

the attention of Thomas Jefferson, who stood above the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers and noted that the region's beauty was "worth a voyage across the Atlantic." And I must say, its splendor is equally as captivating today as it was more than 220 years ago, particularly at this time of year when visitors, thousands of visitors, are now flocking to Harpers Ferry National Park to take in the beautiful autumn colors.

Jefferson's fellow statesman George Washington was similarly impressed with the community's strategic location and in 1794 recommended that Congress designate Harpers Ferry, which was then in Virginia, as a site for a Federal Armory and Arsenal.

With the establishment of the armory, the community grew into a bustling factory town, where John Hall created the first interchangeable parts for firearms. His inventions led to the mass production of thousands of muskets and rifles, many of which would supply Lewis and Clark on their journey of westward expansion.

But as we all well know, it was John Brown's 1859 historic raid which truly established Harpers Ferry's place in our history. That summer, John Brown settled into a nearby farm in Maryland under the alias of Isaac Smith and laid plans to seize the armory and lead a revolt to spread across the South with hopes of ending slavery.

As the gentleman from Massachusetts mentioned, on the night of October 16, 1859, 150 years ago, he gathered with his provisional army of 21 men and seized the town, taking the town's bridges, Halls Rifle Works, the Federal Armory and Arsenal, and several hostages. As the fighting continued, news of the revolt spread across the region until Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Lee and Lieutenant J.E.B. Stuart ordered 90 marines to storm the engine house where John Brown and his men had taken refuge.

Upon his capture, John Brown was tried and convicted of murder, conspiring to rebel, and treason. He was sentenced to death by hanging in another historic town just down the road from Harpers Ferry, in present-day Charles Town, where on the day of his death, in addition to what the gentleman said, he wrote, "I am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with blood."

Unfortunately, we now know that his words held true as it took the bloody and divisive struggle of the Civil War to finally bring freedom to a people long enslaved. John Brown's raid will forever be known as one of the seminal events which led to the Civil War. His death brought the slavery debate to the forefront of our Nation divided. In the North, Brown was considered a "martyr," and in the South, he was a "terrorist." Yet, regardless of how he may be revered in history, his bold actions helped lead the fight for freedom and the end of slavery.

After once again proving its geographic importance during the Civil War, Harpers Ferry became an epicenter for the fight for equality and civil rights movement. It became the home to Storer College, an integrated institution to educate newly freed slaves, with the campus later serving as the site of the Nation's first Niagara Movement meeting. It was at that meeting where the scholar W.E.B. Du Bois delivered his address which led to the creation of the NAACP, an organization which this year celebrated its 100th anniversary.

Mr. Speaker, as you can see, Harpers Ferry is a town rich in history, and it is only fitting that during the 150th anniversary of John Brown's raid, the Harpers Ferry National Park has held several commemorative events, particularly last weekend to recognize the sesquicentennial and remember the contributions made by those who have come before us.

I simply call on the rest of my colleagues to support the passage of H. Res. 568, and I would also encourage those near-and-far Americans to visit Harpers Ferry and the surrounding area to share in the deep history and tradition that we have in our State of West Virginia that's also part of what we will be commemorating later, that is, the 150-year anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War here in our Nation.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time and urge passage.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, in closing, we ask Members on both sides to support Mrs. CAPITO on her resolution, House Resolution 568.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 568.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 783) recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month and celebrating the vast contributions of Hispanic-Americans to the strength and culture of the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 783

Whereas from September 15, 2009, through October 15, 2009, the United States celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month;

Whereas the presence of Hispanics in North America predates the founding of the United States, and, as among the first to settle in the New World, Hispanics and their descendants have had a profound and lasting influence on the history, values, and culture of the United States;

Whereas since the arrival of the earliest Spanish settlers more than 400 years ago, millions of Hispanic men and women have come to the United States from Mexico, Cuba, and other Caribbean regions, Central America, South America, and Spain, in search of freedom, peace, and opportunity;

Whereas Hispanic-Americans have contributed throughout the ages to the prosperity and culture of the United States;

Whereas the Bureau of the Census now lists Hispanic-Americans as the largest ethnic minority within the United States with a population of 46,900,000, comprising 15 percent of the Nation's total population;

