

as an economically stable and culturally vibrant community. Harlem CDC targets the redevelopment of vacant or underutilized commercial and residential property and publicly-owned spaces (www.harlemcdc.org).

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in recognition of the 2011 "BID on Culture" Winning Banners and in celebration of Black Music Month.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 23, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2219) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Chair, I rise in support of the Fiscal Year 2012 Defense Appropriations bill. Ensuring that our military receives funding for the coming fiscal year is an essential duty of this Congress and key to maintaining the capabilities of our Armed Forces. I applaud the work of the subcommittee and full committee for considering this legislation in regular order. I also give credit to my colleagues on the Rules Committee for ensuring that the House has once again returned to the days of open rules on appropriations bills, so every Member's voice can be heard.

Furthermore, it is with the utmost appreciation that I commend the Appropriations Committee for working in partnership with the Armed Services Committee on matters relating to our military. As Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, I remain fully committed to providing our troops with the resources needed to fulfill their missions. To that end, I am pleased to see that this bill provides the full amount of funding requested by the President for fiscal year 2012 to fund Overseas Contingency Operations, which is essential to achieving victory in ongoing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

However, I do have reservations about the cut to the defense base budget during a time when we are engaged in several overseas conflicts and facing an abundance of emerging threats to our security. Despite the fact that our nation's heroes got Osama bin Laden, we are still a nation at war—a war that we did not start. Al Qaeda has named bin Laden's successor and there is no doubt in anyone's mind that their primary goal is to kill Americans.

I recognize that on a percentage basis, an \$8.9 billion cut may not seem significant—less than two percent. But two percent is the same amount Secretary Gates has been trying desperately to find through efficiencies to reinvest in our force structure and modernization accounts. We have applauded his efforts and supported his goal. Now, unfortunately, this bill would take those dollars away.

Nevertheless, it is clear that we are experiencing a fiscal crisis due to excessive government spending. I fully support ongoing efforts to responsibly cut excess spending to put our nation on the path to economic recovery and lasting prosperity. There are larger battles

looming in the days ahead, in which we must tackle monumental issues such as the nation's debt ceiling. This is where our focus must be. I urge my colleagues to stand united as we move forward to ensure that we do not lower military spending to a level which threatens the safety of American citizens. To do so would be an investment in the decline of our national security.

Once again, I thank my colleagues for bringing this bill to the floor. I believe this bill strikes a reasonable balance of fiscal responsibility and providing for our armed services, and will therefore oppose amendments that would further reduce the resources available for our men and women in uniform and their families. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the passage of this bill.

A TRIBUTE TO BENJAMIN J.
BUFFINGTON

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 24, 2011

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Benjamin James Buffington for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

The Eagle Scout rank is the highest advancement rank in scouting. Only about five percent of Boy Scouts earn the Eagle Scout Award. The award is a performance based achievement whose standards have been well-maintained over the years.

To earn the Eagle Scout rank, a Boy Scout is obligated to pass specific tests that are organized by requirements and merit badges, as well as completing an Eagle Project to benefit the community. Benjamin's project was to work with other troop members to construct a three tier fence that will help develop an outdoor horse arena for Harmony Ranch in Clear Lake, Iowa. Harmony Ranch is a faith-based organization that provides therapeutic horseback riding ministry for individuals with disabilities. When the project was finished Benjamin's fence enclosed a 100 foot by 200 foot area to provide the much needed riding area.

Mr. Speaker, the example set by this young man and his supportive family demonstrates the rewards of hard work, dedication and perseverance. Benjamin's efforts embody the Iowa spirit and I am honored to represent him and his family in the United States Congress. I know that all of my colleagues will join me in congratulating him on achieving an Eagle Scout ranking and will wish him continued success in his future education and career.

CELEBRATION OF CARIBBEAN
AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. DONNA M. CHRISTENSEN

OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 24, 2011

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, as the month of June draws to a close, I rise to recognize the celebration of Caribbean American Heritage Month. The past, present and future of the Caribbean is closely associated with that of this country, as our islands exist be-

tween two great continents and are affected by the social, economic and political decisions that are made by our neighbors to the north and to the south. The Caribbean, and Caribbean Americans were there at the founding of this great country and continue to be a part of its evolution into the 21st century.

