

During his 16 years at Albany Technical College, President Parker has established the school as a premier institution within the Technical College System of Georgia and as a stable workforce development training facility in Southwest Georgia through his vision of excellence and steadfast commitment to increasing enrollment rates and placing Albany Tech graduates in sustainable employment opportunities. By using his positively transformative vision as a guiding post for success, over the last two decades Albany Tech has propelled forward as one of Southwest Georgia's leading technical institutions.

Dr. Parker has achieved numerous successes in his life, but none of this would have been possible without the grace of God and his loving wife of 38 years and junior high school prom date, Sandra Parker. Dr. and Mrs. Parker are the proud parents of three children—Dr. Kimberly Parker, a professor at Texas Woman's University; Andrea Parker, a Lt. Commander in the United States Coast Guard; and Richard Parker, an employee at the United Parcel Service.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to Dr. Anthony O. Parker for his life of selfless service to the students, institutions of higher learning and working families in the state of Georgia and throughout our United States of America.

ON THE BIRTH OF CECILIA ANNE SCHWARTZ

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate Lawrence Schwartz and his wife Allison on the birth of their new baby girl, Cecilia Anne Schwartz, who was born on Monday, November 28, 2011, at 11:26 a.m. in Falls Church, Virginia. Cecilia Anne was 5 pounds, 6 ounces.

I am so excited for this new blessing to the Schwartz family and wish them all the best. I want to also congratulate Cecilia Anne's grandparents Debra and Barry Shulman of Fayetteville, New York, and Joanne and Lawrence Schwartz, III, of Anaheim Hills, California, on this wonderful new addition to their family.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 26, 1995, when the last attempt at a balanced budget amendment passed the House by a bipartisan vote of 300–132, the national debt was \$4,801,405,175,294.28.

Today, it is \$15,051,673,595,197.90. We've added \$10,250,268,419,903.62 dollars to our debt in 16 years. This is \$10 trillion in debt our Nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

RECOGNIZING JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

HON. MARY BONO MACK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mrs. BONO MACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague and fellow Californian, Representative JERRY LEWIS, to pay tribute to Joshua Tree National Park.

Joshua Tree National Park has been a special and unique place of recreation and refuge in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties for the last 75 years. The park was first conferred National Monument status on August 10, 1936 by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Today, 1.3 million visitors a year from throughout the world enjoy this biologically diverse gem encompassing almost 800,000 acres.

Located just outside some of the most densely populated parts of our Nation, the park provides numerous recreational opportunities for American families and international visitors. Campgrounds, scenic drives, and hundreds of trails comprise just a few of the multitude of ways to enjoy the spectacular desert landscape.

Thriving gateway communities in the Coachella Valley and Morongo Basin have prospered in large part from the tourism opportunities created by the park. It is estimated that as an economic engine the park generates over 32 million private-sector dollars and supports over 500 jobs. The park has also created a shared regional identity and provided a common link of interest. A testament to the devotion and passion instilled in the park's supporters, last year alone 1,059 individuals volunteered at the park donating 35,000 hours of work.

Joshua Tree National Park is a crown jewel of the National Park Service. It deserves all the support it has received to preserve its ecological, historical and cultural integrity. Congratulations to everyone who has supported the park over the years and here's to ensuring the park continues to flourish and improve for another 75 years.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF JUDGE NICKOLAS GEEKER

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Judge Nickolas Geeker upon his retirement from Florida's First Judicial Circuit Court in Escambia County. Judge Geeker spent his career serving the Northwest Florida community, including more than 25 years presiding as a judge in the First Judicial Circuit, and I am proud to recognize his dedication and service.

Judge Geeker and his family are deeply rooted in Northwest Florida. The Geeker family settled in Escambia County in the early 1900's and has been a fixture in the Northwest Florida community for more than 100 years.

