

branch campus in Clearfield, Pennsylvania, which was established in 1989. Lock Haven offers a small college lifestyle to over 5,100 undergraduates, along with more than 60 undergraduate programs and three graduate programs.

The school has an outstanding athletic program, which offers 10 women's and eight men's NCAA teams, boasts 13 Division II championships, and has many active club sports teams. Students also have the opportunity to participate in over 120 clubs, activities, and organizations on and off campus.

Lock Haven demonstrates leadership in serving the community and was named to the Presidential Honor Roll for Community Service in 2009. Every year its students perform over 40,000 hours of community service through the Mountain Serve Center, focusing on programs for disadvantaged youth.

This year, Lock Haven will celebrate 140 years of broadening the minds and horizons of its students, and it will mark a significant milestone in the University's history.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I express my support for Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania and thank Representative THOMPSON for bringing this bill forward. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1198, congratulating Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania for 140 years of excellence in higher education.

On the banks of the Susquehanna River in central Pennsylvania is a university where students receive excellent career preparation, develop lifelong friendships, and never feel like they are just another number. Lock Haven University prides itself on having a small college lifestyle with a big university education. With an enrollment of 5,000 students, classes are student centered and there are unlimited opportunities to be become involved.

Lock Haven University was founded in 1870 as the Central State Normal School. By 1927, it was known as the State Teachers College of Lock Haven; and in 1960 the name was changed to Lock Haven State College. In 1983, the school joined with the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education and became known as Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania. The Clearfield campus in Clearfield, Pennsylvania, was established in 1989.

LHU has more than 60 undergraduate programs and three graduate programs. The student-to-faculty ratio is 19:1. Its athletics department offers eight women's Division II teams as well as seven men's Division II programs. Division I men's wrestling and women's field hockey programs round out the athletic offerings.

LHU has an outstanding international mission, offering exchange

programs on six continents. It has approximately 580 full-time employees, which includes 270 full-time instructional faculty.

□ 1445

There are more than 120 clubs, activities and organizations on campus. And it is also one of the few public institutions in the United States to require laptop computers of freshmen and transfer students. The requirement is complemented by a wireless technology infrastructure that will encompass virtually the entire campus in the near future.

LHU's students have numerous opportunities to learn outside of the classroom through internships and field placement. In addition, LHU students can study abroad a semester in England, France, Japan, Australia or one of 24 other countries. Armed with the tools to succeed, 97 percent of recent graduates are either employed or continuing their education.

Today, we honor Lock Haven University for 140 years of excellence in higher education. Congratulations to its president, Dr. Keith Miller, and the faculty of one of the most noble endeavors, preparing future leaders for every sector of our society. I would also like to congratulate the students and staff as well.

I support this resolution, and ask my colleagues to do the same.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CHU. I urge passage of House Resolution 1198, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1198, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REMEMBERING VICTIMS OF OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1206) remembering the victims of the attack on the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and supporting the goals and ideals of the National Week of Hope, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1206

Whereas, on April 19, 1995, at 9:02 a.m., a terrorist detonated a truck bomb at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma;

Whereas this was one of the worst terrorist attacks ever to occur on United States soil, taking the lives of 168 people and injuring

more than 850 others, many of them United States Government employees who worked in the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building;

Whereas this cowardly act of domestic terrorism directly affected thousands of families and horrified millions of people across the State of Oklahoma and the United States;

Whereas the people of Oklahoma and the United States responded to this tragedy through the remarkable efforts of local, State, and Federal law enforcement personnel, firefighters, search and rescue teams, public and private medical personnel, other emergency services personnel, and thousands of volunteers from the community who saved lives, assisted the injured and wounded, comforted the bereaved, and provided meals and support to those who came to Oklahoma City to offer assistance;

Whereas this courageous response set what has come to be known as the "Oklahoma Standard", which was later emulated by many Americans following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001;

Whereas, following the 1995 attack, the people of Oklahoma and the United States pledged to build and maintain a permanent national memorial to remember those who were killed, those who survived, and those changed forever;

Whereas this pledge was fulfilled by establishing the Oklahoma City National Memorial, which draws hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the world every year to the site of the attack;

Whereas the inscription on the wall of the Oklahoma City National Memorial reads: "We come here to remember those who were killed, those who survived, and those changed forever. May all who leave here know the impact of violence. May this memorial offer comfort, strength, peace, hope, and serenity.";

