

estimates it needs to provide safe and efficient access for visitors. My legislation would double the annual funding to accelerate the retirement of the growing road repair backlog now estimated at \$4.9 billion.

The poor state of park roads is not caused by insufficient funding alone. Under current law, Federal highway funds can be used for reconstruction and rehabilitation, but not for regular maintenance that would help extend the life of the roadway and preserve taxpayers' investment. Consequently, maintenance of roads and bridges is deferred until they have deteriorated to the point where they qualify for major rehabilitation or reconstruction, at far greater expense. Visitors are put at risk when they try to drive around potholes that pock our park roads. My legislation would make regular maintenance of park roads eligible for federal highway funding.

As our national parks become increasingly crowded, alternative transportation systems are being relied upon to a much greater extent to help move visitors around. Unfortunately, that program is also severely underfunded. A third major focus of my bill would raise the annual funding level for the Federal public lands transit program from the current \$24 million to \$100 million, with 60 percent of it being targeted for qualified projects in national parks.

Visitors from throughout our country and around the world are discovering the natural, cultural, and historic wonders that are embodied in our national parks. Their experience should not be diminished, and their safety certainly should not be placed at risk, while they visit our national parks. I urge you to join me in sponsoring this legislation to improve visitor safety and enjoyment of our parks through improved maintenance and management of its transportation systems.

SUPPORTING A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION TO THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a co-sponsor and strong supporter of H. Res. 1765 because this resolution affirms the imperative for a negotiated solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Palestinian efforts to pursue declarations or recognitions of statehood outside of the peace process are unacceptable. This threatens compromise and a peaceful solution.

I thank Chairman BERMAN for offering this important resolution and my colleagues in the House for calling on Palestinian leaders to cease all efforts at circumventing the negotiation process. Only through this direct Israel-Palestinian dialogue can we move forward to compromise and lasting peace. Unilateral declarations do not support this process, but rather threaten peace and deepen conflicts.

It is time to focus on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Any attempts to bypass negotiations threaten the security and survival of the State of Israel, and the creation of a viable and democratic Palestinian state.

I firmly believe that a lasting compromise can be reached through direct negotiations

and compromise. That is the way forward for Israelis, Palestinians, and the United States. Secretary of State Clinton had it right when she noted that "it is only a negotiated agreement between the parties that will be sustainable."

That is why I strongly oppose any Palestinian efforts to unilaterally declare statehood and abandon efforts for a negotiated two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Today, I am pleased that there is bipartisan agreement that the House of Representatives must do everything in our power to reaffirm the need for a peace process and to move these talks forward toward a lasting solution.

CONGRATULATING MIDWAY USA

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating MidwayUSA for receiving the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Earlier this week representatives from MidwayUSA traveled to Washington, DC, to accept the award.

MidwayUSA is a family-owned, catalog/Internet-based retail merchant that offers shooting, reloading, gunsmithing, and hunting products. Retail customers represent 90 percent of the firm's total business at its two Columbia, Missouri locations, with dealers and international customers making up the remaining 10 percent. More than 95,000 different products from more than 700 vendors are distributed by the company, which employs 243 full-time and 100 part-time workers.

Named after Malcolm Baldrige, the 26th Secretary of Commerce, the Baldrige Award was established by Congress in 1987 to enhance the competitiveness and performance of U.S. businesses. The award promotes excellence in organizational performance, recognizes the achievements and results of U.S. organizations, and publicizes successful performance strategies. The award recipients were selected from a field of 70 applicants. All of the applicants were evaluated rigorously by an independent board of examiners in seven areas: leadership; strategic planning; customer focus; measurement, analysis and knowledge management; workforce focus; process management; and results. The evaluation process for each of the recipients included about 1,000 hours of review and an on-site visit by a team of examiners to clarify questions and verify information in the applications. Since 1988, 80 organizations have received Baldrige Awards. I am extremely proud that MidwayUSA has joined this exclusive list.

Small businesses create jobs and spur economic growth, and I am extremely proud that Columbia's MidwayUSA has been recognized for productivity and quality at a time when our economy is struggling. This kind of success is yet another example of the key role that Missouri's small businesses play in the state and national economies.

