

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL VISITORS, AND EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR DESIGNATION OF FEBRUARY 16, 2011, AS "CITIZEN DIPLOMACY DAY"

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in recognizing the 50th anniversary of the National Council for International Visitors, NCIV—a nonprofit leader in citizen diplomacy—and supporting designation of February 16, 2011, as "Citizen Diplomacy Day."

NCIV is a membership association, with members based in congressional districts throughout the nation, dedicated to promoting excellence in citizen diplomacy—the concept that individual citizens have the right and responsibility to help shape U.S. foreign relations "one handshake at a time." NCIV's nationwide network comprises 92 community organizations as well as federal agencies, associate members, and individuals. With leadership and training provided by NCIV, member organizations create professional connections, provide cultural activities, and offer home hospitality opportunities for foreign leaders and specialists. Each year, the aggregate efforts of NCIV members involve more than 80,000 volunteers.

The NCIV network is the private-sector partner of the U.S. Department of State for the International Visitor Leadership Program, IVLP, a long-standing, successful initiative for strengthening U.S. foreign relations. More than 285 current and former heads of state (including F.W. de Klerk, Anwar Sadat, Manmohan Singh, Nicolas Sarkozy, and Morgan Tsvangirai) and approximately 1,700 cabinet-level ministers have participated in the IVLP, which U.S. ambassadors have repeatedly ranked first among 63 U.S. public diplomacy initiatives.

Through citizen diplomacy, the NCIV network and the IVLP have positively affected hundreds of thousands of lives in America and abroad—among countless other ways, by:

Empowering a key reformer to stand up for democracy and freedom following the February 2010 coup in Niger;

Introducing high school students in Reno, Nevada, to Moroccan journalists and Afghan women leaders;

Sharing best practices with leaders of Malaysian disaster-relief nonprofits in the wake of a devastating earthquake and tsunami;

Connecting an environmental and water resources engineering firm from Portland, Oregon, to business opportunities with China; and

Breaking stereotypes about Americans for a Yemeni governance and conflict management expert.

The success of NCIV is based on patriotic citizens, entrepreneurs, and small businesses coming together to help promote America abroad while boosting the local economy. By working with the State Department, NCIV is an important source of income for many throughout the U.S. based on the increased economic activity generated by international visitors.

Nearly the entire IVLP budget is spent within the United States, where it generates millions of dollars in local economic activity. NCIV members raise an additional \$6 for every dollar they receive in federal funding, all of which is spent locally. Furthermore, by bringing foreign leaders to U.S. schools, government agencies, and businesses, the NCIV network and the IVLP help U.S. communities build a more globally literate, competitive workforce.

Please join me in demonstrating congressional support for this national network of citizen diplomats by recognizing NCIV's 50th anniversary and recommending designation of February 16, 2011, as Citizen Diplomacy Day.

COSPONSORS OF LEGISLATION INTRODUCED BY
THE REP. JIM MORAN

The Honorable Donald Manzullo, the Honorable Howard Coble, the Honorable Keith Ellison, the Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson, the Honorable Lee Terry, the Honorable Mark Steven Kirk, the Honorable Peter Welch, the Honorable Betty McCollum, the Honorable Patrick Murphy, the Honorable John Boozman, the Honorable Sue Wilkins Myrick, the Honorable Steven Rothman, the Honorable Denny Rehberg, the Honorable Jan Schakowsky, the Honorable Daniel B. Maffei.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR DESIGNATION OF MAY AS NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH AND ACKNOWLEDGING THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT CONGRESS HAS TO PROMOTE SAFETY, WELL-BEING, IMPROVED OUTCOMES, AND PERMANENCY FOR THE NATION'S COLLECTIVE CHILDREN

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1339, which expresses the House of Representatives' support for the designation of May as National Foster Care Month and recognizes the important role that foster parents play in the lives of children across the country. There are nearly 500,000 children in America's foster care system. Many of these children come from troubled backgrounds and turbulent pasts. America's foster parents take these children in and show them the care and attention that they deserve as they wait to be reunited with their families or adopted into new, loving families.

I thank Chairman LEVIN for his leadership in bringing this bill to the floor. I also thank the sponsor of this legislation, Congressman MCDERMOTT, for working to increase public awareness about the critical role that the foster care system plays in our society.

In my home State of California, there are nearly 80,000 children in the foster care system, a majority of whom were placed there by the State as a result of parental abuse or neglect. Foster parents play a critical role in the lives of some of the most vulnerable youths in California and across the country. They help hold our Nation's social fabric together by ensuring that thousands of young people in this country stay on track towards successful futures.

