

to enter into 99-year commercial leases for economic development purposes.

Navajo Nation is the largest tribe in the United States. It's comprised of over 250,000 members and extends over 27,000 square miles of New Mexico, Arizona and Utah.

Today's Navajo Nation has worked to provide economic development opportunities and partnerships with individuals, small business owners, and large commercial establishments. With successful initiatives including the Diné Power Authority and the Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, the Nation has been at the forefront of economic development on tribal lands.

Today I am introducing legislation that I hope will enable the Nation to develop new projects and exercise their tribal sovereignty. This bill will authorize the Navajo Nation to enter into commercial leases of up to 99 years on their tribal lands. This simple revision of current law will level the playing field for the Nation by allowing it to enter into the same terms that commercial leases are typically offered.

It is my hope that the offering of 99-year leases will trigger additional economic growth on the Navajo Nation. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this necessary legislation.

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URGING HUMAN RIGHTS AND  
DEMOCRACY IN KAZAKHSTAN

**HON. WM. LACY CLAY**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 23, 2010*

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to growing concern of abuse and corruption in the former Soviet Republic country of Kazakhstan. The recent revolution in neighboring Kyrgyzstan and, earlier, the conflict behind Russia and Georgia heightens concern for the region . . . a region rich in oil and gas supplies and a region which serves as a gateway for the U.S. and NATO war effort in Afghanistan. However, ongoing allegations of corruption, human rights abuses, human trafficking, religious persecution and the lack of election reform, free media and free speech seriously affect its civil society.

The world's 10th largest energy-producing country, where a large number of U.S. corporations are doing business in an effort to meet our domestic energy needs, is not only an ally of the U.S. on non-proliferation treaties; it has provided the U.S. and NATO a gateway to Afghanistan. However, increasingly I see reports indicating that Kazakhstan's governmental system lacks the basic rights of democracy: elections are neither free nor fair; what political opposition exists is manipulated, physically and economically harassed and even sometimes assassinated. Few independent media outlets exist; wide-scale corruption which has begun to affect major U.S. companies doing business in Kazakhstan is rampant; respect for human rights, religious freedom, and freedom of speech or economic liberalization is non-existent.

The United States has sought a mutually beneficial relationship with Kazakhstan and provides aid to Kazakhstan in order to enhance economic growth, democracy, security, and civil society and to attend to humanitarian

needs. However, it is evident that the current U.S.-Kazakhstan relationship is compromised by Kazakhstan's record of human rights violations and lack of immediate and necessary reforms while chairing the OSCE. The U.S. Department of State has criticized President Nazarbayev's government for human rights violations. Its March 2009 report states: "The following human rights problems were reported: severe limits on citizens' rights to change their government; military hazing that led to deaths; detainee and prisoner torture and other abuse; unhealthy prison conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention; lack of an independent judiciary; restrictions on freedom of speech, the press, assembly, and association; pervasive corruption, especially in law enforcement and the judicial system; prohibitive political party registration requirements; restrictions on the activities of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); discrimination and violence against women; trafficking in persons; and societal discrimination."

The details in the report, as well as reports from observer groups, are haunting. Two notable external groups are Freedom House and the United States Department of State. The observer group, Freedom House, has labeled Kazakhstan as "not free" and according to its assessment, Kazakhstan has earned a 6 ranking in Political Liberties and a 5 in Civil Liberties on the Freedom House scale of 1 to 7, 7 being the worst ranking possible. Even the U.S. State Department ranks Kazakhstan as a Tier 2 Watch List, meaning that Kazakhstan is a cause for concern over human trafficking issues.

In amending the constitution to allow him unlimited reign in 2007, President Nazarbayev joined a growing list of authoritarian leaders worldwide who have extended their terms indefinitely.

I applaud the work of the Helsinki Commission under the current leadership of Senator BEN CARDIN, and previously, Congressman ALCEE HASTINGS, for their ongoing commitment to bringing these matters to light and it is my hope that we continue work to bring about a transparent democracy where human rights violations and corruption have no place.

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OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL  
DEBT

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 23, 2010*

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today our national debt is \$13,471,094,170,316.20.

On January 6th, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$2,832,668,424,022.40 so far this Congress.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL  
HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

**HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 23, 2010*

Mr. HINCHEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Latino Democratic Committee of Orange County, as it celebrates National Hispanic Heritage Month. For almost a decade, the Latino Democratic Committee of Orange County has championed the cause of improving the lives of Latinos in Orange County through pride of ethnic origin, involvement in government, education and community issues while building coalitions. I am delighted to add my voice to those recognizing the contributions of Hispanic Americans to the United States and to celebrate Hispanic heritage and culture. I am proud to join the residents of Orange County in commemorating this celebratory month.

