

lower costs of prescription drugs in the FEHBP but to also provide our federal employees with a safer, higher quality prescription drug benefit.

In this day and age, when every effort is being made to reduce federal spending and to find money to fund healthcare reform and other domestic policy priorities, the level of ambiguity around costs and drug prices under the FEHBP is appalling and must change. What we have before us is an issue that can save the taxpayer billions of dollars while at the same time reduce premiums for federal workers and their families. All I ask of my colleagues is for their support in passing this important legislation.

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES TO HAITI

SPEECH OF

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 20, 2010

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to support the resolution expressing condolences to and solidarity with the people of Haiti in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake of January 12, 2010.

With reports of up to 200,000 deaths and more than 1.5 million people left homeless, this is the worst natural disaster incurred by Haiti in more than 200 years. As the poorest and least developed country in the Western Hemisphere, it is reassuring to see the United States and the international community coming together in solidarity to help this country in its hour of need. The 7.0 earthquake has caused upheaval for almost one-third of the Haitian population and wrecked the existing infrastructure, making roads impassable, hindering rescue/aid flights, and tainting water supplies.

The earthquake's destruction spared no nationality, no class, no age, no religion. Thousands of American volunteers and missionaries were also lost; however, due to the selflessness and quick action of first-responders, we are able to celebrate each life as survivors are found. The rescue effort has been led by rescue teams from around the world. Teams in Texas eagerly await the opportunity to deploy to Port-au-Prince and various organizations in my district have been holding fundraisers to contribute to the effort. Americans have contributed over \$200 million to major relief groups in just 7 days since this disaster, and their generosity will be important in the coming months as Haiti rebuilds its tangible resources as well as its national consciousness.

Haitian recovery from the tragic events in its capital city will require continued support from the international community, and I urge my fellow colleagues to join me in supporting the resolution expressing condolences to and solidarity with the people of Haiti in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake of January 12, 2010.

HONORING THE OUTSTANDING SERVICE OF THE 354TH EXPEDITIONARY FIGHTER SQUADRON

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 354th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron on their recent landmark deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

During their recent combat deployment, the 354th distinguished itself as the Air Force's premiere Close Air Support unit by flying more sorties per day, per aircraft, than any other ground-attack unit in the Central Command area.

Over the course of their 6-month tour, the unit flew more than 10,000 flight hours and launched more than 2,500 sorties in support of thousands of troops on the ground and all with only half of their full complement of aircraft.

The Bulldogs spearheaded the integration of the SADL communications system or Situational Awareness Data Link. They were also the first A-10 unit to forward deploy to Kandahar Airfield, closer to the action and closer to the enemy.

In order to remain airborne, the maintenance team worked around the clock to ensure a utilization rate of 210% of the usual domestic operational rate. For the 354th that meant 400 sorties a month.

The dedicated service of the airmen of the 354th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron has undoubtedly saved the lives of countless American, Coalition and Afghan ground forces and under the brutal conditions of an unrelenting Afghan winter.

As the first A-10 squadron in theater, the 354th has set the bar very high, but I am confident that their follow-on units will meet that standard.

On behalf of the people of Tucson, I am personally very proud to welcome home the 354th to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

CBS WINS LAP DOG AWARD

HON. LAMAR SMITH

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, for the second time in a row, CBS is the winner of the Media Fairness Caucus' highly un-coveted "Lap Dog Award" for the week's most glaring example of media bias.

During CBS' coverage of the special election in Massachusetts on Tuesday evening, two hours before the polls closed, political analyst John Dickerson claimed that if Republican candidate SCOTT BROWN won the election, it would "get a lot uglier in Washington."

Brown went on to say that Republicans "feel excited and they see glory in attacking the President."

It's no wonder just 2 in 10 Americans say reporters try to offer unbiased coverage of political campaigns, according to a recent Rasmussen poll.

CBS and the national media should give Americans the facts, not tell them what to think.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EGYPT

HON. ALBIO SIRES

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Mr. SIRES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share my concern and outrage over human rights abuses in Egypt.

I rise to ask that the Egyptian Government uphold the rights of all religious communities by ending discrimination and harassment of groups such as the Coptic Christians, and prosecuting those that do such groups harm.