Whereas according to the Bureau of the Census, 16 States have at least a half-million Hispanic residents, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, and Washington;

Whereas according to the Bureau of the Census, Hispanics are the largest minority group in 20 States, including Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming;

Whereas according to the Bureau of the Census, there are 1,600,000 Hispanic-owned businesses operating in areas including construction, administrative and support, waste management and remediation services, and retail and wholesale trade that generated \$222,000,000,000 in revenue in 2002, up 19 percent from 1997;

Whereas according to the Bureau of the Census, the rate of growth of Hispanic-owned businesses between 1997 and 2002 tripled to 31 percent compared with the national average of 10 percent for all businesses;

Whereas Hispanic-Americans serve in all branches of the United States Armed Forces and have fought valiantly in every war in the history of the United States;

Whereas according to the Bureau of the Census, there are 1,100,000 Hispanic veterans of the United States Armed Forces;

Whereas the Medal of Honor is the highest United States military distinction, awarded since the Civil War for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty";

Whereas 43 men of Hispanic origin have earned this distinction;

Whereas many Hispanic-Americans are dedicated public servants, holding posts at the highest levels of government, including Cabinet Secretaries, Members of the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the Supreme Court; and

Whereas Hispanic-Americans have a deep commitment to faith, family, and community, an enduring work ethic, and a perseverance to succeed: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes Hispanic Heritage Month;

(2) celebrates the vast contributions of Hispanic-Americans to the strength and culture of the United States; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe Hispanic Heritage Month with appropriate programs and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as you may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am proud to present House Resolution 783 for consideration. This resolution recognizes Hispanic Heritage Month and celebrates the vast contributions of Hispanic Americans to the strength and culture of these United States.

The measure before us was introduced on September 29 by my colleague and friend Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida and enjoys the support of nearly 60 Members of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, each year Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15 in celebration of the many contributions of Hispanic Americans to our Nation. This observation began in 1968, following President Lyndon Baines Johnson's designation of a Hispanic Heritage Week, and was expanded to cover the 30-day period of September 15 to October 15 by President Ronald Reagan in 1988.

Notably, September 15 marks the anniversary of the independence days of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, the 30-day period of observance also covers the anniversary of the independence days of Mexico and Chile, as well as the anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Americas.

Mr. Speaker, according to the most recent United States Census Bureau estimate, the Hispanic American population in the United States is roughly 47 million people, which is about 15 percent of the Nation's population, making American citizens of Hispanic ancestry our Nation's largest ethnic or racial minority. Moreover, the Census Bureau has also recognized our Nation's Hispanic population as the fastest-growing minority group and notes that 16 States, including California, New York, Florida, Texas, and my home State of Massachusetts, currently include at least a half million Hispanic residents. The Census Bureau additionally estimates that there are approximately 1.1 million Hispanic American veterans, proud veterans, of the United States Armed Forces.

Over the course of several generations, American life has been deeply enriched by Hispanic contributions in

the fields of government, the arts, sports, education, and countless other areas. Within the past 2 years alone, we have witnessed historic firsts for Americans of Hispanic heritage that evidence the historical, cultural, and social significance of Hispanic Americans as a vital part of our Nation.

Founded in December 1976, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus currently consists of 24 Members of Congress. In August of 2009, the United States Senate confirmed Sonia Sotomayor as the first Hispanic American to serve on the United States Supreme Court. In February of 2009, the United States Senate also confirmed Hilda Solis as the Nation's first Hispanic American woman to serve as our Secretary of Labor. And in April of 2008, renowned Hispanic American author Junot Diaz became the first Dominican American author to receive the Pulitzer Prize for fiction and only the second Hispanic American author ever to win the prestigious award.

Hispanic American activists such as Cesar Chavez have fought tooth and nail to organize workers and attain the basic rights that all Americans deserve. Baseball greats, including Roberto Clemente, Juan Marichal, and Rod Carew, have helped to make America's pastime the great international sport it is today. Musicians such as Tito Puente and Carlos Santana have delighted millions with their music. And actors such as Benicio Del Toro and Jimmy Smits continue to entertain us in films and television. And celebrated authors, including Richard Rodriguez and Sandra Cisneros, continue to advance America's rich literary history with their works.