Since 1968, as Hispanic Heritage Week was approved by President Lyndon Johnson and expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988, we have all come together to celebrate and honor Hispanic Americans and their contributions to our Nation. Since the Revolutionary War, Hispanics have served with honor and distinction in every conflict. They serve as leaders in government, law, business, not-for-profits, social movements, and grassroots efforts. Hispanics continue to enrich our Nation's character and shape our common future. Now, more than ever, Hispanic Americans are shaping the American experience.

Madam Speaker, I am delighted to honor National Hispanic Heritage Month and the Latino Democratic Committee of Orange County. I congratulate and salute the board of directors and supporters of this organization for their very positive and lasting impact on the lives of so many individuals and families.

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POLITICAL PRISONERS BEING  
HELD IN VIETNAM

**HON. DANA ROHRBACHER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 23, 2010*

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Madam Speaker, the Vietnamese government is nothing but a gaggle of thugs and gangsters who exploit, control and profit from the labor of the Vietnamese people and the theft of that nation's natural resources. The Hanoi dictatorship regularly imprisons, tortures and executes Vietnamese citizens who challenge the government/mafia's rule. As in all countries ruled by a communist party religious believers are persecuted most severely because those who align themselves with a higher authority than the mob in the capitol are its greatest threat.

More than two years ago, I placed a list of the political prisoners then being held by the government of Vietnam in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. I am sorry to say that the list of political prisoners now being held in Vietnam has actually grown over the last twenty-four months. Vietnam has benefited immensely from growing US-Vietnam ties in the 15 years since relations were resumed, but the relationship has not in any way, shape, or form been

a two-way street. Vietnam remains a one-party state that restricts freedom of association and assembly, controls religious and labor organizations, bars independent media, obstructs free speech and harshly prosecutes its most prominent public critics.

In advance of the 1000th anniversary of Thang Long, Ha Noi on October 1st, I call on the Vietnamese ruling elite to release all political and religious prisoners immediately and unconditionally. And I urge the State Department to re-designate Vietnam a "Country of Particular Concern" for its gross violations of human rights and religious freedom.

I have attached a new List of Political and Religious Prisoners Who are Still Detained.