Following his graduation from Louisiana Tech University, Judge Geeker attended law school at Florida State University where he

was part of the College of Law's charter class of graduates. After serving as a law clerk in the office of U.S. District Judge D. L. Middlebrooks, Judge Geeker returned to Escambia County. He served as an Assistant State Attorney, Assistant U.S. Attorney and as a U.S. Attorney for the Northern District. In 1984, Judge Geeker was elected to Florida's First Judicial Circuit Court, where he has remained since being invested as Circuit Judge in January 1985.

Throughout his 40-year career, Judge Geeker has served with honor and distinction, and his unwavering commitment to upholding the law in an unbiased manner is a prime example of our legal system working at its best.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am honored to recognize Judge Nickolas Geeker for his service to Northwest Florida and to the United States of America. My wife Vicki and I wish him and his wife Jan all the best.

IN HONOR OF BARBARA CORNETT

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today to recognize Barbara Cornett, who is retiring from her work as a member of the Monterey County Board of Education, a role she has filled with great integrity since December 2003.

Mrs. Cornett's career in California public education spans six decades. She has served as a classroom teacher, school nurse, director of special education and assistant superintendent with Salinas Union High School District before retiring in 1992.

A clinical nurse as well as an educator, Mrs. Cornett is respected by both the medical and educational communities for her understanding of the needs of the special education students.

She earned her Bachelor of Arts at Vanderbilt University, and Master of Arts, School Administration, at San Jose State University. As a member of the Monterey County Board of Education, Mrs. Cornett served as its liaison to the Special Education Local Plan Area and the Monterey County Schools Insurance Group.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that the Monterey and Salinas school systems will continue to thrive because of her longstanding work. Barbara deserves our deepest gratitude and our most heartfelt wishes for a job well done.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF PFC THEODORE B. RUSHING

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, November 11, 2011 a central Florida Soldier, PFC Theodore B. Rushing, lost his life in service to our nation from wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked his unit with an I.E.D. in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan while assigned to 3rd Squadron, 71st Cavalry Regiment; 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, New York.

PFC Rushing joined the U.S. Army in March of this year. Upon completion of his training at Ft. Benning, Georgia, PFC Rushing reported to Fort Drum, New York. In August he deployed with his unit to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

PFC Rushing's impressive list of awards and decorations include the Purple Heart; Army Achievement Medal; Afghanistan Campaign Medal; NATO Medal; National Defense Service Medal; the Combat Action Badge; and a Bronze Star awarded posthumously.

PFC Rushing was a former student at Altamonte Christian School in Altamonte Springs where he had a reputation of being fearless, an attribute that he carried into battle. Upon completion of high school, PFC Rushing attended Seminole State College where he earned his associates degree. PFC Rushing had planned on following in his father's footsteps as a police officer once he had completed his military service.

We shall never forget the ultimate sacrifice PFC Rushing has given for his country. His actions will serve as an everlasting reminder of the dedication and sacrifice the members of our nation's Armed Services make every day.

To his family, we extend our very deepest sympathy and condolences. PFC Rushing is survived by his father George, mother Ann, sister Stacy and grandparents Marcheta and William.

For his service and sacrifice, I ask all Members to join me in honoring his life and commitment to our nation.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION PROVIDING A DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PRO- GRAM (DBE) AT THE FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today, along with 33 minority Members of Congress, I am introducing critical legislation that will address the lack of a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program at the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

Including Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) language in the Surface Transportation Reauthorization bill will ensure that minority, veteran, and women-owned businesses are getting their fair share of federal transportation dollars. Federal transportation spending has historically served as a crucial means of empowering socially disadvantaged businesses. Thanks to the efforts of the Black, Hispanic, and Asian-Pacific Congressional Caucus' and a bipartisan group of Members on the House Transportation Committee, every major transportation bill since 1983 has mandated minimum levels of participation by minority and/or women owned companies.

Unfortunately, because the Federal Railroad Administration has not historically been a significant grant-making agency, it is not currently authorized to require opportunities for disadvantaged businesses. Without this authority, the FRA is limited in their ability to ensure that disadvantaged businesses are provided an even playing field.