Mr. Speaker, let us take this opportunity to honor the contributions of these and all Americans of Hispanic ancestry to the historical, cultural, and social fabric of our Nation through the recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting House Resolution 783.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Please join me in recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month to celebrate the lasting influence Hispanic Americans have had throughout the United States.

Mr. Speaker, the United States Census Bureau lists Hispanic Americans as the largest ethnic minority. The Hispanic culture has a privileged place of influence in the United States history.

Hispanic Americans have nobly served the United States Government throughout our history. They have served with distinction in the U.S. military, fighting for our Nation in all major American conflicts.

A total of 43 Hispanic men have earned the Medal of Honor, the highest United States military distinction for

their service above and beyond the call of duty to our country. Hispanic Americans are members of the Senate, the House of Representatives, and with the appointment of Justice Sotomayor, the United States Supreme Court.

The work ethic of Hispanic Americans have helped make them into American entrepreneurs. The number of Hispanic-owned businesses has grown into the millions. Between 1997 and 2002, Hispanic-owned businesses have increased at an astounding rate of 31 percent.

Join me in honoring the countless achievements of Hispanic Americans that have been instrumental in shaping our Nation into what it is today.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers, and I continue to reserve our time.

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I would yield as much time as he may consume to my distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART).

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, a lot has been said, but a lot needs to be said. I would like to thank the chairman and everyone else for bringing this resolution to the floor. We have heard from both of the speakers previously about the great and positive impact that Hispanics have had in this country. Yes, it is a large population and a growing population. It is important that this celebration, which started in 1968 when Congress authorized President Johnson to proclaim National Hispanic Heritage Week and was expanded in 1988 to a month-long celebration. It is important that we recognize and celebrate the contributions of this important part of our country.

The chairman mentioned some notable people who have done so much for this country, but you don't need to frankly look too far from Capitol Hill, or too far from this room, this Chamber right now, to recognize some of those who have done so much for our country.

One of the families that I greatly admire is the family of the person who is Speaker right now, the Salazar brothers, who have given so much for this country, generation after generation.

Previously, Justice Sotomayor was mentioned as another one of the those notable Hispanics whose contributions have been felt for many, many years, and who will continue to be felt for many, many years. It is appropriate that we are here celebrating, and that today Congress joins this celebration, this recognition of such an important part of the fiber of the United States of America, of the Hispanic community of this great country.

I thank all of you for bringing this forward. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 783 which recognizes Hispanic Heritage Month and celebrates the vast contributions that Hispanic

Americans have made to the United States in the past and that they continue to make today.

One of the most recent contributions of the Hispanic community came when Sonia Sotomayor was nominated and confirmed to the Supreme Court, becoming the first Latino to serve on our Nation's highest court. Other history-making Hispanic Americans include the Secretary of Labor, Hilda Solis, and the Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar. By making these nominations, President Obama showed his commitment to have executive and judicial branches that reflect the diversity of our Nation and include the voice of the Hispanic community.

But the contributions of Hispanic Americans are not limited to the executive or judicial branches. Today, we have over 20 Hispanic Members of Congress. Nydia Velázquez was the first Puerto Rican elected to Congress in 1992 and she has since become the first Hispanic woman to chair a full committee. Congresswoman LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD became the first Mexican-American woman elected to Congress in 1992. The 111th Congress would not be the same diverse, dynamic body without the input of its Latino Members.

Mr. Speaker, we need to look to the Federal Government for evidence of how Hispanic Americans contribute to this country. The 37th Congressional District of California, which I am privileged to represent, is home to a considerable number of Latinos who are making a difference every day.

My city is a city of heroes, of people who work hard to better themselves but who never forget where they come from. I want to share an amazing story with you today about one of our local heroes, Leslie Jimenez. Leslie overcame adversity and graduated from Compton High School, a school that at that time had a very low rate of graduating seniors. Not only did Leslie graduate, but she went on to attend and graduate from Harvard University, too. This fall, Leslie returned to Compton and began teaching advanced placement biology and anatomy and physiology through Teach for America. Leslie took her success and chose to give back to her community and serve as a role model to other Latino students.

