

TRIBUTE TO U.S. SENATOR MITCH
McCONNELL OF KENTUCKY

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to U.S. Senator MITCH McCONNELL, a true statesman, who now holds the prestigious record as Kentucky's longest serving U.S. Senator. It is truly an honor for the Commonwealth of Kentucky to be served by such an accomplished and determined leader.

I remember the early days when MITCH first arrived in Washington, D.C., wandering the halls of Congress, but leaning on his experience as a local Judge-Executive in Jefferson County seeking compromise and working to solve problems. Today he is the Republican Leader in the United States Senate and is known for his mastery of parliamentary procedure, his ability to unite the Senate Republicans—which is no small feat—and standing firm on his conservative principles.

An advocate for Eastern Kentucky families, MITCH is a great friend of mine who understands the needs of the Bluegrass State and does everything he can to help those who need it most. MITCH is rightly credited for being an integral part of one of the greatest legislative achievements in Kentucky history, which were his efforts to pass the tobacco buyout. Many observers said the buyout would be impossible to arrange; however, MITCH dived in head first and with great focus was able to successfully push forward legislation that has allowed Kentucky farmers to transition to other crops and properly reimbursed quota holders. He should be proud of his efforts as he saved thousands of farmers and their families.

Always wanting to move Kentucky forward, MITCH has worked tirelessly to strengthen higher education which has benefitted millions in the Bluegrass State. By improving our universities, MITCH has not only helped our students succeed but has helped to bolster communities, create new jobs and build a strong workforce for the Commonwealth. Kentucky's future leaders have been awarded many new opportunities thanks to MITCH.

In addition to all he has done for the Commonwealth, MITCH is known as a fierce campaigner who did the seemingly impossible when he first defeated an incumbent Senator in 1984, and then went on to lay the foundation for the resurgence of the Kentucky Republican Party. Republican success within Kentucky is due in large part to MITCH's vision and hard work.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Senator MITCH McCONNELL and his accomplishment as Kentucky's longest serving Senator. He is truly a legend in the Commonwealth and I look forward to his continued successes.

A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF
WAYNE C. THOMPSON

HON. DIANE E. WATSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, it is with profound sorrow that I learned of the passing of my associate and colleague, Wayne Thompson, in December. Over the past two years, Wayne had become a trusted advisor to me on the Freedmen's efforts to secure full citizenship in the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. I will deeply miss Wayne's knowledge, wisdom, and sage advice. I have prepared the following resolution in honor of a man who defined the meaning of a purpose-driven life.

RESOLUTION

Whereas Wayne C. Thompson was born January 15, 1946, in Spencer, Oklahoma, the fourth of nine children of Tasso and Daisy Lee Thompson;

Whereas Wayne Thompson completed his secondary education in Spencer, Oklahoma and received a BSC in Social Psychology from Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda;

Whereas Wayne C. Thompson served in the United States Army with tours of duty in Vietnam and Germany;

Whereas Wayne C. Thompson dedicated his life to the promotion of human and civil rights around the world, including his participation in numerous marches and sit-ins during the Civil Rights Movement and service to the international wing of the Black Panther Party;

Whereas Wayne C. Thompson was the long-standing Executive Director of the Oklahoma Health Care Project through which he was involved with the Community Health Centers movement, Responsive Intervention Prevention Program for Community Organizations, the Young Black Men's and Women's Forums, Agent Orange Class Assistance Program, Developmental Outreach Program for Minority Communities, the Seminole and Cherokee Freedmen, World Health Organization, numerous delinquency prevention and youth violence intervention programs, All of Us or None, and the defense of political prisoners and the San Francisco 8;

Whereas Wayne C. Thompson was a founding member of the Institute of the Black World 21st Century and a coordinator of the Haiti Support Project and had an abiding and profound interest and commitment to eradicating social and economic injustice in Central America, Mozambique, Haiti, and the developing world;

Resolved,

(1) That Wayne Thompson led an exemplary and selfless life in service of those less fortunate;

(2) That Wayne Thompson was a fighter for justice who sought no notoriety for his efforts to help oppressed people around the world; and

(3) That Wayne Thompson was a warrior with the biggest heart, one of the greatest civil rights soldiers the world has known, whose good deeds and works have left the world a better place, and whose memory will be carried forward by the legions of people he touched with his remarkable human spirit.

