

initiatives for African American business owners. In a battle that is still being fought today, Congresswoman Meek passionately opposed cuts to social welfare programs in the 90s to prevent the financial burden from being carried on the backs of the middle class and the disadvantaged.

Mr. Speaker, Congresswoman Meek has been an asset to this country and it is important that we recognize her lasting contributions to her district and our nation. It is always my pleasure to honor an individual with such exemplary character and integrity such as my dear friend Congresswoman Carrie Meek.

INTRODUCING THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEES LEAVE TRANSFER ACT OF 2011

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Federal Employees Leave Transfer Act of 2011. Put simply, this bill will permit federal employees to transfer unused sick leave, without compensation, to agency sick leave banks.

I offer this bill during a time when federal employee benefits and service are under attack. Unlike some voices, I believe that public service as a worthwhile endeavor, and that the civil service is a talented workforce that needs to be carefully managed and developed.

Though this bill is a small change to existing law, it is an important one because it reassures federal employees that if they became catastrophically ill, or require extended leave due to the illness of a loved one, other federal employees can come to their assistance through the donation of their excess sick leave.

This bill is expected to be nearly cost-neutral. The bill states that federal employees cannot be compensated for transferring their sick leave to a sick leave bank. That provision is expected to nearly eliminate the cost of the bill, with the small exception of program administration.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, until 2014, Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) employees will be allowed to use one-half of their accumulated sick leave for annuity purposes. This bill will allow federal employees to donate their excess leave to a sick bank, rather than suffering from the "FERS flu." This bill could even increase productivity by preventing the abuse of sick leave.

Sick leave donation programs and banks are abundant in state and local government, at public and private universities, and in the private sector. Therefore this bill will not grant federal employees a benefit not enjoyed by the private sector.

For those who believe this bill may contribute to abuse, it must be noted that a federal employee cannot draw from a leave bank unless he/she donates to the bank in the first place. That incentivizes participation. Second, a federal employee cannot actually draw from a leave bank until he/she has exhausted all of their own sick and annual leave. Therefore, leave banks are shielded from abuse since federal employees cannot take advantage of this benefit until they have significant skin in the game.

Finally, I am proud that this bill has 4 esteemed public servants as original co-sponsors: Congressmen CONNOLLY, WOLF, SARBANES and VAN HOLLEN. This bill is also supported by the American Federation of Government Employees, the National Treasury Employees Union, the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, and Federal Managers Association.

RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF LINN ON ITS CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of Linn, located in Osage County in Missouri, as the community recently celebrated its centennial anniversary.

In what is now the city of Linn settled a diverse group of people with different nationalities and backgrounds. They settled in the region that is currently Osage County, calling the settlement Linnville but then later renamed the town more simply Linn, after the U.S. Senator Lewis F. Linn. It was in 1842 that Linn was designated the County Seat for Osage County.

Here is the home of Linn State Technical College. The college was started with some of the foresight that is indicative of this region, recognizing the need for training a talented workforce. This vision has grown with the community for the last fifty years, putting technical education as an integral part of the community.

Over the past century, a multitude of trades and occupations supported the town. Today, Linn is known for its diverse population, collection of many religious ideologies and exceptional school system. Linn is a thriving town and a proud community, thankful for those that have paved the way to the present and laid the foundation for our tomorrow.

In closing, I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing the residents of the city of Linn congratulations on their centennial anniversary.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE DEDICATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON LAKEWOOD HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the dedication of The University of Akron Lakewood Higher Education Center. The University of Akron Lakewood will give students throughout Cuyahoga County an opportunity to benefit from the quality education that The University of Akron (UA) has been providing its students for more than one hundred years.

Founded in 1870 by John R. Buchtel, the University of Akron was originally Buchtel College. When Butchel College first opened its doors in 1872, 46 collegiate students were

taught by seven faculty members. Over the past 140 years, UA has expanded and in 2010 welcomed 4,796 freshman students, the largest incoming class in the school's history. Today, the University of Akron offers 300 undergraduate and graduate programs to more than 29,000 students. The Princeton Review listed UA among the "Best in the Midwest" in its 2011 edition of Best Colleges: Region-by-Region.

