

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONGRATULATING A.K. MAGO ON RECEIVING THE PRAVASI BHARATIYA SAMMAN AWARD

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2010

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate A.K. Mago on receiving the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award.

On January 9th, the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award was presented to A.K. Mago for his outstanding work which has enhanced India's prestige in the United States. He is the first recipient of this award from the Houston Consulate Jurisdiction, which covers Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Texas.

The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award is the highest honor conferred on overseas Indians. The award is presented by the President of India as a part of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conventions, which have been organized annually since 2003. Recipients of this award have made significant contributions towards a better understanding of India abroad and have supported India's causes and concerns in a faithful way. Additionally, the honorees have made significant contributions in the welfare of the Diaspora, philanthropic and charitable work in India and abroad, and in building closer links between India and its Diaspora in the economic, cultural, and scientific fields.

Madam Speaker, I ask my esteemed colleagues to join me in expressing our congratulations to A.K. Mago for receiving this high honor.

HONORING ARMY SERGEANT JUSTIN SIKMA FOR HIS EXEMPLARY SERVICE IN IRAQ

HON. DEBORAH L. HALVORSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2010

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Army Sergeant Justin Sikma, Bourbonnais resident and member of the 317th Engineer Company.

While working to clear a swampy field in Iraq, an extra vigilant Sergeant Sikma, spotted a live fragmentation rocket in the path of a piece of machinery being operated by a fellow soldier.

Sikma's keen eye protected the nine other men at his squad's work site.

America is fortunate to have brave soldiers like Sergeant Sikma in our armed forces keeping us safe and protecting our freedoms here at home and abroad. We all owe a debt of gratitude to Sergeant Justin Sikma and the millions of those who have served and will serve the great United States of America.

CONGRATULATING JOSEPH A. HEFFERS, RECIPIENT OF THE 2010 ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM THE GREATER PITTSBURGH FRIENDLY SONS OF ST. PATRICK

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2010

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Joseph A. Heffers, the 2010 recipient of the Achievement Award from the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick.

A son of the late John Heffers and Mary Golden Heffers, Mr. Heffers was born and raised in Pittston City, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

A graduate of Pittston City High School and Wilkes-Barre Business College, where he earned a degree in business and accounting, Mr. Heffers served in the United States Army from 1964 to 1967 in the Special Troops Unit at Fort Dix, New Jersey.

Mr. Heffers worked at Eberhard Faber Company in Mountaintop, Pennsylvania, as a project manager for 21 years, receiving the President's Award from Mr. Eberhard Faber in 1986.

He later worked for Cooper Industries in Weatherly, Carbon County, Pennsylvania, as a production specialist and later retired from Intermetro Industries in Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Heffers is currently the Chief Executive Officer and Manager of the Metro Wire Federal Credit Union in Plains Township, Pennsylvania.

A past president of the Greater Pittston Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, Mr. Heffers serves on the advisory board of the Salvation Army in West Pittston and also is a member and former financial secretary of President John F. Kennedy Council 372 Knights of Columbus, their Council Choir and the Fourth Degree Assembly.

Mr. Heffers coached several youth athletic teams including Stoners Soccer, Jenkins Township Girls Softball and Girls Varsity Basketball at St. Mary's Assumption School in Pittston.

He is a member of St. John the Evangelist Church, Pittston.

Mr. Heffers resides in Port Griffith with his wife of 38 years, the former Mary Catherine Shea. They are the parents of two children, Joseph, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania and Mary Elizabeth Gregor, Plains Township, Pennsylvania. The couple also has two grandchildren, Maxwell Wallace Gregor and Declan Joseph Gregor.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Mr. Heffers on this notable occasion. His exemplary service to his family and community has earned him widespread respect and recognition.

HONORING THE MEDICAL TEAM ORGANIZED BY DR. JESSE BUTLER

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2010

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight to recognize a medical team from my district that recently traveled to the Dominican Republic to provide life-saving spinal surgery to victims of the Haiti earthquake.

In the immediate aftermath of January's devastating earthquake, Dr. Jesse Butler, an orthopedic spinal surgeon from Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge, found a way to contribute his unique skills. In just a few short days, Dr. Butler was able to organize a medical team, collect medical equipment worth millions of dollars, and travel to the Dominican Republic.

