

to reflect on the importance of protecting the safety of our community, and educating others on gun safety.

The Million Mom March is an inspiring event in history, and I am immensely proud of all Americans, both past and present, that fight to stop gun violence. I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing the gratitude of the U.S. Congress toward the Million Mom March and the event's ongoing impact on our nation's safety.

CONGRATULATING THE NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2010

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague to congratulate the National Urban League for 100 years of service to the people of America.

The Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes was established on September 29, 1910, in New York City. This group later became the Urban League. The group was formed to address the needs of African-Americans escaping the oppressive Jim Crow South. Opportunities in the North were few and far between and de facto segregation had forced many blacks into marginal roles in society. These conditions were still preferable to the state-imposed second-class citizenship of the South. In its first 10 years, after mergers with other groups fighting for gender equality and worker safety, the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes changed its name to the National Urban League.

Even at its founding, the Urban League was an open and progressive organization. Mrs. Ruth Standish Baldwin, Dr. George Edmund Haynes and Professor Edwin R. A. Seligman of Columbia University all played critical leadership roles in the organization during its infancy.

The organization counseled black migrants from the South, helped train black social workers, and worked in various other ways to bring educational and employment opportunities to blacks. Its research into the problems blacks faced in employment opportunities, recreation, housing, health and sanitation, and education spurred the League's quick growth. By the end of World War I the organization had 81 staff members working in 30 cities.

The Urban League was a crucial supporter of A. Philip Randolph's 1941 March on Washington Movement to fight discrimination in defense work and in the armed services. Additionally, the Urban League hosted, at its New York headquarters, the planning meetings of A. Philip Randolph, Martin Luther King, Jr., and other civil rights leaders for the 1963 March on Washington.

Mr. Speaker, throughout its history, the Urban League has been on the right side of America's most pressing issues. Whether it has been gender equality, workers' rights, or civil rights, America can count on the Urban League to hold it accountable to its promise of equality and opportunity for all citizens. Our country has been forever changed for the better by the efforts of the Urban League. All of our lives have been touched by and benefited

from the work they have done and continue to do.

RECOGNIZING AMERICAN LEGION MILTON L. BISHOP POST NO. 301

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. SHUSTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize American Legion Milton L. Bishop Post No. 301 of Connellsville for signing the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

In his Second Inaugural Address, Abraham Lincoln urged the country to "care for him who shall have borne the battle." By signing the Armed Forces Community Covenant, the members of Post No. 301 have assumed this high moral obligation. They are committed to improving the quality of life of service members and their families. With this solemn pledge, the members of Post No. 301 recognize the importance of caring for those who put their lives on the line for our country's safety and freedom. It is a great act of patriotism and human decency.

The Connellsville Legion's commitment to service members and their families is truly admirable. I commend Post No. 301 for volunteering its time and efforts to this worthy cause, and I thank the Post for its devoted citizenship.

BIPARTISAN RESOLUTION CON- DEMNING MALAWI'S HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce a bipartisan resolution calling on the Government of Malawi to immediately release two prisoners of conscience—Tiwonge Chimbalanga and Steven Monjeza—and to address the pervasive violation of human rights in the country and the criminalization of consensual sexual conduct by adults.

Messrs. Chimbalanga and Monjeza were arrested at their home on December 27, 2009, after holding a traditional engagement ceremony. These two men now stand accused of "committing acts of gross indecency," punishable by up to 14 years in prison under Malawi's law. They have been repeatedly denied bail and subjected to psychiatric evaluation without their consent. While in prison, Mr. Monjeza's health has gravely deteriorated.

In prosecuting two innocent individuals solely on the basis of consensual sexual conduct, the Malawian authorities have severely violated the fundamental human rights of Mr. Chimbalanga and Mr. Monjeza under international law.

Amnesty International has declared these men "prisoners of conscience", and Human Rights Watch and other organizations have called for their immediate release.

The final ruling that will decide the fate of these men is expected on May 18, 2010.

Today, with my colleague from Wisconsin, Representative TAMMY BALDWIN, I call on the

Government of Malawi to immediately release these two individuals and for Secretary Clinton to closely monitor human rights abuses in Malawi.