A TRIBUTE TO THE HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL OF PAINTING

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join several of my other colleagues in honoring America's first and most prestigious school of painting. Known as the Hudson River School of Painting, this 19th century school popularized the American landscape.

I have a connection to the Hudson River School. One of the school's most popular and prolific artists, Thomas Moran, grew up in Philadelphia. He later worked at a local engraving firm, which sparked his interest in painting. Moran soon garnered attention for his paintings and was hired to paint scenes of the wilderness of the American West. These paintings, for which Moran is best known, are primarily from the area that is today Yellowstone National Park.

Moran's massive landscapes, and works by other Hudson River School painters, inspired Congress to dedicate Yellowstone, as well as Yosemite and Acadia, as National Parks. Eventually, these paintings were used by environmental conservationists to encourage Congress to form the National Park Service in 1916.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join me in my appreciation for the works of painter Thomas Moran, and for the lasting legacy of the first indigenous American school of painting, the Hudson River School.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DWAYNE NELSON

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mr. Dwayne Fitzgerald Nelson who passed away suddenly on October 18, 2011 at the age of 50. Mr. Nelson, also known as "Coach Rock," coached the boys' junior varsity basketball and football teams at Dillard High School in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Before coaching, he worked for the City of Fort Lauderdale for over 20 years. He impacted the lives of many individuals in the community and will be truly missed.

Hundreds of mourners came to Nelson's funeral service, including friends, family members, colleagues, and other members of the community, celebrating the many lives that he touched throughout his years of service. Many of his current and former players came to pay their respects, and the Dillard boys' basketball and football teams wore T-shirts with Nelson's picture on the front in memory of their respected coach. Those in attendance remembered how Nelson helped lead the boys' basketball team to five state championships.

Dwayne Nelson committed his life to serving the Fort Lauderdale community. His colleagues at Dillard High School noted how he was the first person at the school every day for almost 20 years. As a coach, he taught his players lessons that went far beyond any ath-

letic field. He made sure that they kept their grades up, so that they would succeed both on the field and in the classroom. This type of commitment is what set him apart as an outstanding mentor and coach.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember Dwayne Nelson's dedication to improving the lives of so many. His service to Dillard High School and the City of Fort Lauderdale, demonstrates how everyday Americans can make a real difference by helping others in their community. My thoughts and prayers are with Mr. Nelson's family and friends during this most difficult time.

HONORING ESTELLE RUBINSTEIN

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of Estelle Rubinstein who will be retiring after 41 years of outstanding work in the education field.

Through her work with Androscoggin Head Start and Child Care (AHSCC) in Lewiston, Maine, Estelle has dedicated over 40 years to improving outcomes for Maine's handicapped children. Before graduating with a B.S. in Elementary Education in 1979, Estelle worked as a Head Start teacher for AHSCC. Throughout the years, she has served the organization as its Special Education Director, Program Coordinator and Executive Director.

Throughout her career, Estelle has been a champion of the idea that every child should have the opportunity to receive a high quality education, regardless of their financial situation or disability. Her work to identify children in need of special services and ensure that their families were provided access to vital programs has touched the lives of countless Mainers. She is truly a gifted educator and should serve as a shining example to others of what can be accomplished by a single individual.

It is always with some lingering sadness that I pass along my best wishes for the retirement of people like Estelle. You can never truly quantify the work of such an individual. Although she is retiring, her contributions to the field of education will continue to benefit children for generations. On behalf of the people of Maine, it is with pride that I congratulate Estelle and wish her the best of luck on her retirement and in her future endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Estelle Rubinstein for her impeccable commitment to her field and her community.

A HERO OF US ALL

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I submit a copy of Jay Nordlinger's recent piece in National Review highlighting the plight of Chinese dissident Chen Guangcheng.

Nordlinger writes, "Many people in the world regard Chen as one of the greatest men we have known in the last decade." His courageous exposure of China's brutal one-child