Members of the team included anesthesiologist Dr. Howard Konowitz, from Gottlieb Memorial Hospital in Melrose Park; scrub nurse Teresa Dudic, from Gottlieb; registered nurse Maria Korbel, from the Illinois Bone & Joint Institute in Morton Grove; nurse Aimee Duque-Randolph; and physician's assistant Alicia Granger-Carlson.

Dr. Butler's team operated on 11 patients, ages 14 to 35, at Dario Contreras Hospital in Santo Domingo, where many earthquake victims were treated. Conditions were far from ideal: patients waited in crowded hallways, and surgeries were performed in rooms as hot as 85 degrees. Victims withstood the pain of their injuries without the aid of morphine.

Upon their return, members of the team recalled the fear and desperation of those they treated, but also the Haitians' will to live and persevere. And though they could only meet a fraction of Haiti's enormous medical needs, they said they hope that their work will inspire others to similarly volunteer their time and talents.

I would like to submit for my colleagues' interest the following article from the February 10th edition of the Chicago Tribune about the team's trip.

LIFE-SAVING TRIP FOR EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS
'LIFE-CHANGING' FOR SURGICAL TEAM—SPINAL SURGERY UNIT INSPIRED BY RESOLVE OF HAITIANS

(By Courtney Flynn)

When orthopedic spine surgeon Dr. Jesse Butler saw images of the lives shattered by the Haiti earthquake, he knew he had to help the only way he knew how: by fixing broken backs.

Within 48 hours of the Jan. 12 quake, the physician from Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge organized a spinal surgery team, called in favors to collect millions of dollars of medical equipment and boarded a plane to the Dominican Republic.

"Instead of going the traditional route through a relief agency, we thought it would be more successful if we took charge of the logistics ourselves," Butler said. "We put together a team that could pretty much handle anything thrown at them."

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

In one week, the team operated on 11 patients, from 14 to 35, including a 25-year-old pregnant woman whose injuries had left her a quadriplegic. Nine of the patients were Haitian earthquake victims; two were injured in a motorcycle crash.

Despite the severity of the patients' injuries and the tragedy they'd been through, members of the surgical team said they were struck by the Haitians' resolve to live and wait for help.

"When you looked into their eyes, you saw a terror and fear that just burns into your soul," said Dr. Howard Konowitz, an anesthesiologist from Gottlieb Memorial Hospital in Melrose Park who was on the trip. "There was no morphine . . . but no one was moaning, no one was screaming."

The team performed its work at Dario Contreras Hospital, a public hospital in the Dominican capital of Santo Domingo where many Haitians have sought medical attention since the earthquake. Team members chose the hospital consulting with the Ministry of Health on where their skills would be of most help.

The team worked in grueling conditions, operating in rooms where the heat reached 85 degrees. Some patients waited in crowded hallways, others on thin mattresses atop rusted metal frames.

"We were working long hours. The rooms were so hot, people were dehydrated," said Teresa Dudic, a bilingual scrub nurse from Gottlieb. "And the patients, you could see the desperation in their eyes, they were scared."

Konowitz described the trip as "life-changing."

"All the other catastrophes that I can remember in my lifetime, there was nothing medically like this that I can remember," he said. "It's haunting what we saw."

And although it was gratifying to provide what help they could, team members recognized it was a tiny fraction of the need.

"We may have fixed their spine during the week, but we only got to 11 (people)," Butler said. "There were another 20 we couldn't take care of."

And the people they did treat need long-term care.

Maria Korbel, another member of the team who's bilingual and a registered nurse at the Illinois Bone & Joint Institute in Morton Grove, said she hopes their work will inspire others.

"If we were able to start a chain reaction, I think that would be fabulous," Korbel said. "I hope we started something good, something positive, something that will keep going."

Physician's assistant Alicia Granger-Carlson and nurse Aimee Duque-Randolph also were members of the team.

RECOGNIZING THE 189TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

SPEECH OF

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 2010

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1107 to recognize the 189th anniversary of the independence of Greece and to celebrate Greek and American democracy.

The path to a free and democratic state is often long and arduous. This has been particularly true for Greece, and through the decades, the country has worked diligently to en-

sure the rights of citizens and uphold the principles of democracy. On March 25, 2010, we join the Greeks in celebrating their Independence Day, and by so doing, we are reminded of the sacrifices that a country grounded in democratic principles necessitates. In truth, the work that goes into attaining a freer and fairer democratic state never truly ends, and for this reason, it is important to recognize the citizens of Greece and the Greek government on this day.

