

Citizens' Health Care Working Group. The panel did groundbreaking work to bring the American people together to confront the health care crisis and facilitated the direct communication of their views and concerns to lawmakers. His leadership on the panel established Hansen as a key leader and trusted advisor to Congress and the Obama administration on the primary health care issues facing working families and the elements of comprehensive health care reform.

Hansen is the Founding National Chair of the National Commission on Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Misconduct and Violations of 4th Amendment Rights. The commission examined ICE misconduct during the Bush administration's workplace raids. It presented the findings to the American people in a report that documents the terrible costs and human suffering caused by ICE misconduct and outlined key elements of needed immigration policy reforms.

Hansen is a founding architect of the Change to Win Federation that has set a new course for the labor movement. Recognizing that industry-wide organizing is the best way to give workers the power to raise working and living standards, Hansen is leading the UFCW through a dramatic shift in priorities as more staff and resources than ever before are dedicated to uniting workers and bringing them under a union contract.

At the core of Hansen's leadership is the spirit and exuberance that he demonstrated as a young volunteer organizer and activist. He knows that activated members can organize, that they can build their union, and that they can confront corporate power and win. After all, Hansen did all of those things as a rank-and-file member—today he is activating and leading a new generation of workers and building a 21st century union.

50TH ANIVERSARY OF AEROSPACE CORPORATION

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the Aerospace Corporation's 50th anniversary.

Fifty years ago the United States Congress had the foresight to create the Aerospace Corporation, a federally funded research and development center.

The Aerospace Corporation doesn't make the things that orbit in space. It makes the things that orbit in space work properly, and helps get them there safely.

The Aerospace Corporation has been involved in every Defense Department space program since 1960. From blueprint to launch and system architecture, the Aerospace Corporation is the Pentagon's technical conscience, its independent math checker.

The Aerospace Corporation has played a key role in developing and maintaining the space systems Americans and people around the world now take for granted, like GPS and weather satellites. And it makes sure the launches of those satellites are safe and successful.

Fifty years after its creation, we need The Aerospace Corporation more than ever.

The United States is at a crossroads in space. China launched a shot across our bow in 2007 when it destroyed a satellite in low-Earth orbit. That sent me a very clear message. While the United States may still enjoy superiority in space, we're no longer the only player.

We must protect our space assets, and build a constellation of robust, redundant, low-cost communication, navigation and reconnaissance satellites that can withstand an attack or a catastrophic accident. If we don't start now we are going to be too late.

We not only need a new generation of spacecraft, we need a new generation of space engineers.

Our space workforce is aging. Some 60% of aerospace workers are over age 50, and almost 26% are eligible for retirement this year. Not enough young scientists and engineers are signing up to take their place.

While the United States graduates 70,000 engineers, a meager 15 percent of our college graduates every year, China graduates more than half a million.

China has decided the most important asset to a space program and its future as a super power is human capital—the scientists, engineers, and technicians that design and build satellites, rockets, and space vehicles.

And while we struggle to educate enough engineers to keep up internationally, we're losing many of them to the sexy new world of Internet technology.

It used to be that being a rocket scientist was synonymous with genius. Now it seems that mantle has slipped onto the shoulders of those who invented Facebook, eBay and Google.

If we want to continue to be the world's leader in space, we have to get our young people to dream again—dreaming out of this world, literally. We need to inspire our young people the same way President Kennedy did nearly 50 years ago when he committed the United States to winning the space race.

I've lived through a half century of U.S. space superiority. Only with sustained focus and leadership will my kids and grandchildren enjoy another half century of U.S. dominance. At this milestone, let us chart a path to that century.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE RESTORING PROTECTION TO VICTIMS OF PERSECUTION ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise with my colleagues, Mr. MORAN of Virginia and Ms. WATSON of California, to end a part of our immigration system that has denied protection to those who need it the most. The Restoring Protection to Victims of Persecution Act ends the practice of barring asylum claims by those who have been in our country for more than a year.

Enacted as part of the Illegal Immigrant Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, the one-year bar to asylum has failed. Instead of preventing fraudulent asylum claims as intended, the one-year limitation has turned away individuals who would most benefit from

sanctuary. A disproportionate number of these immigrants are women who are the targets of gender-based persecution, including domestic violence, female genital cutting, and "honor" crimes.