Whereas the National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism was established to educate the Nation's emergency responders about preventing and mitigating the effects of terrorist attacks;

Whereas the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building has been replaced with a new, safe, secure, and functional Federal building in downtown Oklahoma City that houses many of the offices once housed in the Murrah Building, sending a message that the people and Government of the United States will not be cowed by terrorists; and

Whereas the 15th anniversary of the terrorist bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building is April 19, 2010: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) joins with the people of the United States in sending best wishes and prayers to the families, friends, and neighbors of the 168 people killed in the terrorist bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and

(2) sends its best wishes and prayers to those injured in the bombing and expresses gratitude to the thousands of first responders, rescue workers, medical personnel, and volunteers from the community and across the Nation who answered the call for help on the morning of the attack and in the days and weeks thereafter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that

all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend Congresswoman MARY FALLIN and our colleagues from Oklahoma for introducing this resolution. This resolution commemorates the lives of the Federal employees and other victims of this savage terrorist attack and reminds us of the ongoing terrorist threat in our borders.

House Resolution 1206 was introduced by the gentlewoman from Oklahoma, Representative MARY FALLIN, on March 23 of this year and was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. It comes to the floor today with the bipartisan support of over 50 cosponsors.

Over the last year, we've witnessed a rise in violent rhetoric by extremist groups in America. In the most recent incident, Andrew Joseph Stack intentionally crashed his small plane into a Federal building in Austin, Texas, that included offices of the Internal Revenue Service, among others.

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, there have been over 75 violent attacks by domestic terrorists since 1995, Mr. Speaker. The resolution before us today is especially poignant because it is but the most destructive example of a recent frightening trend in domestic terrorism, that is to say, the incident in Oklahoma City.

At 9:02 a.m. on April 19, 1995, Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols used a truck full of explosives to attack the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. Their vicious attack, conducted at a time when most of the building's employees were at work and their children at a day care center, killed 168 people and wounded 850 others. The explosion was so powerful it reduced much of the building to rubble and damaged at least six adjacent buildings, including an apartment building, a church, and a YMCA. Some of the victims of the Murrah Federal Building were children who were in the day care center for building employees.

McVeigh and Nichols appear to have been motivated by similar anti-government ideology as the dozens of domestic terrorist who have attacked America in 15 years subsequent to that bombing.

Seven emergency response crews responded to the attack after receiving a call reporting it in at 9:03 a.m., with Fire Station One's crew arriving first at the scene. Oklahoma City's police force set up an incident command system to manage a massive search and rescue operation. Average citizens, as well as the Civil Air Patrol, American Red Cross, and other organizations assisted with responses to the attack.

After the attack, Oklahomans and other Americans responded with generous offers of assistance. Immediately after McVeigh detonated the explosives in the truck, many bystanders ran to the building to try to save people who were still in it. Oklahoma City restaurant owners gave first responders free meals. Blood drives were so overwhelmed with volunteers that long lines forced the city to ask blood donors to wait for the next drive.

Workers actually left their boots on-site after response crews ran out of work boots. This collective sacrifice and outpouring of support earned the moniker "Oklahoma Standard," which describes an extraordinary, spontaneous outpouring of community support in times of tragedy.

Thank you again, Congresswoman FALLIN, our colleague, for introducing this legislation which I'm a proud cosponsor of.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 1206, remembering the victims of the attack on the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Fifteen years ago, domestic terrorists set off a truck bomb in front of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in what would become one of the worst terrorist attacks to happen on American soil. In a matter of moments, the lives of 168 people, including 19 children, were cruelly brought to an end. In the aftermath, we learned that more than 850 people were injured, and 30 children were orphaned; 219 children lost at least one parent in the tragedy.

To those there, it seemed as if no one in Oklahoma escaped unscathed. Indeed, it has been said that "at 9:02 a.m. on April 19, 1995, every American became an Oklahoman." The outpouring of support for the people of Oklahoma in the hours, days, weeks and months following this attack revealed the depth of character of the citizens of this great Nation.

Many of those killed and injured were Federal employees or the families of Federal employees. It is important that we take time to remember the civil servants who served our country honorably and perished in this tragedy. All of these employees' service to our country deserve recognition and distinction.

