

However, one year later we see a deteriorating Haiti. One not imagined in our collective plans to "Build Back Better," one year ago. Instead, over one million displaced people still live in tent camps while conditions in the country continue to deteriorate. It is apparent that substantive reconstruction has barely begun and significant progress will continue to face obstacles in the near future. As witnessed in the recent demonstrations following the Haitian general elections, civil strife and unrest continue to pervade the populace at large. With the growing cholera epidemic, the situation in Haiti is especially dangerous and volatile.

Mr. Speaker, as the Representative of the second largest Haitian immigrant population in the country, I am deeply concerned about the conditions on the ground. Although some progress has been made, it appears as though conditions are deteriorating at a faster rate. As USAID and other international organizations scramble to resolve the housing/rubble crisis, security is rapidly decreasing within the IDP camps. Gender Based Violence (GBV) is further threatening the physical, mental and emotional capacity of women and girls. I commend USAID and the NGO community for taking steps to address this, but more is needed to end this phenomenon.

It is of the utmost importance for all parties engaged in this humanitarian response and reconstruction efforts to significantly improve their outreach to women and girls. Near term and longer term assistance programs will only be effective if women and girls are fully engaged as equal partners in program assessment, design, and implementation. There is a vibrant network of women's organizations in Haiti. Their involvement is critical to the successful reconstruction of Haiti and to the development of a society that offers equal protection and opportunity to all its citizens.

Before I conclude, I would like to also recognize Ms. Corrine Jocelyn, Executive Director of Diaspora Community Services for her remarkable work in organizing the March for Change that took place today in recognition of the one year anniversary of the earthquake. She was joined by many other Haitian organizations and prominent community leaders calling the Haitian Diaspora and their allies to actions. I fully support this endeavor and encourage the entire Haitian Diaspora to become more involved in advocating and educating our Nation on Haitian heritage and the issues that plague the island nation.

Lastly, I would like to recognize Bells for Haiti initiative that took place today in Minnesota. At the time the earthquake took place, bells will ring from churches, schools and organizations for 35 seconds to commemorate the event. I commend the organizers, Konbit—MN/Haiti and the participants for such a beautiful tribute.

As we continue to support our brothers and sisters in Haiti, let us never forget Let us never forget that as we unite with the people of Haiti, Haitian-Americans and the Haitian Diaspora that we are forever guided by the words etched indelibly on the Haitian flag, 'L'Union fait la force' (Loon yon feh la force) . . . through unity, there is strength!

RECOGNIZING MAJOR MARK O'NEILL, UNITED STATES ARMY, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS DEPARTURE FROM THE ARMY'S HOUSE LIAISON OFFICE

HON. GEOFF DAVIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize and pay tribute to Major Mark O'Neill, United States Army, on the occasion of his departure from the Army's House Liaison Office and his new assignment as a student at the Army's Command and General Staff College. My staff and I have had the great pleasure of working with Mark over the past year he has served with the Congress. It has been an honor to work with this combat veteran and citizen-soldier.

Major O'Neill has had a varied and distinguished military career. Upon graduation from Villanova University in May of 1998, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Army. After completing the Infantry Officer Basic Course and Ranger School at Ft. Benning, Georgia, he was assigned to the elite 82nd Airborne Division as an airborne infantry platoon leader. In March of 2000, he led his thirty-nine-man platoon in a joint exercise in Oman with the Omani army. During his time with the 82nd, Mark, a paratrooper to the core, participated in fifteen airborne operations.

In December of 2000, he transferred to the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) where he served as a platoon leader and regimental personnel officer. With the Old Guard, then First Lieutenant O'Neill conducted dozens of military funerals and state ceremonies. The same dedication with which he accorded respect to grieving families and friends during funerals at Arlington National Cemetery was in evidence on September 11, 2001, when Mark led his platoon in the initial response to the attack on the Pentagon.

Major O'Neill left active duty in May of 2003, joining the Cintas Corporation as a Service/Sales Manager, but in February of 2006 he was recalled from the Ready Reserve to serve as an embedded trainer with the fledgling Afghan National Army. As an advisor to an Afghan National Army (ANA) infantry company, Mark trained the company leadership on both tactical and logistical tasks and accompanied them on over twenty combat patrols. On more than one occasion, he experienced combat firsthand. He was cited for bravery in October of 2006 for organizing the defense of his ANA company and repelling a Taliban ambush.

In June of 2007, Mark joined the Army National Guard and was assigned to the National Guard Bureau's Directorate of Domestic Operations. From February 2010 to present, he served as the National Guard's legislative liaison with the Department of the Army's House Liaison Division. During his assignment to the Army House Liaison Office, Major O'Neill developed outstanding rapport with Members of Congress and their staffs—both personal and committee. Whether escorting congressional delegations to visit soldiers and families at Army installations, soldiers in the theater of operations or Wounded Warriors at Walter Reed, Mark has been a strong advocate for soldiers and a superb representative of Army values.

I ask that my colleagues please join me in recognizing the outstanding accomplishments of Major Mark O'Neill in serving the United States Army and the Nation.

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES TO THE PEOPLE OF AUSTRALIA FOR THE LOSS OF LIFE AND DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY DUE TO THE WORST FLOODING IN HALF A CENTURY

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my condolences for the loss of life and destruction of property that is occurring in Australia's northern state of Queensland, as a consequence of the worst floods in half a century. The flood, which has affected three-quarters of Queensland, has killed 20 residents and resulted in thousands of people being evacuated from their homes and businesses.

