

As a native Texan, Judge Vasquez was raised in a small historic neighborhood in Laredo. He had a modest upbringing as the sixth child out of seven. In 1972, he graduated from Martin High School and attended Junior College for 2 years. He received his Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor Degree from the University of Houston in 1979. Soon after, he started his career as an Attorney at Law for the Laredo Legal Aid. In 1981, he became the youngest Justice of the Peace elected in Laredo and served Precinct 1 for 5 years while at the Law Offices of Raul Vasquez. Judge Vasquez was elected Judge of the County Court at Law #1, serving for 12 years. He was also a faculty member for the Texas College for New Judges, where he lectured on issues regarding domestic violence. The end of this year, Judge Vasquez plans on retiring, bringing a close to his professional career of over 28 years of being a judge. His leadership and successful career have truly benefited the community and courtrooms with fairness and justice.

Not only has Judge Vasquez held an esteemed and honorable career, he also devotes much of his time to community organizations for helping troubled youth. His passion for helping the youth led him to be the Founding Member of the Laredo Youth Conference, Webb County Angel Wish, and Children's Coalition. He also served on Advisory Boards for Communities in Schools, SCAN, and Child Advocacy. Judge Vasquez has been a Member of numerous organizations such as the Webb County Court Administration of Judges, State Bar of Texas, Laredo Bar Association, and Webb County Auditor's Department. Throughout the past 20 years, he has been recognized on various honors. He was awarded the LULAC Tejano Achiever Award, Law Day Honorary Chair, and Crime Stopper Alfa Award.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor and pleasure to have had this time to recognize Judge Raul Vasquez on his career and community involvement. He has contributed his time, knowledge, and efforts to the judiciary and to community outreach for our youth.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, on rollcall 255, I was away from the Capitol due to commitments in my Congressional District. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

HONORING THE BROADCASTING CAREER OF PEDRO GARCIA AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Pedro Garcia for his 40 years of service to Connecticut and Puerto Rico as a broadcaster and sports

commentator in these communities. On May 9, 2010, Mr. Garcia will deservedly be recognized by community leaders in Connecticut for his outstanding career and service to others.

Born in Patillas, Puerto Rico, Pedro Garcia comes from a humble and hardworking family, including his parents Irene Cruz and Enrique Garcia, and his fourteen brothers and sisters. While Mr. Garcia's parents and four of his siblings remain in Puerto Rico, the rest of his family lives in my home State of Connecticut.

Pedro Garcia is widely known throughout the world and respected for his professionalism and tremendous talent as a broadcaster and sports commentator. He first endeared himself to the Connecticut region in his work for WEHW in Windsor, CT beginning in 1968 and for WLVI in Hartford, CT in 1970. He then went on to WLIY and WNEL in Puerto Rico before returning to Connecticut to work for WRYM in Newington for the past two and a half decades.

In addition to his broadcasting career, Mr. Garcia has a long history of involvement in the community. He has served as the Master of Ceremonies for the Puertorriquen Parade in Connecticut and worked with former Connecticut State Representative Maria Sanchez to address the needs of the Latino Community. I also commend Mr. Garcia for his important work with other countries, such as Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Peru, where he reported on education, health, sports and politics.

Pedro Garcia has touched many lives and is especially loved for his sense of humor and compassion toward others. I commend him for his outstanding career and service to the Greater Hartford and Puerto Rican communities.

HONORING ELOISE GREENLEE 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 Eloise Greenlee of Hancock, who has served her country honorably and her community admirably. Eloise 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.

Born in Ohio in 1922, Eloise discovered her love of music at an early age. As a young girl she loved to play the trumpet. Following the United States' entrance into World War II, Eloise enlisted in the U.S. Army on November 9, 1942 and put her musical skills to work. While stationed at Fort Des Moines, Iowa, Eloise was recruited to be a travelling member of the U.S. Army Women's Army Corps Band, playing her beloved trumpet.