HONORING MARIA RODRIGUEZ FOR A LIFETIME OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, I rise to commemorate decades of service to the community by a longtime and dear friend, both to me and my husband and to the children and families of New Haven, Connecticut: Maria Rodriguez.

Elected to New Haven's Board of Aldermen in 1976, Maria has the distinction of being the first Hispanic alderperson in the history of our city. But that service was only the beginning of her contributions to our city and state. For as long as I have known her, Maria has given of herself to the people around her, and has worked to make New Haven a richer, more vibrant, and more compassionate community.

Indeed, Maria has spent a lifetime doing so. She began her career in the early 1970s as a trained mental health therapist at the Connecticut Mental Health Center, where she worked day in and day out to improve the experience and the quality of life of Hispanic families in the Greater New Haven area. As my husband Stan, Maria, and I worked on so many local political campaigns then, we became great friends. She helped us to forge many wonderful friendships in New Haven's Hispanic community. She is a tireless worker and a strong ally.

After receiving her Masters from Southern Connecticut State University in 1983, and spending a year as a key and valuable aide to my predecessor, Bruce Morrison, Maria soon moved into full-time social work. For over 25 years, through organizations such as the Connecticut Board of Education, Family Counseling of Greater New Haven, and Latino Youth Development, Inc., she provided therapy to families and students in need of mental health care.

In her off-hours, Maria kept on giving. From serving on the board of the YMCA to tutoring students in her free time, she has always looked for more ways to help those in need and to improve our city. And, now that she has decided to retire from the Connecticut Board of Education, I can only expect she is already thinking of new ways to volunteer her time and her effort.

For that is who Maria is. For decades now, she has continued to infuse our community with her warmth and energy, her caring and compassion. I thank her deeply for her service to the families of New Haven, and for her years of friendship to me. And I congratulate her and her family—her husband Alquilino, her son Paul, and daughter-in-law Bunny—on reaching this milestone. Congratulations, Maria, you have earned it.

HONORING COMMUNITY LEADER
LAURA BINGHAM

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a friend to education and a leader among leaders who hails from my home state of North Carolina. Laura Bingham's service as President of Peace College officially began on July 1, 1998, but her leadership skills were forged and honed many years before. Laura was born and raised in Kings Mountain, North Carolina and is a 1977 graduate of Peace College.

My colleagues in the House are well aware of how seriously we take our basketball in North Carolina and Laura Bingham has solid credentials from some of the top hoops institutions around. She earned her B.A. in Political Science from UNC Chapel Hill, a Master of Arts in Philanthropic Studies from Indiana University and completed coursework at Duke University and North Carolina State University. She cut her teeth in public service by helping lead major health, education, economic, environment and intergovernmental policy initiatives with my friend, former Lt. Governor Bob Jordan. Bingham served as director of a 1983 Governor's Conference on Women and the Economy for Governor Jim Hunt which was considered the first of its kind in the nation that yielded 125 policy recommendations.

Since her appointment as President of Peace College in 1998, student enrollment has increased; the academic curriculum has grown, with Peace offering the first undergraduate major in Leadership Studies in North Carolina and an innovative teacher education partnership with Wake County Schools; and the campus footprint expanded to address the growth and provide enhancements. In 2007, Peace College celebrated its Sesquicentennial and launched a \$30 million fund-raising campaign to boost academic and student endowments and fund new science labs, library renovation, and a campus commons.

Laura plays an active leadership role in civic, business, educational, and philanthropic endeavors, including The Fifty Group and the World President's Organization, and serves as vice chair for the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, as a Director of the Downtown Raleigh Alliance, and in 2008 became the first woman chair of Leadership North Carolina.

As chair of Leadership North Carolina, Laura has helped shepherd the organization through one of the worst financial periods many of us can remember and positioned the program's sustainability for years to come. The measure of a good leader is the legacy they leave behind. Laura Bingham leaves North Carolina with 750 informed and engaged leaders to take the baton and help craft our state's future.

Madam Speaker, at the conclusion of this academic year, Laura Bingham will complete her tenure as President of Peace College and Chair of Leadership North Carolina. We cannot afford a void in leadership at this point in our nation's history and Laura's work at Peace and with Leadership North Carolina has been

focused on engaging, challenging and informing future leaders. I join the Board of Directors of Leadership North Carolina in recognizing Laura for her leadership, vision and determination.