As it relates to the territory that I represent, the U.S. Virgin Islands, from the rum trade that helped to fund the American Revolution, to the first salute of the colors of the newly declared nation to being the place where the young Alexander Hamilton spent his formative years, our contributions to the American story are well documented. Less known, is that our territory was purchased from Denmark almost 100 years ago in conjunction with the building of the Panama Canal as a means to defend that and other American interests in the region. Also less known are the contributions of our citizens who left the islands to live in this great nation and to contribute as average citizens who are teachers, doctors, and businessmen, and as standouts in the Harlem Renaissance and the civil rights movement in this country. The Virgin Islands and the wider Caribbean have contributed and continue to contribute soldiers, historians, activists, legislators and yes, Members of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, this year, the Institute of Caribbean Studies led by the indomitable Dr. Claire Nelson has recognized Members of Congress of Caribbean American Heritage who served in the past and who serve now. In addition to myself, the Honorable BARBARA LEE, the Honorable SHEILA JACKSON LEE, the Honorable YVETTE CLARKE and the Honorable FREDERICA WILSON who proudly serve now, they also recognized former Members, the Honorable Mervyn Dymally and the late, great Shirley Chisholm. Caribbean American members continue to serve this country in every walk of life in entertainment, in law, in finance, in economic development. The countries in the Caribbean Basin continue to be friends and allies of our great nation. It is only fitting that Caribbean American Heritage be a relationship that is honored and recognized on an annual basis.

CONGRATULATING THE ST. CLAIR
HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL TEAM
ON WINNING THE MICHIGAN
DIVISION II STATE TITLE

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 24, 2011

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct privilege to recognize a special achievement recently accomplished by the St. Clair High School Saints Baseball Team. St. Clair capped off a remarkable and extremely memorable 2011 season by taking home the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) Division II Team State Title! Forty-Eight years have passed since St. Clair won their last state high school championship which was in boys' gymnastics, so this was truly a time for celebration and jubilee. The St. Clair High School Baseball Team exhibited true-grit, determination and solidarity to reach the pinnacle of this historic season.

With "Skipper" Bill McElreath leading the charge, the Saints played strong fundamental

baseball focusing on the basics: error-free defense, smart base-running and simply putting the ball in play. The Saints were able to keep the pressure on their opponents and force them to commit untimely mistakes which they were able to capitalize upon.

This was true in the state finals when the team scored two runs on wild pitches en route to a 4–1 victory over Grand Rapids Christian. The Saints consistently exhibited the intangibles like heart, discipline and a positive attitude. They were never afraid to get their gloves and jerseys dirty to make a play.

In addition, the Saints also compiled an impressive final record of 33 wins and only one 1 loss, with 31 wins coming straight in a row. I applaud the entire coaching staff for their efforts to prepare this team both mentally and physically for competition.

Here I think it is worth mentioning our hometown Detroit Tigers who are posthumously honoring former Manager Sparky Anderson by retiring his Number 11 jersey this season. I think Sparky put it best when he said, "Baseball is a simple game. If you have good players and if you keep them in the right frame of mind then the manager is a success." I am sure Coach McElreath would echo that same sentiment.

In commend the Saints for staying energized and hungry each time they crossed the white chalk to face-off against their opponents. This is an extremely difficult task, considering the various pressures and distractions high school student-athletes face on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize the hard work and sacrifices displayed by all the members of the 2011 St. Clair High School Baseball Program. I congratulate the coaches, staff, teachers, parents, students and fans for their assistance in making this a season no one will ever forget.

Despite the hardships, set-backs and obstacles, the Saints showed they had the skills, will power and fortitude to rise to any challenge and accomplish their ultimate goal—a State Championship! Teamwork, perseverance and friendship all contributed to this title as well. I know the City of St. Clair, St. Clair County and the East China School District take great pride in what these young men were able to accomplish.

In closing Mr. Speaker, I share that same pride and express my personal congratulations and best wishes. All the accolades, awards and trophies won by this team are rightfully deserved. This baseball squad exceeded expectations and established a tradition of winning for future teams to follow. Way to go Saints!

RECOGNIZING HILLARY BERKOWITZ

HON. GREGORY W. MEEKS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 24, 2011

Mr. MEEKS. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize a student of the Month from the Sixth Congressional District of New York.