THE LIST OF POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS PRISONERS WHO ARE STILL DETAINED

1. Trung Van Duy, life sentenced, then reduced to 20 years, has been in prison for 14 years, the Campaign the Red Jacaranda of Hoang Viet Cuong, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
2. Le Van Tinh, over 70 years old, member of People Action Party of Vietnam (PAP), Advisory Board member to Unified Buddhist Church, arrested 25/01/1995, sentenced to 20 years, has been in prison for 14 years in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
3. Do Van Thai, sentenced to 17 years, has been in prison for 11 years, has HIV/AIDS, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
4. Nguyen Huu Cau, life sentenced, has been in prison for 34 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
5. Nguyen Van Hoa, nearly 70 years old, sentenced to 20 years, has been in prison for 18 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
6. Nguyen Van Trai, sentenced to 16 years, has been in prison for 14 years, has stomach bleeding, weakness, cerebrovascular disease, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
7. Nguyen Long Hoi, nearly 70 years old, life sentenced, then reduced to 20 years, had been in prison for 13 years, then escaped and was arrested in 2010, now has to be in prison for 7 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
8. Nguyen Tuan Nam, member of People Action Party of Vietnam (PAP), sentenced to 19 years, has been in prison for 14 years, has cerebrovascular disease, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
9. Tran Van Duc, member of the Free Vietnam Organization (FVO), near 60 years old, sentenced to 11 years and has been in prison for nearly 11 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
10. Nguyen Xuan No, sentenced to 8 years, has been in prison for 4 years, political prisoner in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
11. Tran Van Thieng, 75 years old, sentenced to 20 years, has been in prison for 19 years and 6 months, has chronic kidney stage 3 and prostatic disease, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
12. Bui Dang Thuy, nearly 60 years old, member of People Action Party of Vietnam (PAP), sentenced to 18 years, has been in prison for 13 years, has severe lung disease, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
13. Nguyen Van Canh, nearly 60 years old, sentenced to 13 years, has been in prison for 5 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
14. Do Thanh Nhan, 84 years old, sentenced to 20 years, has been in prison for 18 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
15. To Van Hong, nearly 60 years old, sentenced to 13 years, has been in prison for 11 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
16. Danh Huong, Cambodian-Vietnamese prisoner, sentenced to 17 years, has been in prison for 11 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
17. Pham Xuan Than, life sentenced, has been in prison for 14 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
18. Nguyen Hoang Son, sentenced to 12 years, has been in prison for 11 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
19. Huynh Anh Tu, member of the Free Vietnam Organization (FVO), 42 years old, sentenced to 13 years, has been in prison for 10 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
20. Huynh Anh Tri, member of the Free Vietnam Organization (FVO), 38 years old, sentenced to 13 years, has been in prison for 10 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
21. Nguyen Ngoc Phuong, member of the Free Vietnam Organization (FVO), 45 years old, a Vietnamese living in Cambodia, sentenced to 13 years, has been in prison for 10 years, in Camp 1, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
22. Nguyen Van Trung, over 60 years old, sentenced to 20 years, has been in prison for 18 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
23. Huynh Anh, sentenced to 8 years, has been in prison for 6 years, in Camp 2, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
24. Au, was arrested in recent day and was in court at Lam Dong, Dong Nai province.
25. Kim, was arrested in recent day and was in court at Lam Dong, Dong Nai province.
26. Huyen, was arrested in recent day and was in court at Lam Dong, Dong Nai province.
27. Phuong, was arrested in recent day and was in court at Lam Dong, Dong Nai province.
28. Vu Hung, sentenced to 20 years, had been in prison for 11 years, escaped and was arrested.
29. Do Thanh Van, sentenced to 20 years, has been in the prison for 12 years.
30. Pham Ba Hai, sentenced to 5 years, has been in the prison for 4 years.
31. Huynh Buu Chau, about 58 years old, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province was arrested in 1999 in Cambodia, sentenced to 11 years, and will be released on 9/9/10, in Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
32. Ho Long Duc, member of the Free Vietnam Organization (FVO), sentenced to 20 years, has been in the prison for 12 years, in Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
33. Van Ngoc Hieu, sentenced to 20 years, has been in the prison for 12 years, hasn't had anyone who visits, escaped from the Camp B34 but was arrested.
34. Le Kim Hung, member of the Free Vietnam Organization (FVO), sentenced 20 years, has been in the prison for 12 years, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
35. Truong Quoc Huy, 29 years old, sentenced to 6 years, has been in the prison for 4 years.
36. Tran Quoc Hien, lawyer, the spokesman to The United Workers and Famers Association (UWFA), sentenced to 5 years, has been in the prison for 3 years, in Bo La prison camp, Binh Duong province.
37. Son Nguyen Thanh Dien, member of the Free Vietnam Organization (FVO), has USA Green Card, returned to Vietnam, was arrested and sentenced to 17 years, has been in the prison for 12 years, in Xuan Loc prison camp, Dong Nai province.
38. Nguyen Van Phuong, sentenced to 17 years, has been in the prison for 12 years, in Xuan Loc prison camp, Dong Nai province.
39. Tran Hoang Giang, sentenced to 16 years, has been in the prison for 12 years, in Xuan Loc prison camp, Dong Nai province.
40. Truong Minh Duc, journalist, camp 4.
41. Tran Tu, life sentenced, has been in the prison for 17 years, has USA Green Card, in Nam Ha prison camp.
42. V. Van Thanh Liem, 60 years old, Hoa Hao religious prisoner, sentenced to 6 years and 6 months.
43. V. Van Dien, 71 years old, Hoa Hao religious prisoner, sentenced to 7 years, has been in the prison for 5 years.
44. Nguyen Thanh Phong, Hoa Hao religious prisoner, sentenced to 6 years.
45. V. Van Buu, Hoa Hao religious prisoner, sentenced to 7 years.
46. Mai Thi Dung, Vo Van Buu's wife, sentenced to 11 years, is severe sickness, Hoa Hao religious prisoner, Camp 4, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
47. Nguyen Van Tho, 72 years old, sentenced to 7 years, Hoa Hao religious prisoner, Camp 4, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
48. Duong Thi Tron, Nguyen Van Tho's wife, 72 years old, Hoa Hao religious prisoner, Camp 4, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
49. Le Van Soc, sentenced to 6 years, was arrested in 2006, Hoa Hao religious prisoner, Camp 4, Xuan Loc prison, Dong Nai province.
50. To Van Manh, sentenced to 6 years, was arrested in 2006, Hoa Hao religious prisoner.
51. Nguyen Van Thuy, sentenced to 5 years, was arrested in 2006, Hoa Hao religious prisoner.
52. Doan Van Duyen, member of The United Workers and Famers Association (UWFA), arrested 12/04/07, sentenced to 4 years, in camp prison B5, Bien Hoa, Dong Nai province.
53. Tran Van Thiep, arrested in 2007, lived in An Giang province.
54. Nguyen Van Hai, nick name "Blogger Dieu Cay", sentenced to 2 years and 6 months, political prisoner (but was arrested with the reason announced by court: "did not pay tax")
55. Nguyen Van Ngoc, 51 years old, arrested in 2007, sentenced to 5 years.
56. Nguyen Van Phong, born in 1975, member of Progressive Party, arrested in 03/29/07, sentenced to 6 years, has been in the prison for 3 years and 5 months, in K3, Camp 5, Yen Dinh, Thanh Hoa province.
57. Nguyen Binh Thanh, born in 1955, member of Progressive Party, arrested on 3/30/07, sentenced to 5 years, has been in the prison for 3 years and 5 months. in Z30A, K4, Xuan Truong, Xuan Loc, Dong Nai province.
58. Tran Khai Thanh Thuy.
59. Pham Thanh Nghien.
60. Le Cong Dinh, the President of Democratic Party of Vietnam.
61. Tran Huynh Duy Thuc.
62. Le Thanh Long.
63. Tran Anh Kim, member of Democratic Party of Vietnam.
64. Nguyen Tien Trung, member of Democratic Party of Vietnam.
65. Pham Van Viem, translated the book "Che Do Phat Xit", arrested many times and escaped, living in Bulgaria for 7 years and was arrested back to Vietnam in 12/97, in camp 615, Kim Giang, Thanh Xuan, Ha Noi (link: <http://www.daiviet.com/archive/index.php/t-92220.html>.)
66. Le Id Tue, politically refugeeed in Campodia, missing since 5/7/07 (according to Nguyen Thu Tram, Le Tri Tue was arrested by the police of Phuong 3, Phu Nhuan district, Hochiminh city.)
67. Pham Van Troi, 41 years old.
68. Vu Hung, teacher, 44 years old.
69. Tran Duc Thach.
70. Nguyen Xuan Nghia, the writer, 61 years old.
71. Ngo Quynh, university student, 26 years old.
72. Nguyen Manh Son, 67 years old.
73. Nguyen Van Tinh, 68 years old.