RETIREMENT OF SENATOR
GEORGE VOINOVICH

HON. JEAN SCHMIDT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Madam Speaker, this past Monday, Senator GEORGE VOINOVICH announced that he will not be seeking re-election to the United States Senate in 2010. Senator VOINOVICH has dedicated the last 40 years of his life to public service. I look forward to continuing to work with him over the next 2 years, but would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that he will be sorely missed when he leaves.

Since 1967, GEORGE VOINOVICH has been a fixture in Ohio politics. Ohio has been blessed to have such a tireless advocate so dedicated to serving others. Although Washington, DC will be losing a respected voice on so many pressing issues, I congratulate him on his 40 years of distinguished and outstanding service to the citizens of the State of Ohio and wish him, his wife, Janet, and his entire family the best in the coming years.

CONGRESSIONAL TRIBUTE HONORING
LINDA CHAVEZ-THOMPSON

HON. CHARLES A. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Mr. GONZALEZ. Madam Speaker, we rise today to honor the life and accomplishments of Linda Chavez-Thompson, a San Antonio resident who will be honored this Friday by the San Antonio AFL-CIO for her achievements and contributions to our community.

A native of Lubbock, Ms. Chavez-Thompson has been an integral part of the American labor movement for 40 years. In 1995, she made history when she was elected Executive Vice-President of the AFL-CIO, the first Hispanic to hold one of the organization's three highest offices. She currently serves as executive vice-president emerita and remains committed to delivering economic and social justice to all Americans.

Over the course of her life she has partnered with many organizations on behalf of civil and human rights, including those of women, immigrant Americans, and the LGBT community. And as she continues to work to better the world around her, her current projects include starting a scholarship fund for children of union members and developing a future leadership initiative.

The city of San Antonio, the State of Texas, and our entire country have reaped the benefits of her hard work and lifelong commitment to justice and equality, and we could not be more grateful for her contributions. Congressman CIRO RODRIGUEZ and I are honored to know her as a friend, and we congratulate Ms. Chavez-Thompson for all of her achievements and this well deserved recognition.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE
OF CANDELARIA TAITANO RIOS

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and service of Candelaria Taitano Rios, a community leader on Guam. Known to her friends and family as "Candy" or "Lala," she passed away on January 5, 2009. I commend her for her lifetime of achievements and her service to our community.

Candy was born on February 22, 1932, to John and Rosario Taitano in the village of Hagåtña, Guam. Candy was married to the late Joseph Leon Guerrero Rios and they had five children, the late Joleen Rios, Joseph Rios Jr., Rose Rios, John Rios, and Helen Rios. She attended George Washington High School in Mangilao, Guam and graduated in 1951. She continued her education by earning an Associate's and Bachelor's Degree from the College of Guam before earning her Master's degree in Elementary Administration and Supervision from the University of Guam in 1971.

While Candy pursued her college degrees, she taught in Guam's public schools from 1951 to 1976. She was appointed as Assistant Principal at Piti Elementary School and as Principal at C.L. Taitano Elementary School in Sinajana. In 1986, Candy retired from Government of Guam service as the Deputy Director of the Government of Guam Retirement Fund.

After her retirement, Candy remained involved in many community projects and the non-profit sector. As a charter member of the Retired Educators Association, she advocated for issues important to retirees on Guam and promoted the advancement of quality education for Guam's students. She was also a member of the Retirement Employee's Association, the Vocational Education Advisory Council, and the Guam Elementary Administrators Association, for which she also served as Vice President.

Candy Rios was active in community affairs and was a leader in the Democratic Party of Guam. She served in many positions in the party and was an effective grass roots activist and organizer. Many sought her advice and endorsement, and through her volunteer work, she had a significant impact in the electoral successes of the Democratic Party.

Candy Rios was a lifelong educator and community leader. I extend my heartfelt condolences to her children, Joseph, Rose, John, Helen, her family, and her friends as we mourn her loss and celebrate her lifetime of achievements.

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL
FOLIC ACID AWARENESS WEEK

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the observance of America's annual National Folic Acid Awareness Week, which began on January 5, 2009.

It is my hope that this awareness week gives the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) further awareness to reduce the prevalence of preventable serious birth defects in women of childbearing age across all segments of our population. Enriched cereals and grain products are fortified with the B-vitamin folic acid, but only one-third of U.S. women of childbearing age consume the scientifically recommended daily amount. Folic acid, a B-vitamin, is particularly critical for proper cell growth and has been scientifically proven to prevent birth defects of the brain and spine, called Neural Tube Defects (NTD).