An attack that happened just weeks ago starkly illustrates the need for change in Egypt. On January 6th, 2010, a drive-by shooting killed six Coptic Christians in Nag Hammadi. This deadly attack, carried out the night before the Coptic Christmas, is the most recent in a long history of repression and abuse of Coptic Christians in Egypt.

On January 14th, 2009, the U.S. Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Michael Posner, spoke out against this attack. He stressed the need for prosecution and justice in the country. Last October, the Department of State released its 2009 International Religious Freedom Report detailing the widespread and ongoing persecution of this community. The report also highlights increasing violence and the need for improved investigations.

While the United States and the human rights community have been vocal in condemning this attack and other human rights abuses, the Egyptian government has yet to recognize the full significance of the violent act or the overarching issue of intolerance in the country. Violence in the name of the religion is unacceptable, but when governments do not sufficiently address such behavior, the violence is far more troubling.

Religion is a fundamental freedom that must be upheld and respected around the world, in every nation and in every community. I urge my colleagues in the House to join me in calling for religious freedom and basic rights for all people.

TRIBUTE TO THE CITY OF OWASSO, OKLAHOMA

HON. JOHN SULLIVAN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to recognize the City of Owasso, Oklahoma, in the First Congressional District for receiving an A+ rating in government transparency by the online citizen's watchdog group, Sunshine Review. I congratulate the City of Owasso for receiving this prestigious award and becoming the first city in Oklahoma to receive a perfect grade.

The Sunshine Review is an online resource that monitors government transparency at the local, county, and state levels throughout the country. According to the organization, they seek to make government accountability and records accessible for all citizens and taxpayers to read. In order to assess a city's rating, the Sunshine Review compiles a "transparency checklist", consisting of ten basic sections of accountability. Each section must

have proper online access for its constituents to review governmental work, including budgets and contractual information for elected and administrative officials.

I am proud that Owasso became the first city in Oklahoma to receive this distinguished honor. As we work towards accountability and transparency in Congress, Owasso remains a shining example to local and state governments and to what our nation must accomplish as a whole. By receiving a perfect grade, the City of Owasso remains a shining example of a local government taking responsibility to its citizens and taxpayers they represent. All citizens deserve an open forum to see how their government spends their hard-earned, taxpayer dollars.

I firmly believe that an open and honest government is the most effective way to give Americans the transparency they deserve. Owasso's focus on this important issue illustrates their steadfast leadership to promote accountable governance at all levels. I am proud of the city for this great accomplishment.

KOREAN AMERICAN DAY 2010

HON. ENI F.H. FALÉOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Mr. FALÉOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, last week, on January 13, we marked the 107th anniversary of the first Korean immigrants to the United States. From those few Korean individuals who came in 1903 to Hawaii, then a U.S. territory, the Korean American community has grown to nearly two million people.

For the first few decades of the 20th century, Korean immigration was impeded by U.S. law. Regrettably, until the 1960s, U.S. law refused to admit immigrants from East Asia. Fortunately, as attitudes about race and ethnicity changed and matured in the wake of the civil rights movement, these shameful barriers were removed. America became a land of opportunity not just for Europeans seeking refuge and comfort, but for people from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, as well.

Korean Americans have contributed immeasurably to our society and culture. They have raised families and built successful businesses, strong neighborhoods, active civic associations, churches, and charities. Korean Americans have served in the armed forces, been elected to public office, and been appointed to positions of authority in President Obama's administration.

In my capacity as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and the Global Environment, I have paid close attention to issues of concern to the Korean American community. With many Korean Americans still having family ties to the Korean Peninsula, they care deeply about the continuing resilience of the U.S.-Korea alliance. When I served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam in the 1960s, I met many Korean soldiers who fought side by side with Americans, just as Americans had fought side-by-side with Koreans in the Korean War a decade and a half earlier.

The close alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea has included South Korea's important contributions to fighting terrorism around the world and promoting

democracy and liberal values. The Republic of Korea has remained a steadfast ally of the United States and ought to be considered America's greatest foreign policy success in the post-World War II era.

It is worth noting today that, later this year, we will be commemorating the 60th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War. Veterans of that conflict, both Korean and American, have strong feelings about the U.S.-Korea alliance. I have attended many ceremonies at which Korean War veterans pay tribute to their fallen comrades and share their memories of the battlefield. Many of them have returned to Korea in peacetime to visit the friends they made and—in some cases—the families of their spouses.

