

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, each year we recognize November as National Adoption Month. I encourage my colleagues in both chambers to raise awareness about the adoption of young boys and girls in our foster care system who dream of one day having a forever family. Many of us have brothers or sisters, aunts or uncles, sons or daughters, who have lovingly decided to add to their family through adoption. By raising awareness about the many benefits of adoption, and the process for families and children in foster homes, we can make sure more children go to sleep in their own home every night.

According to the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, 423,000 children are living without permanent families in the U.S. Today, 115,000 of these children are eligible for adoption but almost 40% will wait more than 3 years in foster care before being adopted. Every single year—and this number is climbing—over 29,000 of our young people “age-out” of foster care. A child that “ages-out” is more likely to be undereducated, unemployed, homeless, addicted to drugs or alcohol and/or utilizing government benefits to survive, compared to their peers who grew up outside the foster care system or were adopted before aging out. Our children deserve better than this, and the good news is we can help. We can help by encouraging more families to consider adoption, and offering assistance to those who do by extending the adoption tax credit.

Our young people are our greatest treasure. To continue to allow thousands of our young people to begin adulthood at a distinct disadvantage would be devastating. Please consider the plight of so many of our children and young adults living in foster care; shuttled back and forth between homes, towns, cities, schools, friends, support groups, and so on. Children in foster care without a more permanent structure and support system are more likely to distrust adults or have strained relationships with the adults in their lives and with their peers.

National Adoption Month is also an opportunity to recognize the foster parents in our communities who are selflessly giving so much to help our youth. They too deserve our support and our thanks. Foster parents across this nation are wonderful examples for all of us and provide some of our most vulnerable young people with protection and a sense of family and home. I appreciate their sacrifice and I hope they know it does not go unnoticed. The decision to become foster parents or adoptive parents can sometimes be scary; not knowing how one's family dynamics may be impacted or if you'll be able to create a bond with the child and the child with you. To all who may be considering these options today, trust me. I know from personal experience that the worry melts away as soon as you bring that special child into your home. As a foster grandparent, and now a proud grandpa of two adopted children, I can assure you that it won't be long before you realize that it's not just the children who gain so much through adoption. You too gain more joy and more love than you ever could have imagined.

Look for ways that you can get involved with adoption efforts in your local community. Locate adoption services in your community and help with your time, money, or both. Adoption is essential to the health of our nation. Supporting adoptive parents, adoption agencies, and foster parents is a duty for all of us.

RECOGNIZING THE ABILITYONE PROGRAM

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the AbilityOne Program, which has helped more than 47,000 blind or significantly disabled Americans develop skills and receive training ultimately leading to successful employment.

The AbilityOne Program harnesses the purchasing power of the federal government to buy products and services from participating community-based non-profit agencies that are dedicated to training and employing individuals with disabilities. This program affords Americans with disabilities the opportunity to acquire job skills and training, receive good wages and benefits, and gain greater independence and a higher quality of life.

I am proud to acknowledge two non-profit agencies, Skookum and Lighthouse for the Blind, both of which are closely associated with AbilityOne in my district. These organizations represent two of many non-profit social enterprises dedicated to the mission of enriching the lives of people with disabilities.

Skookum's mission is to create opportunities for people with disabilities, assisting government customers by delivering critical logistics, facilities maintenance and public works services. Skookum was recently awarded the 2010 National AbilityOne Award for Performance Excellence in Hiring Veterans with Disabilities which demonstrates a proud commitment to recruiting the right person for the right job and bringing Wounded Warriors into our workforce.

Lighthouse for the Blind has been providing employment, support, and training for people who are blind, deaf-blind, and blind with other disabilities in the Puget Sound since 1918. Lighthouse for the Blind expands employment opportunities by providing the technical and communication tools needed for self-sufficiency. The manufacturing operations center makes products for the Federal Government and various aerospace companies.

