

issues that are a fundamental part of securing Israel's future.

Last week, U.S. Special Envoy George Mitchell announced the beginning of proximity talks that require him to address the concerns of both the Palestinian Authority and the Israeli government prior to an attempt to restart direct negotiations on the final status issues. The United States has a responsibility to act in good faith as an honest broker.

Negotiations will not be successful as long as the United States continues to stand by idly as illegal settlements continue to be built in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Furthermore, 1.5 million people in Gaza continue to suffer without basic services and Palestinians in the West Bank are denied the freedom of movement and prosperity by the separation barrier and hundreds of check points.

The United States can better demonstrate its strong support for Israel by helping it move toward good-faith negotiations that ensure a peaceful and prosperous future for Palestinians as well.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, on roll call No. 277 taken May 19, 2010, H.R. 5325, the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, had I not had a family emergency which required my immediate return to California, I would have proudly voted "yes".

With increasing global competition, it is critically important that we boost our country's research potential and expand our commitment to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education. Economic growth requires innovation; innovation requires robust research; and effective research requires a broadly educated workforce. I am deeply saddened that COMPETES fell victim to short-sighted Republican political gamesmanship, and I look forward to working with House Science and Technology Chair BART GORDON to get COMPETES reauthorized through another legislative vehicle.

JEWISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the rich heritage and invaluable contributions that Jewish Americans have made to our Nation and to the community that I am proud to represent in Missouri's First Congressional District.

The earliest Jewish immigrants came to St. Louis over two hundred years ago.

Like most new Americans, they came seeking a refuge from persecution and discrimination, with the hope of building productive lives and practicing their faith, without fear.

In St. Louis, and across the Nation, Jewish Americans have excelled in every facet of our society. From commerce, to the arts, to edu-

cation, medicine, the law, government, and in our armed forces.

Jewish Americans have enriched our Nation and contributed much to our shared cultural heritage.

I also want to make special mention of the long and historic partnership between the African American and the Jewish American communities, in the pursuit of social justice, civil rights, voting rights and equal protection under the law.

During the most trying times of the civil rights movement, Jewish Americans and African Americans marched together, stood together, protested together, prayed together, and even died together, to advance the cause of full citizenship and real equality for all.

That partnership and common pursuit of justice endures today.

In my district, I am blessed to represent a large, vibrant Jewish community with many outstanding congregations, educational and cultural groups and social service agencies; including: the Jewish Federation of St. Louis; the Jewish Community Center; Jewish Family and Childrens Services; the Jewish Community Relations Council; the St. Louis Holocaust Museum and Learning Center, Barnes-Jewish Hospital, the Central Agency for Jewish Education, and many others.

Jewish Americans have helped shape our Nation's history, and their unending commitment to faith, family, learning and social justice will continue to strengthen the United States.

I am proud to join with my colleagues to mark Jewish American Heritage Month.

COMMENDING DAVID BARTON FOR EDUCATING AMERICA ABOUT OUR NATION'S RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

HON. BILL POSEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. POSEY. Madam Speaker, recently, I had the opportunity to tour our nation's Capitol building with one of our nation's leading scholars, David Barton. David Barton is an accomplished author, speaker, and historian who focuses on helping Americans explore and understand our nation's moral, religious, and constitutional heritage. It is critically important that all of us have a deeper understanding and appreciation of our nation's founding.

Mr. Barton has dedicated his life to studying historical documents from the foundation of our nation and helping Americans understand the impact moral and religious teaching and beliefs had on our nation's Founding Fathers and the direction of our nation. Through his work, he teaches that in addition to a constitutional foundation, our nation has undeniable religious and moral underpinnings.

Mr. Barton is founder and president of Wallbuilders, a national organization that presents "America's forgotten history and heroes." The organization seeks to educate citizens about the important role that religious faith had on our Founding Fathers and our nation's institutions, including our government.

Mr. Barton has received substantial recognition for his work, including being named "one of the 25 Most Influential Evangelicals" by

TIME magazine and receiving several Angel, Who's Who in Education, and Telly Awards, as well as the George Washington Honor medal.

I commend Mr. Barton for his commitment to fostering a scholarly understanding of America's heritage and for the important work he does in studying and teaching regarding the Biblical values that guided our Founders during the birth of our nation more than 225 years ago. I have been on several Capitol tours with Mr. Barton, and his knowledge about the religious foundation of our country never ceases to amaze me. It is through this type of work that Americans gain a better understanding of what the Founders expected our nation to be like and what we should expect from our elected leaders and the laws they create.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Barton and the work that he does to educate Americans about our nation's past so that America can be a beacon to the world.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today our national debt is \$12,975,292,327,567.97.

On January 6, 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 \$2,336,866,581,274.10 so far this Congress.

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

IN CELEBRATION OF THE DEDICATION CEREMONY FOR CONGREGATION OLAM TIKVAH

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Congregation Olam Tikvah on the occasion of the Dedication Ceremony for their recent expansion.

Congregation Olam Tikvah was formed in 1964 by six Fairfax County families who recognized the need for a synagogue that would serve the Kings Park, Springfield, Fairfax and Annandale areas. The congregation was initially led by Reb Jack Frankel who, although not an ordained rabbi, provided religious leadership and guidance in those early days.

From these modest beginnings, Olam Tikvah has grown into a vibrant community and is the spiritual and religious home to over 620 Jewish families in the Northern Virginia area. Along with this growth in membership has come an expansion of programs which now include a preschool, child and adult education classes, ritual support, a Men's Club, a Sisterhood and a senior social group.

In addition to religious education and development, Congregation Olam Tikvah supports involvement by its members in a number of organizations and projects dedicated to the betterment of the secular community. These efforts include aid to victims of domestic violence, providing support to our military families, blood, food and clothing drives, elementary school mentoring programs and Sukkot in April which performs needed home repairs to our elderly, disabled and low-income neighbors.