Hillary Berkowitz is the valedictorian of the 2011 class of Benjamin Cardozo High School. She will be attending Barnard College in the

fall. She challenged herself with the most rigorous of college preparatory courses that Benjamin Cardozo High School have to offer, and has attained a grade point average of 103.13.

In May 2010, Hillary was the proud recipient of the Queens College Presidential Excellence Award granted to the "best junior" in each Queens high school, and she is currently a 2011 National Merit Semifinalist. She is a dedicated member of the school and actively participates in school events. She is the treasurer for her leaders club, volunteers in tutoring other students, and always helps her teachers in whatever way she can.

Her college counselor has deemed her "Benjamin Cardozo High School's finest" and is an exceptional young woman. She has a great love for academia and the arts, and hopes that she can attend law school in the future. Her hard work and dedication to success have earned her the respect of her peers, her teachers, and the community. I know that she has a bright future ahead of her.

THE FASTER ACT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 24, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Facilitating American Security Through Energy Resources Act—The FASTER Act. This legislation will require the Department of the Interior to increase and accelerate the approval of high-potential onshore oil and gas permits located on Federal lands.

The current Administration has delayed, canceled, and reduced domestic energy production. The proof is in the numbers: in 2008 there were over 2,400 new oil and natural gas leases issued on Bureau of Land Management land and 2.6 million acres leased for production, but in 2010 the number of new leases issued dropped to 1,308 and acres leased dropped to 1.3 million. In exchange for this massive reduction, Administrative officials only offer distant hope for renewable resources. This is extremely troubling.

My bill would require Department of the Interior officials to identify, in consultation with industry, leases that have the highest energy potential and expeditiously move them through the permitting process.

The Bureau of Land Management claims that it takes, on average, 206 days to process a drilling permit application, but in reality the actual waiting time for many businesses is closer to two years. With the price of gas hovering around \$4 per gallon in this fragile economic recovery, the economic damage caused by that wait time is completely unacceptable.

Just this week the President acknowledged the energy crisis we are facing, and moved to open up the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. But this is the shortest of short term solutions, and will do nothing to address the structural problems facing our need to secure our national energy supply.

The combined recoverable oil, natural gas, and coal resources of the United States are

the largest in the world, and much of it is on Federal land. Our country's abundant natural resources represent not just tens of trillions of dollars, but also millions of high-paying jobs.

I served two combat tours of duty in the Middle East with the Marine Corps and saw firsthand how volatile this region was then. It's even less stable now. We cannot afford to be dependent on these increasingly unstable nations for so much of our energy, particularly when we have such vast resources here at home. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this bill.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JESSE
OTIS BEALL

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 24, 2011

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Jesse Otis Beall of DeBary, Florida who passed away on Thursday, June 16, 2011.

It was my honor and privilege to have known Jesse who, as the "unofficial" historian for the City of DeBary, has been involved in city events and organizations since moving there following his service in the Navy during World War II.

More than his service to our nation, we can never repay or adequately recognize the sacrifice Jesse, his wife, Arbutus, and his family made with the loss of their son and loved one, Charles Richard Beall.

Their son was killed while serving in Vietnam in 1968. It was my honor to help grant Jesse Beall's request to have our main transportation artery through DeBary, Florida named in his son Charles Richard Beall's name. I will never forget the day I stood with Jesse as work crews placed that sign honoring his son on that DeBary thoroughfare. Jesse was a patriot and an American Father who we will always remember and hold dearly in our hearts.

Jesse loved the outdoors and could often be found hunting, fishing or even wrangling alligators. But most of all, Jessie loved his adopted home of DeBary. As the town's historian, Mr. Beall often found himself the collector of all things DeBary. Members of the community would often transfer to him possessions or other items they found knowing that Mr. Beall would keep them for posterity sake. His collection continues a reminder of our area's past and proud history on which Jesse left an indelible mark.

Jesse is survived by his wife of 54 years, Arbutus; his son Roger; his daughter Rebecca Genest; his brother Gene; five granddaughters; and one great-granddaughter. To them, we offer our deepest sympathy and condolences. Jesse also had a daughter, Rochelle, who passed away in 2003 and his son, Charles, who was killed while serving in the Vietnam War and for whom U.S. 17–92 in DeBary is named.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to recognize Jesse Beall's contributions to our nation and the great State of Florida. I ask all Members of the U.S. House of Representatives of the 112th Congress to join me in remembering this great American.