It is with great pleasure that I extend my support to the AbilityOne Program. The dedication and commitment of Skookum and Lighthouse for the Blind help individuals who are blind or have significant disabilities find employment, live fuller lives, and remain active members of our community. I commend everyone associated with AbilityOne for working to improve so many lives and make our country a better place for all.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE OUTSTANDING PUBLIC SERVICE OF SIX RETIRING OFFICIALS WITHIN USDA'S OFFICE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

HON. MARK S. CRITZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. CRITZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the distinguished public service careers of six retiring officers within the Department of Agriculture's Office of Rural Development, RD. These individuals have worked diligently and effectively over many years to promote economic prosperity and safe living in the various rural communities throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. Lambert Rosenbaum, Virginia Stump, Cindy Brandt, Barbara McMillen, Susan O'Donnell, and Mary Ellen Polosky have made clear through the quality of their work at RD that they see a place for rural areas in America's future. These individuals will leave a lasting legacy; their belief in the promise of rural America will surely live on in those who have had the privilege to work with them and manifest itself in all that RD does for the individuals, communities, and businesses of southwestern Pennsylvania for years to come.

Public service has been a calling for each of the six outgoing officials at USDA Rural Development. Lambert Rosenbaum, the outgoing Area Director for the Butler and Westmoreland Area Offices, boasts a 31 year career at USDA. In addition to his civil service, Mr. Rosenbaum served three years of active duty in the Army, during which he served a combat tour in Vietnam and earned the prestigious Bronze Star. He has also served in the Army Reserves for 42 years. Most recently, Mr. Rosenbaum's reserve service took him to Kuwait, where he earned the Meritorious Service Medal. His devotion to the public welfare has clearly made an impression on his children, as two of his sons have served in the Iraq War.

Virginia Stump, a Team Leader and Area Specialist, will leave RD after 30 years of civil service. She has worked extensively on the Water Waste Program, which furnishes rural communities with the means to install sanitary sewers. She has also helped to market several rural development programs, including the Value Added program and the Renewable Energy programs. Ms. Stump is married and has one daughter, as well as twin grandchildren.

Cindy Brant, a Loan Specialist, also has over thirty years of experience in civil service. She began her career with USDA in 1979 as a Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, CETA, Trainee. A year later, she became an Assistant County Supervisor, working out of the Somerset Office until its closure in 2007. While in the Somerset Office, she worked extensively on the Direct Housing Program, helping numerous low-income individuals to purchase homes in rural areas. Upon leaving Somerset, she moved on to the Greensburg Area Office and took on the additional roles of Guaranteed Housing Program Specialist and Multi-Family Housing Program Specialist. In recognition of her outstanding service, Cindy received USDA's Unsung Hero Award in 2009.

In her 28 years with USDA, Barbara McMillen, an Area Specialist, has worked on a

number of different projects, including those that provide housing loans and loans to farmers and ranchers who are having difficulty obtaining commercial credit. Over the last seventeen years, she has worked ardently to help 51,450 households and businesses to obtain \$331 million dollars in loan and grant funds for public water and sewer service.

Susan O'Donnell, also an Area Specialist, has been with USDA since 1977 and has done extensive work in the business, multi-family housing and community facility programs across six counties. She is extremely passionate about public service, and plans to continue to working to promote the welfare of others through volunteer work upon retirement.

Having performed over 36 years of Federal service, Mary Ellen Polosky has set a laudable example for current and aspiring public servants. While with USDA, she has worked mainly in the Housing Division. She has served in her current capacity for the last 9 years, during which time she has helped numerous individuals living in rural areas to procure loans for home purchases and improvements.

Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege of working closely with these individuals while serving as the District Director for the late Congressman John Murtha, and can attest that they embody the highest order of integrity and proficiency. We should all be grateful that such exemplary individuals chose to engage full-bore in the effort to secure a prosperous future for rural America. Their work has given hope to countless individuals and businesses in southwestern Pennsylvania. All of us in the Federal Government should attempt to emulate their commendable public service in our own careers.

HONORING THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF SOMERSET, HUNTERDON AND WARREN COUNTIES

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Jewish Federation of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties located in Bridgewater Township, Somerset County, New Jersey, on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

For half a century, the Federation has helped raise funds to coordinate services and help support agencies that touch the lives of Jews in Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties. Through numerous programs, they have not only assisted in funding but have also provided a place for Jews to come together both in their faith and in the spirit of community service. The Federation is the umbrella organization of the area's Jewish community, bringing together agencies, organizations, and communities to support and fulfill the needs of the Jewish people.

