

festival has raised more than \$4.5 million for participating charities. Mr. Medlin's influence on the community is tremendous, and the results of his efforts will continue to be felt for years to come.

I am saddened by Gordy's passing and proud to honor his lifetime of service and good work.

VOTER INTIMIDATION

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, a recent news story highlights political appointees at the Justice Department running roughshod over both their civil counterparts and the law itself.

In November, members of the New Black Panther Party for Self-Defense stood in paramilitary uniforms, one of them wielding a nightstick, and intimidated voters at a Philadelphia polling place. The facts are not in question. You can see the video on YouTube. Career lawyers at the Justice Department rightly pursued the case in order to bring charges. They even obtained an affidavit from a prominent civil rights activist who was present and described it as "the most blatant form of voter intimidation" that he had seen, including the voting rights crisis he was a part of in Mississippi in the 1960s. The civil suit filed claimed the individuals engaged in "coercion, threats and intimidation, racial threats and insults, and menacing and intimidating gestures."

Yet now political appointees have stepped in to order the suit dropped. Apparently this Justice Department has no problem with voter intimidation or politicization of justice.

BAYONNE MEMORIAL DAY CO-GRAND MARSHALS

(Mr. SIRES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor two very distinguished women for their service in our Armed Forces. Victoria Del Regno served in the U.S. Air Force from 1969 to 1972, and Isabella De Marco served in the U.S. Army from 1993 to 2004 and is currently an active duty reservist. Both women were selected as the Co-Grand Marshals for the Memorial Day parade in Bayonne, New Jersey, in my district. Ms. Del Regno and Ms. De Marco were both born and raised in Bayonne, served as nurses in the military, and both are members of the F.A. MacKenzie American Legion Post 165 in Bayonne.

Mr. Speaker, for the first time in the 91-year history of the parade, two females were selected by the parade committee to serve as Grand Marshals. I am proud that this year's parade honors the service of women in the Armed Forces. These two women and their contributions are outstanding exam-

ples of women who are serving and who have served in our military.

PROTECT MILITARY PERSONNEL FROM HATE CRIMES

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, on June 1 two U.S. servicemen were gunned down at an Army recruiting station in Little Rock, Arkansas. Private William Long lost his life in the attack, and another soldier remains in critical condition. Based on the attacker's own statements, these soldiers were targeted because of their affiliation with the U.S. Army. There is evidence that others were being targeted, and this is not the first time.

Under recently passed hate crimes legislation, H.R. 1913, these heroes would receive no additional Federal protections. I think we can all agree that if there is any class of citizens who deserve special protection from political or religiously motivated crimes, it is our men and women in uniform who put their lives on the line each day to protect this country.

So I have introduced House bill 2677, the Military Personnel Protection Act of 2009. This legislation will right this egregious wrong and ensure those who answered our Nation's call to service are extended the same protections afforded to other protected classes of citizens. I urge my colleagues to join me in passing this legislation and extend Federal hate crimes protections to active, Guard, Reserve and retired members of the armed services. That is the least we can do for them.

NBA AGE ELIGIBILITY RULE

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, tonight millions of Americans will tune in to the NBA finals to watch a great battle between Kobe Bryant and Dwight Howard. Besides immense talent, these gentlemen share another characteristic—they went straight to the NBA from high school. Unfortunately, today's players won't have that same opportunity because the NBA prevents 18-year-olds from choosing their profession and going straight into the NBA simply because of their age. It's something that you don't see in any other sport, baseball, golf, tennis, hockey, any other sport. You don't see it in entertainment, and you don't see it when young men and women choose to join the military and fight for their country. This is part of a hypocritical system that we have which doesn't allow these people to choose their profession when they come out of high school, and it makes the term "student athlete" an oxymoron. The system does more to serve the needs of the universities and the NBA, which uses them as a farm system, than to serve the educational

interests and needs of the students themselves.

Kobe Bryant and Dwight Howard have achieved outstanding success, and I look forward to watching them tonight. But there is no reason to think that today's 18-year-olds can't do the same. Age restriction should be abolished. The NBA should repeal this unfair rule.

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FREE EGYPTIAN BLOGGER KAREEM AMER

(Mr. KIRK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call on Egypt to demonstrate that it is a force for tolerance in the Arab world by releasing Kareem Amer from prison.

A young human rights activist, Kareem Amer, was sentenced in February of 2007 to rot in prison for 4 years based solely on what he wrote on his blog. He is the first blogger of the Arab world to be jailed completely for his Internet comments. And his only crime was criticizing extremists who persecute women and minorities.

We have a unique opportunity to right this injustice. President Obama should call for the release of Kareem to protect the free speech of all of us on the Internet.

The Egyptian Government is heavily subsidized by the U.S. taxpayer. Americans are going through tough times and would not be happy supporting a regime that set a precedent that put the first blogger in jail solely for promoting tolerance. Egypt should not stand out as a repressive regime that stifles Internet speech. That is why Kareem Amer should be released from prison before the President leaves Egypt.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF NAVY COMMANDER DUANE WOLFE

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to honor the life and service of my constituent, Navy Commander Duane Wolfe. Commander Wolfe died Monday, May 25, at Al Asad Air Force Base in Iraq. He was killed by a roadside bomb.

Mr. Speaker, words can't describe the loss felt throughout our California coastal communities by Commander Wolfe's death. He was truly a pillar in his community, spending the majority of his life on the central coast with his wife of 34 years, Cindi, and their beautiful family. Commander Wolfe served in Iraq as a Seabee. He worked at Vandenberg Air Force Base as a civilian for over 20 years and served as well as a deacon of the Los Osos Church of Christ.