The University of Akron Lakewood Higher Education Center will be housed in downtown Lakewood's Bailey Building on the corner of Warren Road and Detroit Avenue. The Lakewood location will offer variety of classes for students enrolled in the College of Nursing, College of Education and College of Business. Additionally, general education courses will be offered to high school students who wish to pursue dual-enrollment.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognition of the new University of Akron Lakewood Higher Education Center.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, due to unforeseen circumstances I was absent on September 21, 2011 for the vote on H.R. 2608, The Continuing Appropriations Act of 2012. However, had I been present I would have voted no for H.R. 2608.

RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF HERMANN ON ITS 175TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the city of Hermann, located in Gasconade County in Missouri, as the community recently celebrated its 175th anniversary.

What is now the city of Hermann began as a small colony of the German Settlement Society of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1836. Hermann has remained the county seat of Gasconade County since 1842.

The city was originally laid out by the German Settlement Society of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with the intent of preserving the German language and culture. In 1847 what is known today as Stone Hill Wine Company was formed. Today the winery hits an annual wine output of 1,250,000 gallons. Hermann became the "Wine City of Missouri," and today is still the center of Missouri's wine industry.

Over the past century, industries involved in the cultivation of grapes, production of wine, shoemaking and tourism have supported the town. Hermann is a thriving town and a proud community known for its many festivals and also as "The Bed and Breakfast Capital of Missouri."

In closing, I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing the residents of the city of Hermann congratulations on its 175th anniversary.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF DR.
JOSEPH R. FINK

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Joseph R. Fink and recognize his contribution to higher education and community involvement in Marin County, California. Dr. Fink is retiring as the President of Dominican University of California.

It has been my privilege to work closely with Dr. Fink for many years, during which time his friendship and assistance have been invaluable. Under his leadership Dominican has established itself as a successful university with high ideals and a big vision. Establishing the Green MBA Program and the Center for Sustainability, Dominican University has emerged as an innovative school whose students are working to develop creative solutions to some of the world's toughest problems.

Dr. Fink earned a doctorate in American History from Rutgers University and began his career as an Associate Professor of History and Assistant to the President at a small liberal arts college. Before coming to Dominican University, he served as Dean of Arts and Sciences at the City Colleges of Chicago, president of a public college in New Jersey, and president of an independent liberal arts college in Pennsylvania. He is the recipient of many awards and recognitions, including four honorary doctorate degrees for his achievements in higher education and community service.

Starting at Dominican University in 1988, during a period of transition, Dr. Fink restructured the management of the university to move it from small college to university status. He worked with the Board of Trustees and the faculty to successfully assume control of academic and fiscal affairs to put the university on a whole new course. With his expertise in management, the university's enrollment almost quadrupled while the average SAT scores rose by more than 180 points. A leader with considerable collaborative skills, he has been innovative in creating opportunities for friends of the university to support its mission. With increased fundraising, the annual operating budget rose dramatically allowing extensive campus renovation, the building of a new recreation complex, new residence halls, and a state-of-the-art science research center.

In addition to being a very competent administrator, Dr. Fink is an outstanding member of the community, serving on the boards of a variety of organizations, including the Council of Independent Colleges, the World Affairs Council of Northern California, the Marin Symphony, the American Land Conservancy, and the Commonwealth Club of California.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Fink is a man of remarkable talent and considerable commitment, he will be missed in the community and at the university, but we honor him today and wish him well in his next endeavor. Congratulations, Joseph Fink.