74. Nguyen Van Tuc, 46 years old.  
 75. Nguyen Kim Nhan, 61 years old.  
 76. Duong Kim Khai, arrested on 8/10/10 at Chuong Bo Church, 37/6 Cau Ong Ngu, Binh Thoi St, phuong 28, Binh Thanh district, Hochiminh city.  
 77. Nguyen Van Dal, lawyer.  
 78. 140 prisoners of "Tay Nguyen" and "Dega" in K1, K2, K3, Nam Ha Camp, Ba Sao, Kim Bang, Nam Ha province.

INTRODUCING A RESOLUTION TO  
 RAISE AWARENESS OF HYPERTENSION AND HELP REVERSE ITS PREVALENCE IN THE UNITED STATES

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 23, 2010

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution that seeks to raise hypertension awareness and help reverse its prevalence in our nation through education, further research, and efforts to reduce the excess salt content in our food. Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is the most commonly diagnosed chronic health condition in the United States, disproportionately affecting the Southeast and African Americans.

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke, the first and third leading causes of death in the United States, as well as congestive heart failure and kidney disease. Approximately one out of three adults (74.5 million people) in the United States is hypertensive. Furthermore, about one in four adults is pre-hypertensive, which means that they are at greater risk for developing hypertension. Hypertension is directly and indirectly responsible for tens of thousands of deaths in the United States each year, and its prevalence is expected to grow due to a large aging population and high rates of obesity and diabetes.

Hypertension is called the "silent killer" because there are often no symptoms that indicate that an individual's blood pressure has reached a deadly level. Sadly, more than one out of five individuals is unaware that they have high blood pressure. African Americans have the highest prevalence of hypertension in the United States, and are more likely to develop it at earlier ages, develop cardiovascular morbidity and disability, and die from hypertension or hypertension-related illnesses. Furthermore, Hispanics often have low levels of hypertension awareness, treatment, and control. Fortunately, through education, healthy lifestyle habits, advances in medical science, research, and smart health care policy, we can begin to reverse these alarming trends.