Although the law includes exceptions to excuse those who are determined to have valid reasons for applying for asylum after one year, adjudicators routinely deny applicants who meet these exceptions. People who are attempting to care for their children, hide from their abusers, cope with past trauma, and deal with the challenges of surviving in a new country are repeatedly and arbitrarily denied asylum status because of missing the one-year deadline.

Once denied, an applicant has only two other possibilities for safety: to petition for withholding of removal or to seek protection under the Convention Against Torture. Both these forms of relief demand an applicant surmount a much higher standard of proof than asylum and never provide them permanency or allow reunification with family members.

I also thank my colleague, Mr. ORTIZ, for introducing a comprehensive immigration reform bill that includes language to end the one-year bar. I hope that by giving this issue its own legislation, Congress can move swiftly to help these victims who are being turned away every day. Since its enactment in 1996, more than 35,000 people have been denied asylum solely because of the one-year bar.

As a country, we pride ourselves in our advocacy for democracy and human rights around the world. Please join us in supporting this bill so that we can prove we are as good as our word.

HONORING AL SHUR: LABOR LEADER OF THE YEAR

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, in his more than four decades of union activism, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 569 Business Manager Al Shur has earned a well-deserved reputation as labor's "greenest" leader.

Al, a member of IBEW since 1967, quickly distinguished himself through his political involvement as a rank-and-file member. His activism eventually led him to serve on Local 569's executive board until being elected business manager in 1995.

As business manager, Al has supported development and construction that focuses on improving job quality, the community and the environment.

Under Al's leadership, IBEW Local 569 has been an outspoken advocate for responsible, sustainable development, as well as serving as a model for using green technologies in the construction industry.

IBEW Local 569's offices and training center proudly display a vast network of solar panels which allow the union to operate almost completely free of a traditional power grid.

Al has also worked tirelessly to build relationships with San Diego's environmental leaders through his work with organizations such as the Apollo Alliance, the Environmental Health Coalition and San Diego Coastkeeper.

By working together, the partnership between the labor movement and the environmentalist has become a powerful force for change in San Diego and Imperial Counties.

For his dedication to building alliances between labor and the environmental community, the Executive Board of the Labor Council has named Al Shur our 2009–2010 “Labor Leader of the Year.”

HONORING RICHARD RECHTIEN

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Richard (Dick) Rechten and his business, Rechten International Trucks, which represented the prestigious honor of the International Circle of Excellence Award for 2009.

The Circle of Excellence Award is awarded by the international dealer organization of Navistar, Inc., and honors international truck dealerships that achieve the highest level of dealer performance with respect to operating and financial standards, market representation, and most importantly, customer satisfaction. It is the highest honor a dealer principal can receive from the company.

Rechten International Trucks was founded in 1981 and is headquartered in Miami. Under his leadership, it has grown into one of the preeminent truck dealerships in the Southeast and the entire nation, with 188 employees and four dealer locations, including Miami, Riviera Beach, Fort Pierce and Broward County. Dick has served as chairman of the International Dealer Council and of the Florida Trucking Association, and as co-chair of numerous dealer advisory groups for Navistar. With this most recent award, Rechten International will now receive the Circle of Excellence Award, under Dick's leadership, a total of 23 times.

Through his commitment to hard work and outstanding customer service, he has built an economically vital business of which he can be justly proud. Madam Speaker, I ask our colleagues to join with me in congratulating Dick Rechten for his record of accomplishment and for his many contributions to our South Florida community.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, on March 9, 2010, I was unavoidably detained and was unable to record my vote for rollcall Nos. 92–94. Had I been present I would have voted:

Rollcall No. 92 “yes”—Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act.

Rollcall No. 93 “yes”—Congratulating Wilard S. Boyle and George E. Smith for being awarded the Nobel Prize in physics.

Rollcall No. 94 “yes”—Honoring John E. Warnock, Charles M. Geschke, Forrest M. Bird, Esther Sans Takeuchi, and IBM Corporation for receiving the 2008 National Medal of Technology and Innovation.