HONORING FORMER REPRESENTATIVE
CARRIE P. MEEK

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I had the honor and the privilege of serving in this house with Carrie Meek for ten years. The granddaughter of a slave and a daughter of sharecroppers, Carrie has always held in her heart a deep and abiding concern for the rights and the welfare of others. She made public service a life's calling, and her time as a member of this body was but one chapter in a lengthy career doing what she loves most: fighting for justice and the advancement of those who have something to contribute but are not given the chance.

When Carrie was determined to pursue a graduate degree, the high obstacle of segregation was the first of many she would overcome. Her fourteen years of service in the Florida legislature, in both the House and Senate, helped make Floridians safer from crime, opened new opportunities to Florida's students to achieve higher education, and provided affordable housing to those facing financial difficulty. Her historic election in 1992 as the first African American to represent a Florida district in Congress since Reconstruction began a decade of distinguished service here in Washington.

In Congress, Carrie championed economic development, housing, education, and access to affordable health care. Her relentless advocacy on behalf of her constituents in the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew brought over \$100 million in assistance to rebuild communities across Miami-Dade County and South Florida. Since her retirement from Congress in 2003, Carrie has continued her work at the helm of the Carrie Meek Foundation, a charitable venture committed to improving the lives of Americans by supporting programs in housing, education, health care, and community development.

I am grateful to call Carrie my friend, and I join with my colleagues in celebrating her service to the people of Florida in Congress and her continuing commitment to her fellow Americans across the country.

HONORING THE NEVADA GOES
FALL FREE COALITION

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Nevada Goes Fall Free Coalition on the occasion of the Nevada Fall Prevention Day.

The Nevada Goes Fall Free Coalition has fostered community partnerships across the aging and disabilities service network to provide education and fall prevention programs to local residents.

Nevada Fall Prevention Day is sponsored by the Nevada Goes Fall Free Coalition; a community based task force supported by the National Council on Aging.

The Coalition was formed to promote collaboration among members, to bring aware-

ness to this issue, to promote the effectiveness of risk factor identification and intervention, and to work toward the implementation of the 36 strategies contained within the National Action Plan.

It is estimated that nearly 12 percent of Nevadans are over the age of 65. Additionally, it is estimated that in the United States one-third of all people over the age of 65 will fall each year. Furthermore, over half of the seniors over the age of 80 will fall each year. This would result in medical costs that would exceed \$27 billion annually.

Falls are the leading cause of injury deaths among people over the age of 65 and the leading cause of nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma.

Falling and the fear of falling, can lead to depression, hopelessness, loss of mobility, and loss of functional independence. However, falls and injuries from falls are largely a preventable community health problem.

As the Representative for Nevada's First Congressional District, it gives me immense pride to recognize the Nevada Goes Fall Free Coalition on the occasion of the Nevada Fall Prevention Day.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARMENIAN
INDEPENDENCE

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the full declaration of Armenian independence on September 21st, and to acknowledge the numerous contributions of Armenian-Americans to the history, society, and culture of the United States.

The legacy of the Armenian people is one of strength, resilience, and determination, and we pay tribute to those who struggled for and won their independence twenty years ago today.

The thorny path to freedom is difficult for so many throughout the world, and I am proud to stand alongside the Armenian people as they continue to consolidate the gains of independence. Over the past two decades, Armenia has moved toward a modern, dynamic economy, reduced poverty and inequality, and built a vibrant civil society. I personally experienced the warmth and generosity of the Armenian people first-hand during my visit there.

Here in the United States, the contributions of Armenian-Americans are innumerable. Hundreds of thousands of Armenian-Americans have contributed to the strength, prosperity and creativity of this country by leading the way in diverse fields such as medicine, literature, business, the arts, human rights, and science. The contributions of the Armenian-American community to the United States—and in particularly to life in New York—cannot be fully appreciated quantitatively. It can only be realized by those who walk the streets of New York and interact with the Armenian-American community there and throughout the country.

All those of Armenian heritage throughout the world rightfully celebrate this national day with pride in their hearts and hope for the future. It is my honor to send congratulations to the people of Armenia, along with best wishes for a peaceful and prosperous year ahead.