Designating May as National Foster Care Month is a way to encourage responsible and

caring adults to serve as foster parents. Unfortunately, there is currently a shortage in the number of foster parents available. There are less than 3 foster homes for every 10 children living under the State's care.

While the foster care system provides a vital service in our society, children in foster homes often face special challenges. In 2008, 123,000 of the 273,000 children in the foster care system were waiting to be adopted into new homes. However, by the end of the year, only 55,000 were adopted out of foster care. Foster children who are not adopted or reunited with their families often end up "aging out" of the foster care system. These children who "age out" of the system are in need of resources to help them afford higher education opportunities, find affordable housing and quality health insurance, and achieve steady employment. This is a social demand to which Congress must respond.

Past legislative initiatives to invest in our country's foster care system include the Adoption Assistance and Safe Families Act of 1980, the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, and the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008. These initiatives recognized the need to provide increased resources for foster families and a sense of stability for foster children, 65 percent of whom experience a minimum of seven school changes while in the system. Congress must continue working to improve the foster care system, so that all children within this system can develop and mature in young adults with bright futures.

I salute the selflessness and hard work that foster parents demonstrate each day when they care for a child who had been displaced from his or her family. I offer my sincere support for dedicating the month of May as National Foster Care Month. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 1339.

CELEBRATING ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

SPEECH OF

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1316, Celebrating Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month.

As an original cosponsor of this bill, I am proud to stand here today and speak on this important resolution.

This is a nation of immigrants and it is always important to take time, and recognize the contributions that different cultures and ethnicities have made to our society and our American way of life.

Today, the Asian/Pacific community is one of the fastest growing populations in America.

Over 15 million Americans claim Asian descent and over 1 million residents claim Native Hawaiian descent. By 2050, the Census bureau estimates that over 40 million residents will claim Asian/Pacific descent.

Since the time the first Asian immigrants came to America in 1843, these individuals have had a profound effect on our history.

A large number of Asian immigrants helped to complete the transcontinental railroad.

Today, Asian/Pacific Americans continue to contribute, and many have had distinguished

careers in public service, giving back to the country they love so much.

Indeed, three members of the President's Cabinet—Secretary Locke, Secretary Chu, and Secretary Shinseki—are Asian Americans.

Thirty Members of Congress are of Asian or Pacific descent as well, including my good friend Mr. HONDA, who has done an admirable job championing this cause.

Celebrating Asian/Pacific Heritage Month provides Americans with an opportunity to celebrate our diversity and recognize the achievements, contributions, and rich history that these individuals have shared with us.

It is for these reasons that I urge all my colleagues to vote in favor of H. Res. 1316.

**HONORING FRANK BRANSON FOR
BEING NAMED AMONG THE BEST
TEXAS LAWYERS IN 2010**

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to Frank Branson of Dallas on being honored by the 2010 Edition of the Best Lawyers in America and recognized as one of Texas's best lawyers.

Best Lawyers is the oldest and most respected peer-review publication in the legal profession. Best Lawyers compiles lists of outstanding attorneys by conducting exhaustive peer-review surveys in which thousands of leading lawyers confidentially evaluate their professional peers. In the U.S., Best Lawyers publishes an annual referral guide, The Best Lawyers in America, which includes 39,766 attorneys in 80 practice areas, covering all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Mr. Branson is the founder of Dallas' The Law Offices of Frank L. Branson, a nationally recognized litigation firm. A graduate of SMU Law, Mr. Branson joins a distinguished list of alumni to earn the annual honor, which is based on outstanding achievements, public service and commitment to the legal profession.

Mr. Branson has secured record courtroom recoveries and landmark verdicts for clients seriously injured by dangerous products, medical negligence, transportation injuries, industrial catastrophes, and, in recent years, commercial torts. He is a past president of the Southern Trial Lawyers Association, Dallas Trial Lawyers Association, and Dallas Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates. Additionally, he is a fellow in the International Academy of Trial Lawyers and the International Society of Barristers.

Throughout his career Mr. Branson has consistently prided himself in his tenacious preparation, as well as his imagination in the courtroom. His firm has a nationwide reputation for its use of advanced, state-of-the-art trial techniques such as digital video, computer animation, medical art and individualized anatomical models.