HONORING ED GOTTHARDT

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of the late Ed Gotthardt, former Mayor of Seguin, Texas. Mayor Gotthardt served the community through his distinguished business career and great service as mayor for two terms in Seguin, Texas.

Mayor Gotthardt was born on January 1929 in Galle, Texas and passed away of natural causes February 2010 in New Braunfels, Texas. His accomplished lifetime as a businessman and mayor stemmed from his humble beginnings. His childhood was spent on a farm in Galle in a town between Seguin and San Marcos where he learned about produce. He received his education in the public schools of Guadalupe County, where he graduated from high school. At the age of twenty-one, the late Gotthardt was hired as a produce worker at a local grocery store. With a twelfth grade education, he rose through the ranks to store manager, unit director, to the corporate office as a buyer and then as Vice President of Produce Marketing. In the 1980s, he retired having lived during his career throughout the area in Seguin, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi. The late Gotthardt had a thirty-seven year career in the grocery business before serving two three-year terms as Mayor. After his retirement, he later served as President of the H-E-B grocery store retirees' organization.

In 1990, Gotthardt announced that he planned to run for mayor of Seguin. He had not previously held any position in public office, but his involvement with the community and commitment to the people of Seguin aided to his election. His re-election was without opposition, serving as mayor until 1996. During his time in office, Mayor Gotthardt contributed to the city by ensuring that the Sebastopol State Historical Park in Seguin was renovated and dedicated much of his work for those who served their country in the military. He worked on the Veterans Memorial at the Guadalupe County Courthouse extensively. The late Mayor Gotthardt was recognized for his tireless efforts to ensure the community and people were provided the services needed.

Along with his business career and terms as Mayor of Seguin, the late Gotthardt was a member of Seguin Masonic Lodge AF&AM 109, Alzafar Shrine, Elks Lodge 1229, Order of the Eastern Star Chapter 555, the Seguin Chamber of Commerce, the Seguin Rotary Club and the Comal County Seniors Center. His leisure time was spent with the Seguin Chamber of Commerce, senior center, and with his family.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize the late Ed Gotthardt, former Mayor of Seguin, Texas on his contributions to the community.

HONORING MS. ERIN CONATON

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Ms. Erin Conaton, the Majority Staff Director of the House Armed Services Committee, who leaves our staff today to become the new Under Secretary of the Air Force.

Madam Speaker, this is a bittersweet moment for me. I have come to depend upon Erin Conaton as a trusted advisor and friend since she joined the House Armed Services Committee staff in 2001. Seldom does one person have the combination of talent, good judgment, knowledge, devotion to duty, common sense, and, as we say in Missouri, “good get along,” but Erin is blessed with all of these qualities. And while I am not happy about losing her to the Pentagon and no longer working with her on a daily basis, I know that our country will not just be in good hands, but better hands, with Erin as Under Secretary of the Air Force.

Erin has an impressive academic and professional background. She holds a bachelor's degree from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and a master's degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Before becoming a Congressional staffer, Erin was highly recommended to me as a result of her outstanding work as the Research Staff Director for the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, also known as the Hart-Rudman Commission.

Erin joined the House Armed Services Committee staff in 2001, serving as a Professional Staff Member covering a range of defense policy issues. In 2005, she became the committee's Minority Staff Director. And at the start of the 110th Congress in 2007, Erin assumed the post of Majority Staff Director, serving all of the members of our committee and overseeing the committee's 70-person staff. She has run the House Armed Services Committee as well as anyone in my 33 years in Congress.

In the nine years that I have had the privilege to know and work closely with Erin, she has consistently demonstrated her leadership ability, mastery of national security issues, and dedication to our men and women in uniform. Erin's work ethic is unparalleled, but more importantly, she has a rare gift for getting along with people. Despite the demands of working on Capitol Hill, Erin is unflappable and approaches every challenge with a level head, whether working with Members of Congress, Congressional staff, or Administration officials.

I am delighted that the Obama Administration recognized that Erin Conaton would be an excellent nominee for the next Under Secretary of the Air Force. I can't brag on her enough, and I am pleased that the other body confirmed her nomination last week. I know Erin will make us proud as she continues her career in public service with the Department of the Air Force, and I wish her all the best as she takes on this new challenge.