave law.

More specifically, the bill:

Provides all workers with 12 weeks of paid leave over a 12-month period to care for a new child, provide for an ill family member (including a domestic partner or the child of a domestic partner), treat their own illness, or deal with an exigency caused by the deployment of a member of the military;

Creates a new trust fund to run the program. It is financed equally by employers and employees, who will each contribute 0.2% of employee wages;

Progressively tiers the benefits so that low wage workers (earning less than \$30,000) will receive full or near full salary replacement, middle income workers (\$30,000–\$60,000) receive 55% wage replacement, and higher earners (over \$60,000) receive 40–45%, with the benefit capped at approximately \$800 per week;

Administers the program through the Department of Labor, which will contract with

states to administer the program (similar to how the Unemployment Insurance program is run).

The FMLA has helped individuals meet their employment and family obligations without jeopardizing their job. Now—more than ever—workers' financial obligations must be provided the same security. I urge my colleagues to co-sponsor the Family Leave Insurance Act. All workers deserve the chance to care for their families and still be able to pay the bills.

## RECOGNIZING 188TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

SPEECH OF

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 24, 2009*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join with several of my colleagues this evening in celebrating the 188th anniversary of Greek Independence from the Ottoman Empire. Tonight is also a celebration of a society that represents, in a historical sense, the origins of what we call Western culture, and, in a contemporary sense, one of the staunchest defenders of Western society and values.

In celebrating this anniversary, I am reminded of comments made nearly two centuries ago, by Massachusetts Congressman Daniel Webster. Congressman Webster spoke of the noble fight that would end 400 years of rule by the Ottoman Empire.

Webster stated, 'These [Greek] people, a people of intelligence, ingenuity, refinement, spirit, and enterprise, have been for centuries under the atrocious and unparalleled Tartarian barbarism that ever oppressed the human race.'

The world has greatly benefited from Greek civilization and owes to them the values of democracy that we hold dear. In the years since Greek Independence, Americans and Greeks have grown ever closer, bound by ties of strategic and military alliance, common values of democracy, individual freedom, human rights and close personal friendship.

Mr. Speaker, while we celebrate Greek Independence this evening, it's also important we recognize that Greeks continue to battle oppression from present day Turkey in Cyprus and that Greeks living in Turkey today continue to face discrimination.

Just as Greece gained its independence 188 years ago this month, it is now important that our nation work with the United Nations and with the government of Cyprus to once again unify the island and protect the rights of Greeks everywhere.

Over the past few years, I have become deeply concerned that our government's actions and policies towards Cyprus will make it more difficult to reunify a nation that has been broken apart for more than three decades. I was disappointed that the previous administration's U.S. Department of State opened its fly zone with the occupied part of Cyprus. I was also concerned that the State Department resumed trade with the occupied north through ports that were declared closed after the invasion in 1974. This action ignored Cyprus' domestic law, as well as international law that prohibits entering Cyprus through an illegal port in the north.

Mr. Speaker, we now have a new Administration and a new Secretary of State. I am encouraged that we can take tangible steps to solve the problems in Cyprus through reunifying the Country. I will continue to encourage Secretary Clinton to take a historic look at the Cyprus problem over the past 34 years. It's important to look at this problem through the perspective of three decades of illegal actions on the Turkish side.

As we celebrate Greek Independence and the cultural gifts that the Greek community has given to the world, I remain deeply dismayed by Turkey's continued discrimination against Greeks today in Turkey. I am glad that Secretary Clinton, on her recent visit to Turkey, discussed the issues of Ankara's refusal to recognize the Ecumenical status of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch. The United States cannot let Turkey continue these abuses of religious freedoms.

The Department of State's 2008 Human Rights Report on Turkey lists a litany of abuses including systematic dismantling of property rights, limited education opportunities, and vandalism of religious properties of Greeks living in Turkey. This report shows that minorities are treated like second-class citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful that the United States can reverse its prior path. We must work with the international community to ensure that one day soon, like Greece, the island of Cyprus will be unified and free. We must work to make sure that Greeks do not face discrimination in Turkey.

Tonight, I applaud the determination Greek's showed 188 years ago to overcome the Ottoman Empire, and restore democracy in the place of its birth.

## PAYING TRIBUTE TO FLORENCE M. RICE ON HER 90TH BIRTHDAY

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 25, 2009*

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, it is with great honor and enthusiasm that I rise to congratulate my good friend Florence Rice as she joins her family, long time friends, and the Harlem community together in celebration of her 90th Birthday. This momentous and joyous occasion is being celebrated with an extraordinary affair today at Noon in the Church of the Intercession in my beloved village of Harlem.

Florence M. Rice was born on March 22, 1919 in Buffalo, New York. She is the founder of the Harlem Consumer Education Council. During her childhood, Rice spent several years in the Colored Orphan Asylum and in several foster homes in New York. Upon completion of the eighth grade, Rice left school for work as a domestic seamstress where she became a member of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. Rice spoke out against the discriminatory practices against African American and Latino workers. She participated in Harlem Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.'s 1962 congressional hearing, which probed dressmaker union's policies and after testifying, she was blacklisted.

In the 1960s, Rice founded the Harlem Consumer Education Council, waging a war