By those who knew him best, he is remembered as a dedicated husband and father with a clever wit, a strong sense of work ethic, and a kindness toward those in need.

My thoughts and prayers are with Commander Wolfe and his family and friends during this heartbreaking time, as well as the families of all of our military personnel serving as they do in such danger and with such bravery. We owe our brave men and women serving in the Armed Forces and their families nothing but our full support and gratitude for their tremendous sacrifice.

CAP-AND-TRADE'S NEGATIVE IMPACT ON RURAL AMERICA

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I have serious concerns about cap-and-trade legislation and its impact on the American people, especially rural communities. This, at its core, is a national energy tax which will be passed on to the American people. The stakes are even higher for our Nation's agriculture industry.

Agriculture is an energy-intensive industry, relying on fuel for the pickup truck, fertilizer for the crops, and generators to keep heaters on during the winter.

The Third District of Nebraska is one of the largest agricultural districts in the country, home to more than 30,000 farmers and ranchers. And everyone knows that even a small increase in the operating costs would have dire results.

As higher energy prices hit other areas of our economy, farmers and ranchers will pay more for seed, equipment, steel and other supplies. As the cost of production increases, so will the price of food on the shelves in urban areas.

This national energy tax is the wrong way to go, and certainly my colleagues know that.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACA. For over a year now, I have been coming to the floor to continue to advocate for the need to pass comprehensive immigration reform. While we debate health care and energy legislation, which are important, let us not forget about another urgent situation that is getting worse in America.

To those who say that comprehensive immigration must wait, I ask, how do we humanely deal with the 14 million undocumented immigrants in this country whose lives are being affected every day? How should we respond to thousands of innocent children that increasingly are left to fend for them-

selves as bureaucratic and outdated immigration laws keep them from their parents?

Our immigration system does not fit the current immigration reality. We need comprehensive immigration reform that respects families and protects our borders and makes America safer.

I urge my colleagues to do the right thing. Look past politics and work with the CHC and pass comprehensive immigration reform.

CAP-AND-TAX, AN OVERDOSE OF NEW TAXES

(Mr. BROUN of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, all the symptoms are clear. As a medical doctor, I rise today to diagnose the Obama administration and the majority leadership in this Congress with an addiction to raising taxes.

According to the Wall Street Journal, the Obama budget calls for more than \$1.1 trillion in new taxes over the course of the next decade, including \$646 billion in new taxes for their cap-and-tax scheme alone.

Cap-and-tax will raise the American family's energy costs by more than \$3,100 each year. That amounts to the largest tax increase in the history of our Nation.

Cap-and-tax is an overdose of new taxes. And mark my words, it will lead to catastrophic consequences. Experts almost unanimously agree that the cap-and-tax will destroy millions of jobs and devastate our economy, all of this while having marginal, if any, impact on global emissions.

I urge my colleagues and the American people to stand up against these tax increases and oppose this legislation.

CLEAN ENERGY JOBS

(Ms. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. RICHARDSON. Last week, the House Energy and Commerce Committee reached an agreement on the framework for transforming our economy for decades to come while saving the planet in the process, which should be all of our goal. Before the end of the year, we hope to pass comprehensive energy and job-creating legislation to make clean, American energy available for all of us. The clean energy jobs plan is the next step to create millions of American jobs in clean energy, efficiency, modernization, and a smart electrical grid.

Energy, as a matter, is critical to our own national security and to our self-determination to stop our overarching dependence on foreign oil. And in terms of our environment with the same successful bipartisan American solution that we use to fight acid rain, we can

crack down on the persistent polluters who damage our air and water.

The time for clean energy legislation is now. It will create millions of jobs, reduce our dependency on foreign oil, and it will retool America's industries.

FRANK LARISON: ONCE A MARINE, ALWAYS A MARINE

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there is no such thing as a former marine. Once marines leave the military, they are still marines at heart, soul, and patriotic zeal.

One such marine is Frank Larison, who served in Vietnam—14 years in the military.

The 58-year-old combat veteran lives in Lake Highlands in Dallas, Texas. Like many marines, he has Marine bumper stickers and decals on his vehicle. But the homeowners' association claims the stickers are advertising, which is prohibited under deed restrictions.

Marine Larison has been told to remove the stickers or face fines or towing. Larison is not retreating from this battle. Marine Larison has, in the unique Marine vocabulary, "politely" refused to peel off any of the red and gold Marine decals. Larison told a Dallas reporter, "I'm not advertising. I'm just proud to have served my country."

Marine Larison will win his fight with the association because freedom of speech is still sacred in America whether the association likes it or not. There is nothing like a U.S. Marine. They are a breed of their own. They are truly unique, proud Americans. The association picked the wrong person to do battle with, a U.S. Marine. Semper fi, Frank Larison. Semper fi.

And that's just the way it is.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday, I had the honor and pleasure of participating in a wonderful Asian Pacific American Heritage Month celebration. It featured native songs and dances, beautiful flowers and costumes and excellent food from around Asia. The event was sponsored by the Clark County Asian American Democratic Caucus under the able leadership of Sanje Sedera and Raheela Haq. Community advocates were honored and scholarships were awarded.

Asian Americans are the fastest growing minority group in Nevada and are becoming an increasingly powerful and positive force in our society, our economics, and our political scene. We welcome their valuable contributions and honor their delightfully rich cultural traditions.