Madam Speaker, the country of Greece has played a remarkable role in European history, and I commend the Greek people on their accomplishments and commitment to democratic ideals. I ask my fellow colleagues to join me today in honoring the people of Greece on the occasion of their 189th Independence Day.

HONORING TIMOTHY REILLY

HON. JEAN SCHMIDT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2010

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Mr. Timothy Reilly. Recently, both Tim and his business, Miami Valley International Trucks, were awarded the International Circle of Excellence Award for 2009.

Awarded by Navistar, Inc., the Circle of Excellence is given to dealerships that "achieve the highest level of performance in terms of operating and financial standards, market representation, and, most importantly, customer satisfaction." It is the highest honor that an International dealer can receive from Navistar.

Tim purchased Miami Valley International Trucks in 2004. Since then, he has earned 14 Circle of Excellence Awards and an Isuzu Ichiban Award, given to commercial truck dealers to recognize business excellence and civic-mindedness. Under his leadership, Miami Valley Trucks has grown to include five dealer locations and two parts and services sites in Ohio that employ 367 employees.

These awards are a testament to Tim's reputation as a leader in the trucking industry. This reputation has been honed through his activity and commitment to organizations like the Ohio Automobile Dealers Association, International Marketing, Sales & Finance Advisory Board, and as a former member of the Idealease board of directors. A dedicated supporter of his alma mater, Notre Dame, Tim also is a devoted father to his twin daughters, now 13 years old.

Madam Speaker, please join me in congratulating Tim Reilly for his accomplishments, his record of success, and his many contributions to his community, the State of Ohio, and our Nation.

CELEBRATING MINOOKA COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY BOYS WRESTLING TEAM FOR WINNING THEIR FIRST EVER STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. DEBORAH L. HALVORSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 11, 2010

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize the Minooka Community

High School Boys Varsity Wrestling Team for becoming the 2009–2010 Illinois High School Association Class 3A Dual Team State Wrestling Champions.

Through relentless practice and commitment to their sport, the team captured Minooka Community High School's first ever team state championship title. I congratulate the hard work, dedication, and long hours that everyone involved put in to make this title possible; the coaches for their patience and working with these young athletes, to the parents for believing in their students, to the competitors for believing in themselves and their team.

The members of the championship Indian squad are: Kevin Akers, Mitchell Brozovich, Clayton Charland, Brandon Collofello, Jacob DeKlerk, Zachary Friant, Joseph Govednik, Brandon Haase, Calvin Hill, Alex Hoshell, Cody Jones, Sean Kenny, Matthew Meyer, Matthew McEvilly, Michael McNulty, Blake Montella, Mitchell Morris, Colin Nielsen, Corbett Oughton, Jacob Potts, Josh Pullara, Jacob Residori, Daniel Ruettiger, Leo Ruettiger, Kevin Ruettiger, Matthew Stevens, Timothy Wright and Robert Zabel; and are led by head coach Bernie Ruettiger; and the assistant coaches: Jeff Charlebois, Mike Butterbach, Paige Schoolman, Stan Tischer, and Jon Ryan.

Congratulations on a season to be remembered.

AFGHANISTAN WAR POWERS RESOLUTION

SPEECH OF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I oppose this resolution.

I have serious reservations about the presence of U.S. Forces in Afghanistan. I opposed the President's plan to send additional troops into that country, and I opposed funding for the surge. I was reassured when the President said that he wanted to begin withdrawing U.S. troops beginning in 2011. I joined 137 of my colleagues to vote with Representative MCGOVERN to demand that the President provide a plan for withdrawing from Afghanistan, and have been deeply concerned that the mission for our troops there is not clear. If their mission is not well defined, how can we expect to judge success?

I do not support an open-ended commitment without clear goals. But I also cannot support a sudden withdrawal without a plan to protect American lives and American interests. And that's why I will vote against this Resolution.

This Resolution directs the President to remove all U.S. forces from Afghanistan 30 days from adoption, unless the President decides it is not safe to do so. He would then have until the end of 2010 to remove all U.S. forces from Afghanistan.

This language is absolute and provides no exceptions.

It does not provide exceptions for U.S. forces that might be necessary to safeguard U.S. embassy personnel.

It does not provide exceptions for our intelligence community or Special Forces so they can continue to support Afghanistan and Pakistan in the search for al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden.