

CONGRATULATING THE LINCOLN MAGNET SCHOOL ON BEING NAMED A 2011 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

HON. AARON SCHOCK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 5, 2011

Mr. SCHOCK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lincoln Magnet School in Springfield, Illinois for being named a 2011 National Blue Ribbon award winner in high academic performance. Lincoln Magnet School was only one of 17 public and private schools in the state of Illinois and one of 304 schools nationwide to receive this prestigious honor.

Lincoln Magnet School serves 321 students in sixth, seventh and eighth grade. It incorporates technology in the classroom by providing each student with an individual laptop. The school has previously been recognized as an Apple Distinguished School, one of a select number of schools nationwide to receive that elite honor. Their vision is to "prepare students to be outstanding global citizens in an ever-changing technological world." Lincoln Magnet School has not only met this goal, but has exceeded it.

Lincoln Magnet School is the type of institution more schools should emulate. Students at the school have also consistently demonstrated high academic performance—outscored their peers at the state level in every category. For example, 95% of students in 2010 met the State of Illinois' benchmark in mathematics with 44% of students exceeding the benchmark. In reading, 96% of students achieved the reading benchmark and 33% exceeded it.

The staff and leadership of Lincoln Magnet School have also partnered with local agencies in order to offer numerous educational opportunities to their students. At a time when employers in my district lament the lack of skills in the workforce, I am proud to see schools such as Lincoln Magnet School utilize laptops, virtual lab experiences and other types of technology to better prepare their students for the technical demands of the future.

The one-to-one laptop environment present at Lincoln Magnet School offers students the ability to answer their own questions while also incorporating real-world experiences into the classroom. Virtual science laboratories make difficult concepts easier to understand. The prevalent use of different types of technology means a student never stops learning.

Once again, I congratulate the teachers, staff, students, parents and community members of Lincoln Magnet School for all of their hard work in achieving the National Blue Ribbon award.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF NANCY KEENAN

HON. MICHAEL G. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 5, 2011

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Nancy Keenan of Perkasie, Pennsylvania. Born and raised in South-eastern Pennsylvania, Nancy was truly com-

mitted to the well-being of her friends and neighbors, particularly to the senior citizens of Bucks County.

A self-educated woman, Nancy became an integral part of her community, serving as member of the Perkasie Borough Council, a frequent columnist for her local paper, the Morning Call, the chairperson of the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council, and a member of the Southeast Regional Council of the Pennsylvania Council on Aging.

Of all the projects Nancy was a part of during her remarkable life, one of the dearest to her was the foundation of the new Pennridge Community Senior Center in Silverdale. While the task of raising funds to build this new center was no small undertaking, Nancy patiently and diligently persevered until the project was completed. Her advocacy for the senior citizens of Bucks County goes well beyond the construction of a single building, and this new center will stand as a testament to her hard work and dedication for generations to come.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY AND DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE NEW YORK STATE CONFERENCE

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 5, 2011

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with great pride and as a life member to recognize the 75th Anniversary and Diamond Jubilee Celebration of our beloved NAACP New York State Conference.

On October 7 thru Oct. 9, 2011, The New York State Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) will host its 75th Anniversary Conference and Diamond Jubilee Celebration, at the Westin Times Square Hotel and Conference Center in New York City. The Celebration will honor the rich history of the NAACP and examine critical issues challenging all New Yorkers. Delegates and participants will enjoy interactive workshops on education, health, civic engagement, economic empowerment and criminal justice.

The NAACP New York State Conference has been a vital programmatic component of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for 75 of the 102-year history of the oldest, most effective and most respected civil rights organization in the Nation. The New York State Conference has played a pivotal role in moving the agenda for freedom and equality forward under the leadership of dynamic State Conference Presidents, each of whom addressed critical issues during their tenure.

Dr. James E. Allen, the first President, took on the challenge of expanding the number of branches all across the state. From 1936 to 1952, the number of branches grew from 15 to 45, providing local civil rights advocacy in every corner of the state on a wide range of issues. The succeeding Presidents have built on that solid foundation and added to the scope and innovative advocacy techniques. They were Mrs. Effie Gordon, Dr. Eugene T.

Reed, Judge William Booth, Donald Lee, Raphael Dubard and the current President, my sister, Dr. Hazel N. Dukes.

Through its seventy-five year history, the New York State Conference has been a leading force in driving the missions and goals of the Association. The first Prison Branch of NAACP was chartered in New York. The Youth and College Division grew as a vigorous power to be reckoned with, and continues to be outspoken and on the front line of advocacy today.

Under the leadership of Dr. Hazel Dukes and the first Executive Director David Bryant, Esq. the New York State Conference State opened its offices in lower Manhattan in 1978. Shortly before the historic Centennial Celebration of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 2009, the state conference relocated its office to a beautiful spacious Suite at 1065 Avenue of the Americas in Midtown Manhattan. The state-of-the-art office is run with an Administrative Assistant, support staffs and interns to facilitate activity throughout the state to the 56 adult units, Youth, and College Chapters from Harlem to Highland Falls, Brooklyn to Buffalo, Syracuse to Suffolk County, Albany to Amityville and all points in between.

New York State Conference Civil Rights Advocacy over the years has included historic demonstrations, marches and mobilizations. Like the memorable 160-mile march from New York City to Albany to underscore our civil rights issues, the Over-ground Railroad project to promote voter registration and voter participation throughout the State of New York, marches and demonstrations to protest police brutality and the murders of Michael Steward by Transit police and Eleanor Bumpers by Public Housing police. The New York State Conference held one of the largest demonstrations in Howard Beach to protest the racial murder of Michael Griffin and in Middletown, New York to protest the police murder of the son of NAACP branch President, Maude Bruce.

Reflecting on these important moments and milestones, President Hazel Dukes said, "The New York State Conference has been a vital component of the National NAACP for 75 of its 102-year history. We have played a pivotal role in moving the agenda for freedom and equality forward. The celebration of our 75th Anniversary gives the State Conference an opportunity to review past challenges, celebrate accomplishments and be emboldened by future possibilities." Members and guests of the NAACP from the tri-state area will participate in numerous events during this milestone weekend.

The Conference begins Friday, October 7 at noon with registration and the opening plenary at 2:30 p.m. At 7:30 p.m., the Rev. Dr. Gregory Smith, Senior Pastor and the Congregation of the historic Mother African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church will host an Ecumenical Service in Harlem featuring keynote speaker the Honorable Benjamin Todd Jealous, President and CEO of the National NAACP. The service will also highlight a performance by Vy Higginson's Gospel for Teens Choir, recently featured on CBS' 60 Minutes, by legendary News Correspondent Barbara Walters.

On Saturday, October 8 from 8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m., a number of interactive workshops and

trainings on health, education, civic engagement, criminal justice and economic development are scheduled. I will be bringing welcoming greetings to all of the delegates and special guest assembled for the 75th Annual Luncheon, which begins at 12 Noon and features our dynamic leader, the Honorable Dr. Roslyn M. Brock, Chairman of our NAACP National Board of Directors as the keynote speaker. Other speakers include the Hon. Alphonso David, New York State Deputy Secretary for Civil Rights, Michael Mulgrew, President United Federation of Teachers, Reverend Edward Mulraine, Unity Tabernacle Baptist Church Mt. Vernon, New York, and our beloved State Conference President Dr. Hazel N. Dukes.

The activities of the day culminate with the 75th Diamond Anniversary Awards Dinner Dance. Cheryl Willis, Anchor NY1 News and author of "Die Free" A Heroic Family History," will be the Mistress of Ceremony. The evening speakers include my longtime loyal friend, supporter and ally, George Gresham, President of the mighty SEIU Local 1199. The closing program will take place on Sunday, October 9, 2011 with a breakfast, Church Service, and a legislative session presided by Judge Laura D. Blackburne, Chairman of the Crisis Magazine and by Kenneth Cohen, Sr., Regional Director of the Metropolitan Council of NAACP Branches.

Mr. Speaker, let me take a moment to salute my sister, Hazel N. Dukes as we celebrate our Diamond Jubilee of our New York State Conference. For as long as I have been involved with the NAACP and a Member of Congress, Hazel has always been an outspoken opponent of policies that she felt undermined the achievements of the civil rights movements of the 1960s and today. Hazel's political career has made her one of the most important black activists and campaigners of the last quarter of the twentieth century; I am proud of her stance to reduce class sizes in our New York City Schools and for equal and fair education for all children. Hazel can be a one-woman band, but her advocacy and hard work create and orchestrate for change.

I ask my colleagues and a very grateful Nation to join me in a very special congressional salute to the NAACP New York State Conference celebrating their 75th Diamond Jubilee Anniversary.

ST. CROIX CROSSING "MEGA-BRIDGE" OPPOSED BY TAXPAYERS FOR COMMON SENSE

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 5, 2011

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today, the Natural Resources Committee is marking up H.R. 850 which grants an exemption from the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in order to allow construction of a \$700 million mega-bridge connecting Minnesota and Wisconsin across the St. Croix River. This bridge would be located less than six miles from the eight lane Interstate 94 crossing of the St. Croix. At a time of extremely scarce transportation dollars and tremendous need (Minnesota and Wisconsin have more than 2,000 structurally deficient bridges in need of repairs) building a sin-

gle mega-bridge with a cost of \$700 million is fiscally irresponsible and terrible public policy.

I strongly oppose H.R. 850 and I am not alone. The conservative watchdog group Taxpayers for Common Sense sent a letter today to members of the Natural Resources Committee opposing H.R. 850 and states, "accepting a project that is too big and too expensive for the sake of speeding project delivery would be irresponsible at any time, and even more so while we are doing everything possible to find our way out of a budgetary mess."

A St. Croix River crossing that is affordable, meets transportation and safety needs, and responsibly scaled should be built, but H.R. 850 and its companion in the U.S. Senate, S. 1134, are bills that should be rejected. I appreciate that the willingness of Taxpayers for Common Sense for voicing their concerns about this mega-bridge exemption and I have enclosed their letter to the House Natural Resources Committee for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

TAXPAYERS FOR COMMON SENSE,

October 4, 2011.

OPPOSE H.R. 850: IT'S TIME TO RETHINK THE STILLWATER BRIDGE

DEAR NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEMBER: Taxpayers for Common Sense Action urges you to oppose H.R. 850 ("To facilitate a proposed project in the Lower St. Croix Wild and Scenic River") when it comes before the Natural Resources Committee for your consideration. Proponents argue that this bill will not cost any taxpayer dollars, but granting the proposed bridge between Minnesota and Wisconsin over the St. Croix River an exemption from the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is one of the final few steps before taxpayers are asked to pay many millions on a bridge that is far too large in scope and far too expensive. A bridge in this location is warranted to replace an outdated lift bridge, but needs to be done at a far lower cost. The project as proposed should be rejected.

The current fight over spending cuts and the debt ceiling highlights the immense budget challenges our nation faces, including a trillion-dollar-plus deficit and more than \$14 trillion in debt. The state of our transportation program is little better, as the highway trust fund collects inadequate funds to meet the nation's transportation challenges. As a result, doing more with less is essential, and the same holds true for the proposed St. Croix River crossing.

We are deeply concerned about the scale and cost of this project for a number of reasons:

Driven by a desire to create a "signature" bridge for the region, stakeholders chose the most expensive alternative. This would be by far the most expensive bridge ever constructed in Minnesota, and would be more expensive than the cost of two other Minnesota bridges—the I-35W and Lafayette bridges—combined, yet will carry less than 10% as much traffic. When every dollar is scarce, it is simply irresponsible to build signature bridges that place form before function, and asking taxpayers to fund such an expensive project to carry the 18,000 vehicles the current bridge accommodates is simply outrageous.

According to Minnesota Department of Transportation documents, the so-called "extradosed" bridge proposed for this project, comes with "relatively high cost risk." An extradosed bridge—a combination of a box girder bridge and a cable-stayed bridge—is under construction in Connecticut, and that is the only other example of its kind in the U.S. MnDOT lists its own

lack of internal expertise regarding such a bridge as a project risk. Though some of the extra risk has been built into the project's cost estimate, there still remains an increased chance of cost overruns.

Building this bridge would limit the funds available for the other priorities in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Combined, the two states have more than 2,000 deficient bridges and nearly 6 million trips are made across them every day. In addition, nearly half the roads in Minnesota and Wisconsin need additional maintenance to get them back to "good" condition. Building such an expensive bridge across the St. Croix, with the chance of significant cost overruns, would seriously hamper each state's ability to perform these vital maintenance efforts in as timely a manner as possible, to say nothing of new facilities that may be required to relieve congestion, improve safety, facilitate commerce, and keep the transportation system moving efficiently.

There is little question that a new bridge is required at this location to replace the outdated lift bridge that currently carries traffic over the St. Croix, but only if it can be done at a far lower cost than is currently envisioned. The proposed bridge is a relic from a different time: before our nation finally committed to taking care of its budget mess, before the end of the housing boom that dramatically changed the landscape in western Wisconsin, and before the realization that the current state of our transportation program may lead to a cut as deep as 30% from current funding levels in future years.

At the very least, it is worth taking a hard look at additional alternatives to determine whether we can accommodate the region's transportation needs at a far lower cost to taxpayers, and possibly without an exemption from the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. We understand that there is an urgency to move forward with a new bridge, but accepting a project that is too big and too expensive for the sake of speeding project delivery would be irresponsible at any time, and even more so while we are doing everything possible to find our way out of a budgetary mess.

If you would like additional information, please contact Erich Zimmermann in my office at (202) 546-8500 x132.

Sincerely,

RYAN ALEXANDER,
President.

HONORING THE LIFE OF REV.
FRED SHUTTLESWORTH

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 5, 2011

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the life and legacy of the late Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth. Today, we mourn the loss of an American soldier who lived without fear to exemplify the power of nonviolence in the ongoing fight against injustice, inequality and inequity.

No other word best describes civil rights pioneer Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth but the word "fearless." Rev. Shuttlesworth was a native of Alabama and spent his entire life there dedicated to combating discrimination and the alienation of underrepresented communities. He co-founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and was a key strategist of nonviolent campaigns, working alongside notable civil rights leaders such as Dr.