Mr. Speaker, I have much hope for the future because Hispanic Americans and all Americans are working together to ensure equality and advancement not only of the Latino community, but of all communities. I look forward to celebrating the accomplishments of Hispanic Americans this year and for years to come.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 783, resolution recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month and celebrating the vast contributions of Hispanic Americans to the culture of the United States.

I'd like to thank my friend Representative MARIO DIAZ-BALART, for sponsoring this important resolution; which I am proud to cosponsor.

Economically, culturally, and politically, Latinos are a vital part of this Nation.

The Hispanic community in America is over 47.5 million people strong, and has an annual purchasing power of well over a trillion dollars.

From science, to sports, business, government, and the arts, Hispanic Americans have made significant contributions that have strengthened our Nation and our culture. And earlier this year, the Hispanic community continued to make history with the confirmation of

Justice Sonia Sotomayor as the first Hispanic to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court.

As former chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, it gives me great pleasure to see the continued progress and growth of our Hispanic American community.

I urge my colleagues to recognize the importance of the Hispanic community to our Nation, and vote in favor of the Hispanic Heritage Month resolution.

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, I urge the passage of H. Res. 783, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would simply ask that Members on both sides of the aisle join with the gentleman from Florida in supporting H. Res. 783, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SALAZAR). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 783.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the yeas have it.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

NATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 729) expressing support for designation of a "National Firefighters Memorial Day" to honor and celebrate the firefighters of the United States.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 729

Whereas firefighters are often the first to respond to an emergency, whether the emergency is a fire, transportation accident, natural disaster, act of terrorism, medical emergency, or spill of hazardous materials;

Whereas firefighters tirelessly promote fire prevention and safety to protect our Nation;

Whereas people often do not recognize the important and dangerous work of firefighters;

Whereas the United States has more than 1,000,000 firefighters, 71 percent of whom are volunteer firefighters and approximately 15,000 of whom are female;

Whereas there are 1,600,000 fires, on average, in the United States each year;

Whereas approximately 30,000 fire departments operate within the United States;

Whereas a fire department responds to a fire in the United States every 20 seconds;

Whereas fire departments respond to nearly 2,000,000 calls in the United States each year without hesitation;

Whereas approximately 100 firefighters die in the United States each year in the line of duty;

Whereas 343 New York City Fire Department firefighters died in the line of duty at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001;

Whereas an estimated 32,500 structure fires were intentionally set in the United States in 2007, resulting in 295 civilian deaths;

Whereas 103 on-duty firefighter fatalities occurred in 2008–2009 on the fire ground, 11 at other emergency calls, 39 while responding to or returning from alarms, 7 during training activities, and 17 during other on-duty activities;

Whereas approximately 3,600 people die in the United States each year as a result of fires, and over 19,000 are injured;

Whereas October 9 is the anniversary of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, in which more than 300 people lost their lives;

Whereas President Harding declared the week of October 9 to be "Fire Prevention Week" in 1922;

Whereas the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service takes place each year at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland, on the Sunday before Fire Prevention Week;

Whereas the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation sponsors the annual memorial service to pay tribute to firefighters who died in the line of duty during the previous year;

Whereas given its significance, the Sunday before Fire Prevention Week would be an ideal day to commemorate Federal, State, and local firefighters killed or disabled in the line of duty;

Whereas the Congress created the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation to honor America's fallen firefighters and their families; and

Whereas in 2001, President George W. Bush signed Public Law 107–051 requiring that the flag of the United States at all public buildings be flown at half staff in honor of the National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service in Emmitsburg, Maryland: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) urges the President to designate a day as "National Firefighters Memorial Day" to commemorate Federal, State, and local firefighters killed or disabled in the line of duty; and

(2) calls upon the people of the United States to observe such a day with appropriate ceremonies and respect.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and add any extraneous materials.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, I am proud to present House Resolution 729 for consideration. This resolution seeks to honor our brave firefighters across the United States, as well as commemorate those firefighters who have been disabled or