The band instilled a patriotic spirit, entertaining those serving in the Armed Forces during the war. Eloise could often be found playing trumpet for the wounded military personnel aboard Red Cross medical ships returning home from the frontlines. She played her music and boosted morale for three years before being honorably discharged on November 9, 1945.

Her time in the Army was just the start of Eloise's service and adventures. In addition to becoming a licensed pilot and writing a book on her travelling experiences, she has volunteered at two local hospitals and continued her love of music forming the Keweenaw Swing Band with her husband Robert. She and Robert have also raised three sons.

The Parade of Thanks is a celebration of those who have served their country. Therefore it is appropriate that Eloise, a woman who has spent the past 88 years celebrating life and service through music, has been given the honor of Grand Marshal.

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 Eloise Greenlee for her commitment, recognize her service and applaud her on being named Grand Marshal of the Armed Forces Day Parade of Thanks.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today our national debt is \$12,943,495,066,136.13.

On January 6th, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$2,305,069,319,842.33 so far this Congress.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

HONORING MR. JOHN J. HURLEY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, I am here today to honor the appointment of Mr. John J. Hurley as the 24th President of Canisius College. Hurley, a 1978 alumnus who previously served as the college's executive vice president and vice president for college relations, will be the first lay president in Canisius' 140-year history.

A native of Buffalo, John graduated from St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute in Kenmore and received a Bachelor of Arts degree summa cum laude in English and history from Canisius College in 1978. Upon graduation from Canisius, John won a full fellowship to the Notre Dame Law School from which he earned a juris doctor degree in 1981. He served as an associate in the Chicago law firm of Keck, Mahin & Cate from 1981-1984 before returning to Buffalo in 1984 to take a position as an associate (1984-1988) and then partner (1989-1997) at Phillips, Lytle LLP.

In 1997, John accepted Father Cooke's offer to become the college's vice president for college relations and general counsel. Since 1997, he has been the senior development and external relations officer responsible for capital campaigns, planned and annual giving programs, grant services, all external and media relations, alumni relations and college publications. In 2007, Hurley was promoted to the position of executive vice president and took on the additional responsibilities for the coordination of the college's senior leadership team, strategic planning, integrated marketing, and legal and compliance issues. Today, John Hurley succeeds the Rev. Vincent M. Cooke, S.J., who is retiring after a 17-year presidency.

It is my pleasure today to distinguish the unprecedented appointment of John J. Hurley. In recognition of his role as the first lay president of Canisius College, I congratulate John and wish him success in all his future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING STATE
SENATOR CAP DIERKS

HON. ADRIAN SMITH

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Senator Cap Dierks on his induction to the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement for his long and valuable service to agriculture.

The Hall is an organization whose primary purpose is to acknowledge and preserve the records of those citizens of Nebraska who have made outstanding contributions to the well-being of Nebraska's agricultural way of life.

A rancher and veterinarian by profession, Cap was elected to the State Legislature in 1986 and served as the Chair of the Agriculture Committee for 10 years.

I had the pleasure of serving with Cap in the Legislature, and he is extremely deserving of this honor. I've seen his dedication to Nebraska agriculture firsthand, and his spirit and verve were always an inspiration. He was always there with advice or simply a friendly word of encouragement.

I want to thank Cap for his service and once again, congratulate him on this honor.

HONORING MICHAEL A. ROBBINS

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 6, 2010

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in honor of Michael A. Robbins, who served the City of Chicago and the Chicago Police Department for 22 years before his untimely death on September 13, 2008.

A South Side Chicago native, Robbins enlisted in the Navy shortly after graduating high school and was awarded the Bronze Star for his meritorious service during the Vietnam War. His dedication to public service continued when he joined the Chicago Police Department in 1986 and then went on to serve the United States military in the Navy Reserve.

On September 10, 1994, Officer Robbins responded to a call of shots fired in a neighborhood with a high level of gang activity. When he arrived he was fired upon repeatedly, resulting in 11 bullet wounds. Although he made a strong recovery, three of the bullets remained lodged in his heart.