I want to extend my sincerest gratitude to local, State and Federal law enforcement, firefighters and emergency response teams from Oklahoma and across the United States; the servicemen and -women, the medical personnel, and the thousands of volunteers who donated their time to help save lives and assist the injured and provide meals to those that came to help the people of Oklahoma. Without these brave men and women, countless more lives may have been lost that day.

Oklahomans have demonstrated the depth of their own character by rebuilding in the wake of the bombing. This tragedy could have devastated the future of Oklahoma City; but in the 15 years since the bombing, the city and all Oklahomans have undergone profound healing. I commend them for their strength and for the continued commitment to triumph over such senseless violence, and I stand with them as they persevere.

Rather than allowing fear to hinder them, the people of Oklahoma City determined to continue the city's growth while keeping alive the memory of those lost.

Nowhere is that determination more beautifully exhibited than at the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum. This facility has attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the world each year since its opening. It serves as a reminder of not only the tragic event that took place 15 years ago, but also the way that all Americans came together to pick up the pieces and move on. It provides Oklahomans and all Americans with a sense of hope that we truly are able to rise from the ashes of terrorism and come out a stronger community and Nation.

The Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism was also created to help educate the Nation's emergency responders and law enforcement about preventing and mitigating the effects of terrorist attacks.

Before I close, I will quote the inscription on the wall of the memorial which sums up the lessons learned from this senseless tragedy. It reads: "We come here to remember those who were killed, those who survived, and those who changed forever. May all who leave here know the impact of violence. May this memorial offer comfort, strength, peace, hope and serenity."

As we near the 15th anniversary of the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, I hope we will keep those impacted by this in our minds and heed these important words.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of this resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think this speaks volumes about what we are as a Nation. We're not a Nation of political parties. We're all Americans, and we come together in a tragedy like this to help heal. And I extend my condolences from the great State of Tennessee to Oklahoma. And I thank my friend from Virginia here today for helping us commemorate this.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I thank my friend from Tennessee for his kind words. And now I am pleased to recognize our colleague and friend from Minnesota (Ms. MCCOLLUM) for 4 minutes.

(Ms. MCCOLLUM asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to remember the victims of the

1995 terrorist attack on Oklahoma City that killed 168 people. This act of terrorism was committed by a man who viewed the Federal Government as such a threat it justified mass murder.

I applaud my colleague from Oklahoma for her resolution because it serves as a reminder that right-wing anti-government extremist groups are on the rise today. Only 2 weeks ago, members of a so-called Christian militia in Michigan were arrested by the FBI for plotting to kill law enforcement officers in the hopes of inciting an anti-government uprising.

A national civil rights organization has documented a growing number of hate groups in America and states they are “driven largely by an angry backlash against non-white immigration, economic meltdown and the climb to power of an African American President.” In one word: racism.

Mark Potok of the Southern Poverty Law Center states: “Individuals associated with the Patriot movement during its heydays in the 1990s produced an enormous amount of violence, most dramatically the Oklahoma City bombing.”

Today Mr. Potok states: “As the movement has exploded, so has the reaches of its ideas, aided and abetted by commentators and politicians.”

Only last month a Fox News media commentator, with Members of Congress next to him, rallied a tea party crowd by disparaging Congress and calling the crowd “all these Tim McVeigh wannabes here.” To that, the crowds cheered and applauded.

When Members of Congress compare health care legislation to “government tyranny,” “socialism” or “totalitarianism” in the hopes of scoring political points, it’s like pouring gas on the fire of extremism.

Members of this House, Democrats and Republicans, have a duty and obligation to end the dangerous name-calling that can only inspire extremist militias and phony patriots. In the most free, prosperous and greatest democracy on Earth, it is time to return to civil, decent debate of public policy.

I don’t want another “Oklahoma City” to ever take place again. And just as we would not give aid and comfort to al Qaeda, let us not allow the words of elected leaders to give comfort and comfortable excuses to extremists bent on violence. Words have power for both good and evil, and I implore my colleagues to temper their rhetoric and not allow the words of a Member of Congress to ever be used by a violent militia or phony, hate-filled patriot to cause violence.

The victims of the Oklahoma City bombing were women at work, men in line for government services, and children in a day care center. And these families were torn apart, and they struggle to heal. A community was devastated, but it is again filled with hope and memories.