I would like to take this time to commend MidwayUSA for all their hard work, and I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing MidwayUSA for a job well done.

IN HONOR OF KURT CZARNOWSKI FOR HIS 34 YEARS OF DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVICE WITH THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Kurt Czarnowski in recognition of his 34 years of dedicated public service with the Social Security Administration.

Kurt was raised in the town of Weston, Massachusetts, by his proud parents Edward and Alisca Czarnowski and for the past 27 years, he has lived in Norfolk, Massachusetts, with his wife Anne, their daughter Amy, and son Brian.

Kurt graduated from Hamilton College earning a B.A. degree and then worked as a substitute teacher while pursuing his education, earning a Master's degree in Public Administration at Northeastern University.

Kurt began his Social Security Administration career in 1976 as a Claims Representative in Framingham, Massachusetts. He was selected for the agency's Management Intern Program in 1979 and subsequently worked his way through the management ranks, serving as Programs Analyst, District Manager, Deputy Assistant Regional Commissioner, and Area Director. After holding a number of key positions in the area of public relations, Kurt became the Regional Communications Director in May 2000.

When reflecting on a lifetime of good works, Kurt counts as his greatest achievements his 38 years of marriage to his wife Anne and raising their two children, Amy and Brian, as well as his 34 years of public service with the Social Security Administration.

Madam Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take to the floor of the House today to join with his family, friends and contemporaries to thank Kurt Czarnowski for his dedicated service to the United States of America. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing Kurt Czarnowski for his dedicated public service.

HONORING THE SERVICE AND DEDICATION OF JULIE EUBANK

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Mr. GORDON of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Julie Eubank for her contributions to the Sixth Congressional District of Tennessee. As any member of Congress knows, our legislative achievements and successful constituent services programs would not be possible without a cadre of great staff working behind the scenes. Throughout my time in Congress, I have been fortunate to have many bright, able staff members with an interest in serving their country by working in this body. Today I would like to single out Julie Eubank, my Chief of Staff in Washington.

Julie attended high school in Smyrna and attended my alma mater, Middle Tennessee State University. She graduated with a degree

in Elementary Education, but one fateful internship with my Murfreesboro office changed her course forever. She was drawn into politics and, with few interruptions, Julie has been a member of my team ever since. She has worn many hats in her time with my office. She began as an intern in 2002 and since then has served as my scheduler and executive assistant, communications director, and as the member services coordinator for the Committee on Science and Technology. Undoubtedly, her training as a teacher of small children helped her in each task too, whether it was coordinating events, working with reporters or herding cats on the Committee. Her Tennessee roots have helped kept her grounded and her respect and dedication to her community has been apparent throughout.

In October 2009, Julie became Chief of Staff to my Washington office. It's a position that requires enormous responsibility and trust, and Julie took to the job easily.

Madam Speaker, Julie is exactly the kind of lieutenant you'd want to have in your foxhole. She can take a tough assignment, turn on a dime and put it into action. She is a natural as a manager and mentor and has the absolute devotion of my staff. She has good political instincts, which have always been appreciated. Under pressure, she keeps up a great presence of mind and sense of humor. And apparently, quick reflexes. (As The Tennessean was proud to report after a false-alarm lockdown in Rayburn House Office Building, Julie Eubank "doesn't mess around.")

All of her qualities have been put to the test during her time as my Chief of Staff. She has helped the office shift gears from preparing for a reelection fight to transitioning into retirement. She has been there through difficult floor fights and popped champagne after hard-won victories.

Madam Speaker, I have been honored that Julie has dedicated so much of her professional career—so far—to me and my constituents. My colleagues in Tennessee and I are all extremely proud of her accomplishments. I look forward to following her next endeavors.

Julie, I can't thank you enough for your loyalty through the years. I wish you all the best.

H. RES. 1646 CELEBRATING THE NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to praise the dedicated commitment of the Library of Congress to the promotion of reading through its sponsorship of the National Book Festival. I warmly commend Representative DANIEL LUNGREN for taking the initiative to introduce H. Res. 1646.

The National Book Festival occurred on September 25, 2010, in Washington, DC. President Obama and Michelle Obama served as honorary chairs for the important event. Nearly one million people over the past decade have attended. This year, approximately 150,000 bibliophiles gathered together to meet the 70 best-selling authors in attendance.