As a result of this experience Michael Robbins became an avid activist urging better gun control laws. Most notably, he spoke on the issue at the 1996 National Democratic Convention and later served as a victims' advocate for Fight Crime: Invest in Kids.

On September 13, 2008, Officer Robbins was found dead in his home as a result of the bullets still lodged in his heart. Michael Robbins will forever be remembered for his dedication to making the City of Chicago and the United States a safer place.

I rise today, representing the City of Chicago, to express my deepest gratitude and sympathy to Officer Robbins's family for his dedication and courageous commitment to our communities. Officer Robbins will forever be remembered for his heroic sacrifice by the addition of his name to the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, DC on May 15, 2010.

NATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL
WEEK

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2010

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I stand before you today in support of H. Res. 1149, "Supporting the goals and ideals of National Charter Schools Week, to be held May 2 through May 8, 2010". I would like to begin by thanking my colleague Rep. BISHOP for introducing this resolution in the House, as quality education should be at the top of our priorities list. I urge my colleagues to support and acknowledge charter schools and their students, parents, teachers, and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education and improving and strengthening our public school system.

Charter school programs such as Yes Prep, Harmony, WALIPP, and KIPP deliver high-quality education, challenge our students to reach their potential throughout the United States, and provide thousands of families with diverse and innovative educational options for their children. Charter schools improve their students' achievement and can stimulate improvement in traditional public schools as well. These unique, public schools are authorized by a designated public entity that is responding to the needs of our communities, families, and students and promoting the principles of quality, choice, and innovation.

Charter schools take a revolutionary approach in educating our nation's students. Today, roughly 4,700 charter schools are now serving approximately 1,400,000 children in 40 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico this year. Charter schools continually demonstrate their ongoing success to parents, policymakers, and their communities. Some charter schools even routinely measure parental satisfaction levels while all give parents new freedom to choose their public school.

Charter schools nationwide serve a higher percentage of low-income and minority students than the traditional public system and deliver a high quality education. Chartering is a radical educational innovation that is moving states beyond reforming existing schools to creating something entirely new. Chartering is at the center of a growing movement to challenge traditional notions of what public education means.

Charter schools have demonstrated their commitment to high academic standards, small class sizes, innovative approaches and educational philosophies. Many parents choose charter schools for their small size and associated safety as charter schools serve an average of 250 students.

I am pleased that over the last 15 years, Congress has provided substantial support to the charter school movement through startup financing assistance and grants for planning, implementation, and dissemination. In addition, these schools have enjoyed broad bipartisan support from the administration, Congress, State Governors and legislatures, educators, and parents across the United States.

The intention of most charter school legislation is to: increase opportunities for learning and access to quality education for all students, create choice for parents and students within the public school system, provide a system of accountability for results in public education, encourage innovative teaching practices, create new professional opportunities for teachers, encourage community and parent involvement in public education, and leverage improved public education broadly.

Competition from charter schools has been shown to increase composite test scores in traditional district schools. Furthermore, twice as many registered voters favor charter schools as oppose them. The more people learn about charter schools, the more they like them. Congress must lend its support to these schools and their goals, especially since on average, the funding gap between charter schools and traditional schools is 22 percent, or \$1,800 per pupil. The average charter school ends up with a total funding shortfall of nearly half a million dollars. Yet, 12 studies find that overall gains in charter schools are larger than other public schools; four find charter schools' gains higher in certain significant categories of schools and six find comparable gains to traditional schools. I ask my colleagues for their continued support of charter schools and urge them to support this resolution.

MOTHER'S DAY CENTENNIAL COIN
ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 5, 2010

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to show my strong support for H.R. 2421, "Mothers Day Centennial Coin Act". First and foremost I would like to thank my distinguished colleague from West Virginia, Representative SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO for introducing this bill. The coins minted as a result of this legislation will be in recognition and celebration of mothers and everything they do for us and signify the 100th