And I hope with this resolution every Member of Congress will reflect upon

the victims of Oklahoma City, as well as our duty as elected leaders in a proud and free country.

[From the Southern Poverty Law Center, Apr. 2010]

RAGE ON THE RIGHT—THE YEAR IN HATE AND EXTREMISM

(By Mark Potok)

The radical right caught fire last year, as broad-based populist anger at political, demographic and economic changes in America ignited an explosion of new extremist groups and activism across the nation.

Hate groups stayed at record levels—almost 1,000—despite the total collapse of the second largest neo-Nazi group in America. Furious anti-immigrant vigilante groups soared by nearly 80%, adding some 136 new groups during 2009. And, most remarkably of all, so-called “Patriot” groups—militias and other organizations that see the federal government as part of a plot to impose “one-world government” on liberty-loving Americans—came roaring back after years out of the limelight.

The anger seething across the American political landscape—over racial changes in the population, soaring public debt and the terrible economy, the bailouts of bankers and other elites, and an array of initiatives by the relatively liberal Obama Administration that are seen as “socialist” or even “fascist”—goes beyond the radical right. The “tea parties” and similar groups that have sprung up in recent months cannot fairly be considered extremist groups, but they are shot through with rich veins of radical ideas, conspiracy theories and racism.

“We are in the midst of one of the most significant right-wing populist rebellions in United States history,” Chip Berlet, a veteran analyst of the American radical right, wrote earlier this year. “We see around us a series of overlapping social and political movements populated by people [who are] angry, resentful, and full of anxiety. They are raging against the machinery of the federal bureaucracy and liberal government programs and policies including health care, reform of immigration and labor laws, abortion, and gay marriage.”

Sixty-one percent of Americans believe the country is in decline, according to a recent NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll. Just a quarter think the government can be trusted. And the anti-tax tea party movement is viewed in much more positive terms than either the Democratic or Republican parties, the poll found.

The signs of growing radicalization are everywhere. Armed men have come to Obama speeches bearing signs suggesting that the “tree of liberty” needs to be “watered” with “the blood of tyrants.” The Conservative Political Action Conference held this February was co-sponsored by groups like the John Birch Society, which believes President Eisenhower was a Communist agent, and Oath Keepers, a Patriot outfit formed last year that suggests, in thinly veiled language, that the government has secret plans to declare martial law and intern patriotic Americans in concentration camps. Politicians pandering to the antigovernment right in 37 states have introduced “Tenth Amendment Resolutions,” based on the constitutional provision keeping all powers not explicitly given to the federal government with the states. And, at the “A Well Regulated Militia” website, a recent discussion of how to build “clandestine safe houses” to stay clear of the federal government included a conversation about how mass murderers like Timothy McVeigh and Olympics bomber Eric Rudolph were supposedly betrayed at such houses.

DOING THE NUMBERS

The number of hate groups in America has been going up for years, rising 54% between 2000 and 2008 and driven largely by an angry backlash against non-white immigration and, starting in the last year of that period, the economic meltdown and the climb to power of an African American president.

According to the latest annual count by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), these groups rose again slightly in 2009—from 926 in 2008 to 932 last year—despite the demise of a key neo-Nazi group, The American National Socialist Workers Party, which had 35 chapters in 28 states, imploded shortly after the October 2008 arrest of founder Bill White for making threats against his enemies.

At the same time, the number of what the SPLC designates as “nativist extremist” groups—organizations that go beyond mere advocacy of restrictive immigration policy to actually confront or harass suspected immigrants—jumped from 173 groups in 2008 to 309 last year. Virtually all of these vigilante groups have appeared since the spring of 2005.

But the most dramatic story by far has been with the antigovernment Patriots.

The militias and the larger Patriot movement first came to Americans’ attention in the mid-1990s, when they appeared as an angry reaction to what was seen as a tyrannical government bent on crushing all dissent. Sparked most dramatically by the death of 76 Branch Davidians during a 1993 law enforcement siege in Waco, Texas, those who joined the militias also railed against the Democratic Clinton Administration and initiatives like gun control and environmental regulation. Although the Patriot movement included people formerly associated with racially based hate groups, it was above all animated by a view of the federal government as the primary enemy, along with a fondness for antigovernment conspiracy theories. By early this decade, the groups had largely disappeared from public view.