The Federation targets those in their twenties through forties with their Young Leadership Division (YLD) that aims to strengthen the Jewish community by focusing on three principles: "Live Jewishly. Live Socially. Live Generously." YLD encourages involvement in the Jewish community and provides members with opportunities to not only socialize within their faith but to join together to help others.

The Women's Philanthropy Division is a program that educates and engages women to be active in their religious community. These women work to support those in need locally, in Israel, and around the world through numerous events and fundraisers.

In an effort to aid local businesses, the Federation holds several events throughout the year for the business community to build valuable, lasting relationships. With the understanding that the success of a business is dependent on its visibility and connections within a community, the Federation gives them the boost they need to establish their credibility.

In addition to the programs the Federation offers, it also hosts mission trips overseas to Israel and other countries in an effort to show the history, status and future of Jewish People.

The Federation is a resource of information for anything from educational organizations to social services. No matter the needs or the issues, the Jewish Federation of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties, continues to work to address them.

Mr. Speaker, I task you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Jewish Federation of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties on 50 years of dedicated service.

HONORING FRED BIRCHMORE

HON. PAUL C. BROWN

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the 100th birthday of one of the 10th Congressional District's most impressive and dedicated constituents, Mr. Fred Birchmore. Renowned for his round-the-world cycling trips, Birchmore has biked tens of thousands of miles worldwide on a one-speed 42-pound Reinhardt that now sits in the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. His travels have taken him 25,000 miles across Europe, and through Africa, the far Middle East, Southeast Asia, Latin America, and 2,000 miles along the United States Appalachian Trail. He's traversed deserts, jungles, beaches and warzones, even once crossing paths with Adolf Hitler. Birchmore's adventures on his trusted bike opened his eyes to not only new horizons, but new cultures, peoples, and ways of life that enriched his own in many aspects.

Even more than a sportsman, Fred is a decorated World War II war hero, a loving father of four and has been a devoted husband to Willa Deane Birchmore for 72 years now. His eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren know him to be an adventurer, an intellectual, and an all around outstanding man and role model.

Birchmore is a graduate of the University of Georgia and was a personal friend of the late Larry Munson. He carried the Olympic Torch under the Arch in the Classic City, takes great pride in his possession of the sword of Colonel Sanford who is the namesake of UGA's Sanford Stadium, and still remains a faithful community servant to Athens-Clarke County today.

I am honored to be able to wish Mr. Birchmore a happy 100th birthday on behalf of the United States Congress, and I am pleased

to have the opportunity to shed light on a life that has been so filled with adventure, hard work, passion, and love for family, friends, community, and country. Happy Birthday Fred and may you continue to set an example for all those who love and admire you for many more years to come.

NATIONAL LUNG CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, November is National Lung Cancer Awareness Month. This month is dedicated to raising awareness of lung cancer issues for people who have been affected across the country.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in both men and women in the United States, claiming more lives each year than breast, prostate, colon, and kidney cancers combined. In fact, sadly one in fourteen Americans will be diagnosed with cancer of the lung and bronchus during their lifetime.

According to the American Lung Association, over 370,000 men and women in the U.S. are currently living with lung cancer. In Florida, an estimated 17,000 people were diagnosed with lung cancer just this past year.

While there are few early symptoms of lung cancer, treatment is available through surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation. Unfortunately, only 15 percent of people who develop the disease will live more than 5 years. A need still exists for further advancement in the detection and treatment of lung cancer.

Lung Cancer Awareness Month brings much-needed attention to a deadly disease. I hope in the years to come we can make advancements in detection and treatment of this deadly form of cancer.

HONORING FRANK KAMENY

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, before he died, Frank Kameny had already won a place reserved for Americans who make personal sacrifices for human rights. There can be no doubt that Frank's pioneering sacrifices for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, LGBT, community place him alongside the nation's human rights heroes. What exactly did Frank do? At a time when it was unthinkable, Frank refused to suppress who he was to keep his job with the Federal Government. A World War II veteran with a Harvard Ph.D., Frank had everything going for him except, of course, his identity and, thus, his legitimacy. It was being forced out, not coming out, that was the issue, and Frank took his dismissal from the federal service (for which he later received an apology) as a badge of honor. As we in the Civil Rights Movement began wearing our hair natural, i.e., nappy, to show that "black is beautiful," Frank coined "gay is good."

But it was Frank's lonely act of defiance, without reward, that sets him apart. Frank no