Women especially need folic acid, even if not planning to become pregnant since 50 percent of all pregnancies are unplanned. Consuming the recommended amount of folic acid each day before pregnancy can reduce the risk of a birth defect of the brain and spine by seventy percent. The prevalence rates of NTDs has declined by 27 percent since the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's mandatory addition of folic acid to enriched grain products in 1998. Even with this improvement in the reduction in the Neural Tube Disorders of Spina Bifida and Anencephaly birth defect births, there still are 3,000 babies born each year with serious birth defects, and an estimated 5,000 that die from a serious birth defect.

Since 1998, over 100 peer-reviewed scientific studies have been published and been reviewed by a distinguished group of leading birth defect scientists and researchers. These individuals concluded that more folic acid to already fortified enriched grain products, and folic acid to corn-based products, is important to our country's public health and should be examined by the DFA. In 2006, the Congressional Spina Bifida Caucus petitioned the FDA for review and the FDA refused the request, saying there was not enough science to merit the agency's review.

A recent Center for Disease Control (CDC) study, published in December of 2008, the agency found that only 21 percent of Hispanic women of childbearing age are consuming the recommended amount of folic acid to effectively prevent serious birth defect births, compared with 40 percent of Caucasian women. Hispanic babies are 1.5 to 2 times more likely than other children in the U.S. to be born with a neural tube defect (NTD). The CDC reports that Hispanics across the United States consume the least amount of folic acid, and have the least knowledge about the role that folic acid plays in preventing a serious birth defect birth among all racial or ethnic groups in our country. This leads to an important goal of National Folic Acid Awareness Week, education. Birth defect prevention education is alarmingly low, so public education is essential. Surveys since 1998 have found that only 24 percent of women know that folic acid helps prevent birth defects. Of those who do know, only 40 percent know how much should be taken every day. Over ten years, public education efforts on the parts of the CDC, various birth defect prevention groups, and State and federal prevention awareness programs have been a great start in informing women of the necessity of folic acid during childbearing years, but we still have our work cut out for us.

I would like to recognize the National Folic Acid Awareness Week and increase public awareness of the need for all women of childbearing age to get the recommended amount

of folic acid each day. A continued effort on all fronts is necessary, I encourage the FDA to look at the research and consider adding more folic acid to enriched grain products and corn-based products.

I will be reintroducing a resolution calling for this action and I ask my colleagues to join me in this education effort.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I would like to state for the record my position on the following votes I missed due to personal reasons.

On Wednesday, January 7, 2009, and Friday, January 9, 2009, I missed rollcall votes 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes 5, 6, 7 and 10 and "nay" on rollcall votes 8 and 9.

IN MEMORY OF FATHER RICHARD
JOHN NEUHAUS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I rise today in memory of Father Richard John Neuhaus who passed away on January 7, 2009. Father Neuhaus was a man of great intellect and a prolific writer who defined the terms of the modern debate regarding the role of religion in public life. His work inspired a countless number of individuals and his legacy which is grounded in his deep faith in God will live on for years to come. The following piece which appeared in the January 19 edition of Newsweek is a fitting tribute to the life and work of Father Neuhaus.

[From Newsweek, Jan. 19, 2009]

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS, 1936-2009—AN
HONORABLE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER

(By George Weigel)

Father Richard John Neuhaus's work will be remembered and debated for decades. As a Lutheran pastor, he was one of the first civil-rights activists to identify the pro-life cause with the moral truths for which he and others had marched in Selma; he set the terms of the contemporary American church-state debate and added a new phrase to our public vocabulary with his 1984 best-seller, "The Naked Public Square." As a Catholic priest, he helped define new patterns of theological dialogue between Catholics and evangelicals, and between Christians and Jews. The journal he launched in the early 1990s, *First Things*, quickly became, under his leadership and inspiration, the most important vehicle for exploring the tangled web of religion and society in the English-speaking world. All of this suggests that Richard Neuhaus was, arguably, the most consequential public theologian in America since the days of Reinhold Niebuhr and John Courtney Murray, S.J.

He was also a marvelous human being, with the convictions of a true Christian disciple and the heart of a spiritually insightful pastor. In the retrospect of the death of my closest professional friend on Jan. 8, his living room—in which we prayed, argued,