On May 23, 2010, Olam Tikvah will celebrate the Dedication Ceremony for their most recent expansion. This expansion will provide a new library/learning center, a new social hall and new kitchen and support areas for the social hall. I am confident that these new facilities will provide the resources that will allow Congregation Olam Tikvah to continue its growth.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Congregation Olam Tikvah on the occasion of this Dedication Ceremony as well as in thanking Rabbi Kalender, Rabbi Shalva and the entire congregation for their commitment to Judaism, their synagogue and the residents of Northern Virginia.

HONORING THE ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF THE SRI LANKA CONFLICT

HON. MICHAEL E. McMAHON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. McMAHON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the one year anniversary of the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka. Although the war ended on May 19th, 2009, much work still needs to be done to ensure peace and stability on the island. Despite a pending debt crisis, the Sri Lankan government is still expanding its military footprint, including a \$300 million loan from Russia to purchase new weapons systems. I would urge the Congress to include language in the FY11 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill similar to language included last year. This would restrict all military assistance to Sri Lanka until the government: First, suspends and brings to justice members of the military who have violated internationally recognized human rights or international law; respects internationally recognized human rights, including the right of due process for suspected ex-combatants; treats IDPs in accordance with international standards, and is actively working to resettle individuals in their former homes; provides unrestricted access to conflict-affected areas and populations by humanitarian organizations and journalists; and implements policies to promote reconciliation and justice.

I would encourage my colleagues to support this language until the Government of Sri Lanka can prove it is taking the necessary steps to secure lasting peace and stability for the island.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE RETIREMENT OF REVEREND JOHN H. RICE, SR.

HON. DEBORAH L. HALVORSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mrs. HALVORSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the retirement of the Reverend John H. Rice, Sr. upon the fortieth anniversary of beginning his tenure at St. Bethel Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago Heights, Illinois.

Born in Starkville, Mississippi, Reverend Rice moved to Chicago Heights, Illinois at the age of four. There he spent his childhood, graduating from Bloom Township High School. After receiving his Associate's Degree in Masonry from Los Angeles City College, he returned to the area in 1959 and married Movita Tate, a classmate from Bloom Township High School. He continued his education, graduating from the Moody Bible Institute's evening school in 1967 and receiving his Bachelor's Degree in Interpersonal Communications from Governors State University in 1982.

As pastor at St. Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, Reverend Rice tended to a congregation of 600 families. He spent his 40 years serving the local community, caring for the poor and the homeless. In 1986, he opened the Bethel Community Facility, which became known as the "Miracle on Portland Street" for the year-round services it provides to the homeless. The Facility provides not only food, clothing and shelter for the homeless, but also a doctor's office and several job training programs. In 1990, he opened the Bethel Annex, which provided a "rent-a-church" space for small congregations to worship and now serves as a warming and cooling center for the homeless.

Reverend Rice retires next month after a fulfilling, impressive, and inspirational career. He is truly an asset to Chicago Heights and the Southland area. It is with great pride that I celebrate the career of Reverend John H. Rice, Sr. May his retirement be as fruitful and joyous as his ministry has been.

THE RESPONSIBLE GSE AFFORDABLE HOUSING INVESTMENT ACT OF 2010

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Responsible GSE Affordable Housing Investment Act of 2010. I would like to recognize my colleagues Representatives NADLER, VELÁZQUEZ and MEEKS for their co-sponsorship of the legislation.

The bill will curtail the ability of Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs) such as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to invest in future deals—like in the case of Stuyvesant Town/Peter Cooper Village in my district—that do not result in an increase in, or preservation of, affordable housing.

Since 1992, GSEs like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac have been required to meet certain affordable housing goals each year. "Housing Goals Credit" is awarded numerically based on the types of transactions that they enter into. GSEs in turn make decisions about their investments based on whether these investments would be eligible for Housing Goals Credit.

In 2007, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac invested in a \$22 billion commercial mortgage-backed securities transaction that contained the debt on the Stuyvesant Town/Peter Cooper Village project. The deal was one of the largest commercial mortgage-back securities (CMBS) deals ever; Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's participation as senior debt holders of \$3 billion was critical.

At the time of the deal it was clear that the Stuyvesant Town property was overleveraged—the debt on the property was larger than the rental income it was receiving. After the transaction closed, over the course of several years, the new owners of the property engaged in aggressive tactics to convert affordable units to market rate so that they could increase their rental income—yet the GSEs received affordable housing goals credit for this investment. The investment on the part of the GSEs secured completion of the deal and the GSEs were incentivized to make it because of the housing goals credit they received.

The GSEs should be incentivized to invest in projects that actually do increase or preserve affordable housing. That is what my bill will do. It will require the Federal Housing Finance Agency to rewrite its rules for distributing housing goals credit so that Freddie and Fannie cannot receive credit for investments like the one they made in the Stuyvesant Town project. It would also require the GSEs to use the same underwriting standards for investments in the secondary market that they do for their direct investments which are much stricter. That way, the GSEs won't invest in the secondary market in projects where the rental income is insufficient to cover the payments on the debt on the property.

Madam Speaker, this bill addresses a critical component of GSE decision-making when it comes to their investments: whether or not they will receive housing goals credit. It does not prohibit them from making investments, it merely says that if those investments do not lead to an increase or a preservation of affordable housing, the GSEs cannot receive credit for them.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Mr. GERLACH. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, on Tuesday, May 18, 2010, I missed three recorded votes on the House floor. I ask that the RECORD reflect that had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall 273, "yea" on rollcall 274 and "yea" on rollcall 275.