Mr. Branson's prestige within the law community has been acknowledged since 1987. Forbes magazine recognized him as one of the most successful trial lawyers in the country, and D CEO Magazine recently named him as one of the top five lawyers corporate adver-

saries never want to face in court. His trial work was highlighted in The National Law Journal's Top 100 Verdicts in America in 2007.

Mr. Branson's importance to Dallas extends beyond the legal community. He has been recognized by the Vietnam Veterans of America's distinguished service award and the American Heart Foundation's Chip Moody Eagle Award. Mr. Branson is also a Garland Community Hospital Trustee.

Madam Speaker, I would like to join with the people of Dallas in commending Frank Branson on his continual striving for excellence within the field of law and congratulate him on this well-deserved recognition.

TRIBUTE TO ELISE JONES MARTIN

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a community leader whose tremendous contributions were recently recognized with a new housing development named in her honor. Mrs. Elise Jones Martin has spent her entire life advocating for her community and it is fitting and I think proper, that a new neighborhood in the community that she has devoted her life to will now bear her name.

Elise Jones Martin is a native of Hartsville, South Carolina. She graduated from Essex High School in New Jersey, but returned to her beloved South Carolina in the 1930s to open a beauty salon in Columbia's thriving African American business corridor along Washington Street.

In addition to running her business, Mrs. Martin also furthered her education with trade and teacher training courses at Allen University, Benedict College and South Carolina State University. She went on to teach cosmetology at Booker T. Washington High School. She later became the first African American woman to open a business on Columbia's Main Street.

Throughout her life, she worked on behalf of building strong communities. In the 1960s, her mother organized the Jones-McDonald Club to ensure neighbors took an active part in maintaining their neighborhood. After her mother passed away, Mrs. Martin carried the mantle for the organization. Even well into her 80s, Mrs. Martin walked door to door to meet new neighbors and to encourage them to join the Jones-McDonald Club. With Mrs. Martin's influence, the club has grown beyond its initial purpose. Today it hosts an annual Easter brunch, produces a newsletter, and boasts the participation of elected city officials and religious leaders.

Mrs. Martin was also instrumental in providing community input for a Hope VI project that revitalized a former barrack-style housing complex in Columbia. Her belief that the home and the neighborhood are the foundations to producing solid, contributing citizens helped develop a philosophy for the new family-friendly development that replaced the warehouse approach of the former housing project.

She has taken her passion for building strong communities with her into public service. Mrs. Martin was a member of the Colum-

bia Zoning board for a number of years, serving until her late 80s. She was also an active member of Keep America Beautiful of the Midlands.

She performed another community service by heading her voting precinct for more than 30 years. While working at the polls during the 2008 Presidential primary, she had the honor of meeting then Senator Barack Obama.

Mrs. Martin is an advocate also for early detection of cancer. Using her speaking and leadership skills, she has traveled on behalf of the American Cancer Society's Best Chance Program, educating men and women about the warning signs of breast and prostate cancer.

She has been an active member of Bethel AME Church since arriving in Columbia in the 1930s, where she has served on the Board of Education, Steward Board, and the gospel choir. She is a recipient of the Queen Esther Award, which is one of the highest honors for women at Bethel AME.

Her organization memberships include: Board of Directors of the Drew Park, Renaissance Foundation Board, James E. Clyburn Golf Center Board, City Lighting Committee, City of Columbia Citizens Advisory Committee for Community Development, several neighborhood crime prevention programs, and the W.A. Perry Middle School support group.

Mrs. Martin has received numerous awards for her service including recognition by the American Cancer Society, the Columbia City Council, the Columbia Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and Richland County School District One. On May 1, 2010, she added the honor of the dedication of The Elise Jones Martin Place to her long list of accomplishments.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the contributions of a true community leader. Mrs. Elise Jones Martin has spent her entire life giving back to her community and improving the quality of life for her neighbors. I am pleased to call Mrs. Martin a friend, and I add my voice to those of so many others in thanking her for her selfless service. She is a remarkable individual who is deserving of our appreciation.

**HONORING THE SEVEN GOLD STAR
MEMBERS OF THE WELSH BETH-
EL BAPTIST CHURCH WHO SAC-
RIFICED THEIR LIVES DURING
WORLD WAR I AND WORLD WAR
II**

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 26, 2010

Mr. KANJORSKI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to the seven Gold Star Members of the Welsh Bethel Baptist Church in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

The Welsh Bethel Baptist Church was founded in 1884.

During the 1940s, the Church established an Honor Roll of all of the members of the Church who served during World War II. In total, 111 members of the Church served in World War II, including 110 men and 1 woman.