Korean War veterans and members of the Korean American community are significant stakeholders in the maturation of the U.S.-Korea alliance, whether that means a security alliance in our mutual effort to denuclearize North Korea, whether it means growth in the number of Korean students who attend American colleges and universities, or whether it means broader and deeper business and trade ties.

The U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA), which was signed in June 2007 and awaits ratification and implementation, will bring substantial benefits to both of our countries. The U.S. International Trade Commission has forecast that the elimination of tariffs on U.S. goods under the KORUS FTA would increase the GDP of the United States by over \$10 billion annually. The agreement will also eliminate regulatory and other non-tariff barriers that have historically restricted access by American farmers, manufacturers, and service providers to the South Korean market.

Korea's economy is beginning to recover from the worldwide recession, with a special emphasis on creating "green jobs" and encouraging growth in 21st century industries that look to the future. At the same time, Korea remains a major market for American goods and services, for agricultural products, raw materials, and finished goods.

With growing uncertainty about our economy, it is critically important that we make every effort to spur U.S. economic growth and create new American jobs through securing access to markets in which U.S. farmers and businesses can compete and succeed. The KORUS FTA stands to further increase U.S. exports to Korea and will generate new jobs for Americans. This agreement will be a triple-win—a win for workers, a win for businesses, and a win for consumers.

Beyond trade, the United States and Korea share similar values and goals. Both countries are democratic republics, both desire peace on the Korean Peninsula and work to assure that nuclear weapons do not proliferate in Northeast Asia, and both want to see economic growth and opportunity throughout the world.

It is in this context that Korea will host and chair a meeting of the G-20 in November 2010. It is a remarkable achievement and one that is emblematic of how far Korea has come considering that 60 years ago, it was a war torn nation. I am confident that Korea will set an ambitious agenda for the G-20 to include how nations can turn to "Low Carbon, Green Growth" sectors to spur economic growth in the aftermath of the global financial crisis.

Last August, I had the privilege of visiting Korea to receive an Honorary Doctorate from Chonbuk National University. I had numerous opportunities to engage in meaningful dialogue with our Korean friends on a host of issues. But above all, I was struck by the kind generosity and hospitality of the Korean people. The same has always been true of our Korean American friends as well.

Madam Speaker, this is why it is my honor to recognize January 13 as Korean American Day pursuant to House Resolution 487, which was passed in 2005 and introduced by my good friend Representative Tom Davis of Virginia. I urge my colleagues to offer their own expressions of support in recognizing the Korean American community and their achievements and the importance of a comprehensive U.S.-Korea alliance in diplomacy, business, and culture.

TRIBUTE TO ANNE McMAHON

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2010

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a former member of my staff and my dear friend, Anne McMahon.

Anne recently passed away after a tough battle with cancer. She leaves behind a wonderful loving family, including husband Peter and sons Jono and Ryan, and a host of friends and admirers across the country.

Anne was one of the first Congressional staffers who my late husband, Walter Capps, hired when he was elected in 1996. She was the anchor of Walter's and, later my, congressional office in San Luis Obispo, California. The consummate professional, she was completely plugged in to the local community and there was no issue or constituency that didn't have Anne's ear or attention.

Among her many talents, Anne was a wonderful writer, having worked as a local journalist for several years before moving to politics, where she worked not just with Walter and me but two county Supervisors as well. She was also a tireless advocate for the environment and worked extensively to preserve our beautiful Central Coast, including protecting Santa Margarita Ranch from development. Eventually her unquenchable love for the natural environment led her to other professional opportunities with The Nature Conservancy and most recently with the California Coastal Commission. She excelled in all these endeavors and brought to all of them her relentless commitment to leaving the world a better place than she found it.

Walter and I both loved Anne for her commitment to public service and tireless devotion to her community. But we also reveled in her vibrant personality, her irreverent and irrepressible wit, and her enthusiastic embrace of all life's joys and sorrows. I know that this healthy outlook on life, along with the endless support from her family and friends, brought her strength during the difficult days of the past year.

Anne touched many lives and inspired all of us. She faced her battle with cancer with the same courage, grace, and sense of humor that guided her throughout her life. Everyone who knew Anne thought the world of her and