But last year, as noted in the SPLC’s August report, “The Second Wave: Return of the Militias,” a dramatic resurgence in the Patriot movement and its paramilitary wing, the militias, began. Now, the latest SPLC count finds that an astonishing 363 new Patriot groups appeared in 2009, with the totals going from 149 groups (including 42 militias) to 512 (127 of them militias)—a 244% jump.

That is cause for grave concern. Individuals associated with the Patriot movement during its 1990s heyday produced an enormous amount of violence, most dramatically the Oklahoma City bombing that left 168 people dead.

Already there are signs of similar violence emanating from the radical right. Since the installation of Barack Obama, right-wing extremists have murdered six law enforcement officers. Racist skinheads and others have been arrested in alleged plots to assassinate the nation’s first black president. One man from Brockton, Mass.—who told police he had learned on white supremacist websites that a genocide was under way against whites—is charged with murdering two black people and planning to kill as many Jews as possible on the day after Obama’s inauguration. Most recently, a rash of individuals with antigovernment, survivalist or racist views have been arrested in a series of bomb cases.

As the movement has exploded, so has the reach of its ideas, aided and abetted by commentators and politicians in the ostensible mainstream. While in the 1990s, the movement got good reviews from a few lawmakers

and talk-radio hosts, some of its central ideas today are being plugged by people with far larger audiences like FOX News' Glenn Beck and U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn). Beck, for instance, re-popularized a key Patriot conspiracy theory—the charge that FEMA is secretly running concentration camps—before finally “debunking” it.

Last year also experienced levels of cross-pollination between different sectors of the radical right not seen in years. Nativist activists increasingly adopted the ideas of the Patriots; racist rants against Obama and others coursed through the Patriot movement; and conspiracy theories involving the government appeared in all kinds of right-wing venues. A good example is the upcoming Second Amendment March in Washington, D.C. The website promoting the march is topped by a picture of a colonial militiaman, and key supporters include Larry Pratt, a long-time militia enthusiast with connections to white supremacists, and Richard Mack, a conspiracy-mongering former sheriff associated with the Patriot group Oath Keepers.

What may be most noteworthy about the march, however, is its date—April 19. That is the date of the first shots fired at Lexington in the Revolutionary War. And it is also the anniversary of the fiery end of the government siege in Waco and the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I again offer my deepest sympathies to the victims of the attack on the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, as well as to the families and friends of those victims. Fifteen years later, we remember and mourn their tragic loss.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H. Res. 1206.

Ms. FALLIN. Mr. Speaker, fifteen years ago next Monday, America was shocked and saddened by a murderous attack in our heartland. 168 Oklahomans died and hundreds others injured when a homegrown terrorist detonated a bomb outside the Oklahoma City Federal Building.

Today I offer a resolution to commemorate that tragedy, but it is also a resolution of hope.

On April 19, 1995, Oklahoma City, the State of Oklahoma and our Nation saw the face of evil. But rather than cower in fear we came together. From the very first moments after the blast, neighbors rushed forward to help neighbors. They lined up around the block to give blood. They became volunteer rescuers—and one, a nurse, gave her life in that effort.

As our wounds began to heal, we vowed always to remember those we lost, those who were injured and those who were changed forever. Five years after the bombing, in 2000, a beautiful and peaceful outdoor memorial was dedicated on the same block that was once marked by blood and tears.

That memorial includes 168 empty chairs in memory of those who died—19 of them children. It contains a reflecting pool and a tough old tree that survived the blast. We call it the Survivor Tree, and it is the emblem of our memorial.

A year later, we added a museum where visitors come each day to learn more about the bombing, and to absorb the lesson that in our free Nation, free speech is honorable, but violence is not.

Those are the physical symbols of hope. There are others just as vital. Dozens of children lost one or more parent in the bombing, or were themselves injured. Today a special

fund is sending some of those children to college.

And each year, as we will next Monday, we gather again at the Oklahoma City National Memorial to pause for 168 seconds of silence, to honor memories, to see old friends with whom we share an unbreakable bond forged of both tragedy and hope. And we also come to renew that vow we made in 1995—we will never forget.

Fifteen years ago this Congress and the Clinton administration stepped forward to bring the help and the justice the events of that day demanded. Subsequent laws made it easier to prosecute terrorists and bring them to final justice.

This resolution continues the commitment of this Congress to stand with and for Oklahoma City. In memory of all those touched by the events of April 19, 1995, I urge its unanimous passage.”