I am proud that the New York State Library, New York Council for the Humanities and the Empire State Center for the Book partnered

together to display New York's rich literary heritage in the Pavilion of the States at the National Book Festival. New York author, Rebecca Stead, also autographed copies of her 2010 Newbery Award-winning book, *When You Reach Me*. New York's involvement at the mall demonstrated a common commitment with the Library of Congress in encouraging the population to read.

Fostering the joy of reading is a valuable goal. Living in the digital age does not mean we have forgotten the pleasure of reading the printed text. Reading broadens our minds to new possibilities, new worlds, new people and new ideas. The future is based on our ability to read, digest information and pioneer innovative ideas. Formal education in the classroom should be supplemented by self-education.

Urging more people to read also improves our literacy rate. A literate population is necessary to guarantee greater educational opportunities, foster life-long learning, jobs, and underpins our democracy because elected officials depend on an informed citizenry to make decisions.

I admire and am thankful of the efforts made by the Library of Congress to promote the wonder of words.

SUPPORTING A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION TO THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, no country has done more than the United States to advance the cause of Palestinian statehood.

We have done so in recognition of Palestinian aspirations for a brighter and more stable future as well as Israel's desire for a secure and peaceful coexistence with its neighbors.

As one of the largest grantors of Palestinian aid, we have worked to ensure that a future Palestinian state has the political, economic and social infrastructure to support a stable functioning democracy.

But our efforts have been predicated on the Palestinians' own internationally-witnessed commitments to seek a negotiated solution to achieve a two-state peace agreement. These commitments served at the core of the 1991 Madrid conference, and were codified in the 1993 Oslo Accords, the 2003 Roadmap for Peace, the 2007 Annapolis declaration, two UN Security Council resolutions sponsored by the Bush Administration in 2002 and 2008, and reaffirmed at the 2010 summit brokered by President Obama.

It is only through direct negotiations that the parties can resolve the core issues of borders, water, refugees, Jerusalem, and the security arrangements and produce an agreement that ends the conflict and sustains a viable independent Palestinian state.

For all who complain that Israeli settlement construction is the primary obstacle to the peace talks, the reality is that Israeli leaders have time and again shown bold leadership to make difficult concessions on this issue and others for the sake of peace. The Israeli government's recent 10-month settlement morato-

rium and its serious consideration of a further extension are proof that settlements are not the stumbling block keeping us from direct talks.

Rather, it is the Palestinian leadership's unwillingness to make tough choices that has sidelined the process. And if anything, a unilateral drive to statehood is chilling evidence.

A strategy to bypass the negotiations process and unilaterally declare Palestinian statehood will turn the clock backward, not forward. It is a reckless tactic that threatens to intensify the conflict and alienate the United States, which by law would be prohibited from providing aid to an independent Palestinian State that does not, among other conditions, have a full and normal relationship with Israel.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and call on others in the international community to pressure the Palestinian leadership to demonstrate their dedication to achieving statehood by returning to the negotiating table.

HONORING MRS. TERRI ALFORD

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the service of Mrs. Terri Alford to the U.S. House of Representatives. For 16 years Mrs. Alford has approached her service to the Congress with a professionalism, dedication, and joy that has inspired hundreds of staff and interns and undoubtedly improved the institution of Congress itself. Mrs. Alford's patriotism, love of the arts, and good humor enlivened the U.S. House of Representatives, and her infectious enthusiasm and good nature were a gift for all who had the pleasure of working with her. As Mrs. Alford prepares for retirement to spend more time with her husband, children, and grandchildren, we thank her for her dedicated service and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 17, 2010

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 631 on, H.R. 5446, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass, To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 600 Florida Avenue in Cocoa, Florida, as the "Harry T. and Harriette Moore Post Office", I am not recorded because I was absent because I gave birth to my baby daughter. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 632 on, H. Res. 1759, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, Expressing support for designation of January 23rd as "Ed Roberts Day", I am not recorded because I was absent because I gave birth to my baby daughter. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Madam Speaker, on rollcall No. 633 on, S. Con. Res. 72, On Motion to Suspend the Rules and Agree, A concurrent resolution recognizing the 45th anniversary of the White