As the proud grandfather to two and soon to be three granddaughters, I am grateful for the example Laura has set for women from every corner of our state and the opportunities she has provided through the gift of education. She is the embodiment of our state's motto *Esse Quam Videri*, to be rather than to seem, and I ask all my colleagues to join me in thanking Laura Bingham for her service to North Carolina.

HONORING MS. SYLVIA BRUNI

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of Ms. Sylvia Bruni, a recent award recipient of the Liberty Bell Award in Webb County of South Texas. Ms. Bruni is currently working in the Child's Advocacy Center to pursue community engagement in the defense of our children reaching over 5,000 children.

Ms. Bruni has played an active and valuable role throughout the community through her diligent education efforts and sharpened insights towards children. She has dedicated her professional career to developing students' minds and is also involved with community outreach.

For seventeen years, Ms. Bruni taught English in the United Independent School District system to gifted and talented students. She had the opportunity to engage with thousands of students over the years, all of which were unique and special to her in diverse ways. Admirably, she confronted many difficulties throughout the years, yet handled all situations with leadership, guidance, and care for her students. She used her expertise in the field to customize her teaching to help students with limited English or problems in school. She was also Program Coordinator, Principal of Salinas Elementary, Director of Curriculum and Instruction in the school system. Additionally, continuing her passion for education, Ms. Bruni worked at Texas A&M International University as Director for Special Programs for seven years with an array of responsibilities—such as, implementing the University's first Summer Children's Workshop, which continues today. Ms. Bruni continued her endeavors working for Laredo Independent School District as Executive Director for Planning and Development. She worked extensively on Laredo ISD's Strategic Planning Program, a professional development program based on best practices and its award winning National Science Foundation Math and Science Initiative. Further, the closing of her public school career, she served as Laredo ISD's interim-superintendent.

Throughout the years, Ms. Bruni has been honored and recognized for her work in the community. Recently, she was recognized as Honorary Walk Chair by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, Laredo Branch. She

was also awarded the Gary G. Jacobs Award for Higher Education by the League of United Latin American Citizen.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to have had this time to recognize Ms. Bruni, award recipient of the Liberty Bell award. She has been personally invested in the mission of providing life changing experiences for our youth, a strong advocate for children's issues, as well as developing personal relationships with diverse community stakeholders.

HONORING MARY ALTMAN FOR
SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor centenarian Mary Altman of Lake Linden, who has served her county honorably and was a trailblazer for women in the Armed Forces as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army during World War II. Mary is being honored on May 15 as Grand Marshal in the 5th Annual Armed Forces Day Parade of Thanks in Hancock, Michigan. As the community pays tribute to Mary, I ask that the U.S. House of Representatives join me in honoring her service.

Mary was born Mary Baril on March 10, 1907 in Lake Linden, located in the Keweenaw Peninsula of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. After graduating from Lake Linden High School in 1927, Mary attended nursing school at Hurley Hospital in Flint, Michigan, graduating in 1931.

Her nursing skills were put to good use when Mary joined the U.S. Army in 1942, following in the footsteps of four of her brothers, two who served in World War I and two who served in World War II. In her rank as First Lieutenant, Mary took charge as chief nurse, leading a group of 18 other nurses in tending to the critically wounded, including amputees, during their rehabilitation at a field hospital in California's Mojave Desert. Following three years working with wounded soldiers, Mary was honorably discharged in 1945.

Mary's dedication to the well-being of others continued after leaving the Army. She served as superintendent of a children's home in Flint and cared for her husband Otto through his illness, until his death.

It is fitting that Mary be honored in the Armed Forces Day Parade of Thanks given her service in the U.S. Army and her devotion to helping improve the lives of those around her. Her personal and professional accomplishments over the past 103 years are a testament to trademark spirit and determination found throughout the Upper Peninsula.

Madam Speaker, the Parade of Thanks is a chance to honor the men and women who have answered the call to serve our nation with honor and with dignity. Without their courage and sacrifices, the United States could not be the great nation we are today. Therefore, Madam Speaker, I ask that you and the entire U.S. House of Representatives join me in thanking Mary Altman for her commitment, recognize her service and applaud her on being named Grand Marshal of the Armed Forces Day Parade of Thanks.