Mr. BOREN. Mr. Speaker, at 9:02 a.m. on the morning of April 19th, 1995, a truck bomb detonated outside the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City killing 168 individuals—all of them unsuspecting women, children, and men—thereby becoming one of the most abhorrent acts of violence ever undertaken against the American people. Fifteen years after the bombing, we recognize on this day—April 19th, 2010—all those both in Oklahoma and across the United States who were touched by this inexplicable articulation of violence, violence which signaled an irrevocable act of domestic terrorism. Our recollections of that nascent dawn are consequently entombed within these words as a small yet vital elegy to the mid-April daylight a decade and a half ago when our world exploded.

We cannot and we must not allow the events from 15 years past to lapse in our memories. The actions of that day still scar the surrounding landscape like the ghosts of an enduring trauma, latent but ever present behind the unyielding advances of time. Within a 16-block radius of the blast site where 850 individuals were injured, where 19 of the 168 killed were under the age of 6, where 324 structures were either damaged or destroyed, where 86 cars were utterly incinerated and where the window panes of 258 buildings were thoroughly shattered, the scorched earth campaign of Tim McVeigh and Terry Nichols permanently impacted not only the existence of each and every Oklahoman but of all Americans. Yet, the remarkable efforts of local, State, and Federal law enforcement, fire and emergency services, search and rescue teams from near and far, medical personnel both public and private, as well as vast numbers of volunteers who willingly endangered themselves to save others, assist the injured, support the grieving, and provide amenities to those endangered or otherwise altered by this act of terrorism all attest to the irrepressible character of Oklahoma and of America as a whole.

Today, after the chaos of tragedy unexpected, after the initial anguish of the moment, after the exposure of a malice which rocked us to our very core, the Oklahoma City National Memorial stands resilient in the downtown area as a sobering reminder of the attack on America's heartland 15 years previous. The memorial itself—set on the grounds of the incendiary assault, in the solitary shadow of an elm known as the Survivor Tree—

bears the following inscription: “We come here to remember those who were killed, those who survived and those changed forever. May all who leave here know the impact of violence. May this memorial offer comfort, strength, peace, hope and serenity.” And, may we as Americans, never permit ourselves to forget the pilfered vitality those 168 empty chairs signify, especially the 16 smaller seats—each one a life, literally in its infancy, extinguished by the unmitigated cruelty of a terrorist plot planted and brought to fruition on American soil.

Moreover, we cannot dismiss the somber relevance the beloved departed lend to the grievous affairs of that morning. We cannot dismiss the 580 injured. Nor can we dismiss the countless number of volunteers from every corner of this country who came from near and far to aid in Oklahoma City's continued recovery. April 19th must remain firmly in our minds as the day America was altered permanently, as the day I urge us to recognize and to never forget.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 1206, “Remembering the victims of the attack on the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and supporting the goals and ideals of the National Week of Hope.”

Let me begin by thanking my colleague Representative MARY FALLIN for introducing this important piece of legislation into the House of Representatives as it is important that we always remember the men, women and children who lost their lives in the tragic bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building. I would also like to recognize Congresswoman FALLIN for her bravery and leadership in the aftermath of the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

Just four months after taking her initial oath of office as Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma, Representative FALLIN was faced with this horrible attack. Through her courage and dedication to the people of Oklahoma however, Representative FALLIN successfully worked toward the recovery and reconstruction of ground-zero and also formed a task force to rebuild the childcare center lost in the disaster.

In one of the most shocking and horrifying terrorist attacks ever directed against the United States homeland, the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma was bombed by homegrown terrorist Timothy McVeigh, leading to the deaths of over one-hundred citizens and Federal employees.

Timothy McVeigh detonated his homemade bomb in front of the Federal building on the morning of April 19, 1995, just as employees and citizens were arriving at work for the day. The large explosion took the lives of 168 people and injured more than 850 others in the area around ground-zero.

I deplore in the strongest terms possible this cowardly act of terrorism against the men, women and children in a Federal building. This type of senseless violence is not welcome in our democratic society and we must work to see that this type of action is never allowed to take place again.

I would especially like to recognize the fine men and women of the police, fire department and other first responders who provided immediate assistance in the aftermath of the bombing. Because of their courageous actions that day, many lives were able to be saved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.