In particular, addressing high sodium (salt) intake can decrease one's risk for developing high blood pressure. The average person in the United States consumes almost 1.5 times the daily maximum value of salt established by the Department of Health and Human Services. According to a study by the American Medical Association, 150,000 lives could be saved each year if the sodium content in processed foods and restaurant foods were decreased by 50 percent. In addition, we must improve access to affordable, healthy foods for all Americans as well as nutrition labeling

to ensure that consumers have the information they need to make informed decisions about their food purchases.

My resolution encourages all individuals to take control of their health by becoming knowledgeable of their blood pressure as well as their risk for hypertension. Furthermore, it supports community-based programs that use culturally competent and evidence-based strategies to address hypertension; recognizes the importance of linking hypertension awareness programs to other existing programs that address health conditions such as obesity and diabetes; and supports further research that provides a better understanding of how hypertension disproportionately affects different communities. Finally, my resolution calls for the Food and Drug Administration to set mandatory national standards, including improved nutrition labeling, for the sodium content in foods, especially those sold in grocery stores and served in schools and restaurants.

Madam Speaker, health care providers, patients, communities, governmental entities, the food industry, and health-focused organizations must work together to raise awareness about high blood pressure and to develop sustainable solutions for prevention, treatment, and control. I remain committed to supporting national, state, and community efforts to address potentially deadly health conditions like hypertension and to combating health disparities.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF WILLIAM AND ELISE WINTER

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 23, 2010

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding contributions made by the Honorable William and Mrs. Elise Winter in the fields of education and race relations in the State of Mississippi.

Mr. Winter served as governor for the State of Mississippi from 1980 to 1984. Mr. and Mrs. Winter have been long-time advocates for public education, racial reconciliation, and historic preservation. Mr. Winter served as a member of President Clinton's National Advisory Board on Race, and was instrumental in founding the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation at the University of Mississippi. In 1989, he became the first holder of the Eudora Welty Chair of Southern Studies at Millsaps College and was awarded the Profile in Courage Award by the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation in 2008.

During his tenure, both he and his wife were instrumental in passing the 1982 Mississippi Education Reform Act. The 1982 Mississippi Education Reform Act was credited with building stronger elementary and secondary education systems throughout Mississippi and the South. Under this act, teachers received pay increases, compulsory school attendance was mandated, teacher and school accreditation became based on school performance, and kindergarten was mandated for public schools in Mississippi.

Mrs. Elise Varner Winter, a native of Senatobia, Mississippi graduated from

Senatobia High School. She completed her postsecondary education at Northwest Junior College and the University of Mississippi, where her academic focus was history.

Her civic and public service activities include advocacy for education. A member of the Mississippi Easter Seal Society, Mrs. Winter also served as President of the official Mississippi Women's Club and Chair of National Library Week. Additionally, she is a member of the board of trustees of Rust College, a trustee of the Synod of Mid-South of the Presbyterian Church and was the first woman elder of Fondren Presbyterian Church of Jackson. She is also very active in Habitat for Humanity—Metro Jackson.

Not only were Governor and Mrs. Winter very instrumental in education reform for the State of Mississippi but they have brought leadership, vision, and voices of reason to the State of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues please join me in honoring Mr. and Mrs. Winter for their many contributions in public education and racial relations in the State of Mississippi.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 23, 2010

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, on September 22, 2010, I missed rollcall votes Nos. 532 and 533. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes No. 532, to establish Coltsville National Historical Park in the State of Connecticut and, No. 533, to authorize funding for the creation and implementation of infant mortality pilot programs in standard metropolitan statistical areas with high rates of infant mortality.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF  
 MARCIA AVNER: NONPROFIT  
 LEADER, ADVOCATE, ORGANIZER  
 AND TEACHER

**HON. BETTY McCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 23, 2010

Ms. McCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute today to one of Minnesota's outstanding community leaders and a longtime resident of my Congressional District, Marcia Avner. This month, Marcia Avner is transitioning from her position as Public Policy Director for the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN), a position she has held for the past 14 years, to Senior Fellow at MCN, where she will continue to do what she has done best for so many years; advising and training emerging nonprofit sector advocates at both the state and national levels.

Marcia has distinguished herself in several realms. She is an incredibly effective and inspirational advocate and organizer, a teacher and promoter of the art of public advocacy, and a distinguished public servant at the local, state and federal levels of government. Her work includes advocacy and civic engagement training and education as well as lobbying on election reform, tax policy, and many other