The steady rain that fell for days before Christmas caused rivers to swell and inundated 22 cities and towns. The Australian National Climate Centre has predicted that the region is highly likely to receive even more than average rainfall from now until the end of March, when the full impact of a strong La Niña cycle will be felt. Estimates of the number of Queenslanders affected go as high as 200,000. States of natural disaster have been declared in 41 of Queensland's 73 municipalities and more than 11,000 people have been evacuated. In addition, the floods have cut off food supplies to communities in the north including Townsville, Cairns and many indigenous communities.

Economists predict that the floods will have an impact on the national GDP of between 0.25 percent and 0.5 percent, or \$3 billion to \$6 billion, with the mining and agricultural industries affected the most. Half of the state's agricultural crops have been destroyed, coal deliveries have been halted, and mines shut. The international economy will likely feel this economic burden because Queensland supplies half of the world's cooking coal for steel manufacturing, which accounts for about two-thirds of the global trade. The Premier of Queensland and Australia's Prime Minister have announced additional disaster relief assistance to help small businesses and primary producers that have been impacted.

Encouragingly, the size of the tragedy has been matched by the size and speed of the response, but the long-term impact is yet to be determined. It will be a long wait before the massive amount of water recedes and the recovery process starts, involving the resurfacing of roads, reconnecting of power and repairing of infrastructure—all requiring an unparalleled rebuilding effort. I extend my sincere appreciation to the emergency service personnel, army and air force crews, volunteers, and Australia's federal and Queensland governments for their well coordinated response to this disaster. The loss suffered would have been far greater without the skill, dedication, compassion, and sacrifice of these emergency responders.

Mr. Speaker, the flood in northern Australia is a major natural disaster and has caused

loss and destruction on a catastrophic scale. I want to send a message of condolence to those Australian families who have lost lives and livelihoods. Australia is and always will be an important ally and friend to the United States. The Australian people will truly be in my thoughts and prayers over the coming weeks. I wish the affected communities the very best as they rebuild their lives and communities, and I encourage my colleagues to do so as well.

TRIBUTE TO ARNOLD AMELL

HON. WILLIAM L. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and remember the life of Arnold “Arnie” Amell, the chair of Plattsburgh State’s College Council in Upstate New York.

A native of Beekmantown, New York, Arnie spent decades devoting his life to the New York education system. Throughout the years, he served as a teacher, a guidance counselor, director of guidance, assistant principal and principal. Outside of the classroom, he served as a member of the college council at SUNY Plattsburgh, President of the Kiwanis Club of Schenectady, and a member of the Northeast Parent and Child Society. Most recently, he spent the last two years as chair of the College Council at SUNY Plattsburgh. Through his decades of service, he worked to enhance the quality of education youth receive in Upstate New York, and provided a strong foundation for countless students of all ages.

Everyone who knew Arnie can say that they knew a man completely devoted to his family and his community. I have personally known Arnie for years and have served on the college council at Plattsburgh State University with him.

The Plattsburgh community has lost a true friend and a great leader, but his memory and spirit will continue to inspire generations of Upstate New Yorkers who will work to better their community in this tradition.

IN HONOR OF THE RETIREMENT
OF ASSISTANT CHIEF HARLAND
WESTMORELAND

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Harland Westmoreland, a dedicated public servant who will retire as assistant chief of the Euless Police Department. As assistant chief, Mr. Westmoreland carried out his duties with honor, boldness, and enthusiasm. With a commitment to service, Mr. Westmoreland has been a leader in the Euless Police Department over the past 35 years.

Mr. Westmoreland was born in Gorman, Texas and attended Reagan County High School in Big Lake, Texas and Dallas Baptist University for both undergraduate and graduate school. At Dallas Baptist University, Mr. Westmoreland earned a masters degree in

counseling and psychology. Along with numerous certifications and licenses, Mr. Westmoreland is a master peace officer. Mr. Westmoreland and his wife Juanita reside in Euless and have four children and ten grandchildren.

In 1974, while working in the private sector, Mr. Westmoreland joined the Euless Police Department as a reserve officer. By 1975, Mr. Westmoreland chose to make law enforcement and public service a full time career. In 1982, Mr. Westmoreland became an investigator, and in 1985 he was promoted to sergeant. In January 1993, Mr. Westmoreland was promoted to lieutenant, and in December of the same year he earned the rank of captain. In September 2004, Mr. Westmoreland became assistant police chief of the city of Euless.

Assistant Chief Westmoreland has committed his career to protecting the citizens and community of Euless. Throughout his career in law enforcement, Mr. Westmoreland has positively affected the lives of countless individuals. As exemplified by his many acts of heroism, Mr. Westmoreland has sacrificed his well-being to ensure the public safety of the residents of Euless. I ask all of my colleagues to join in recognizing Assistant Police Chief Westmoreland for his bravery, for his courage, and for his distinguished career with the Euless Police Department.

THE HOUSE’S READING OF THE
CONSTITUTION

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, when we read the Constitution in this body on January 6, 2011, we missed a good opportunity. I joined in the reading. I was certainly not going to allow one political party to claim the Constitution for its own, as it has sometimes tried to claim the U.S. flag. However, by reading an altered version of the Constitution and by doing so without warrant we lost a great educational moment.

I revere the U.S. Constitution and carry a copy of the Constitution with me every day. I often ask students what they think is the greatest invention of humans. Because they know that I am a scientist, they usually say something technical like the laser or a microchip in answer to my question. I reply that the greatest invention is the U.S. Constitution. It is truly ingenious: Because of this document, our brilliant, resilient, self-correcting system of government, dreamed up in Philadelphia so many years ago, still functions well today. The system inspires and motivates people around the world.

Instead of reading the full Constitution, members of the House took turns reading an altered text based on the amendments. I was further troubled to learn that because of human error we skipped two pages during our reading.

The altered text omitted the original language of Article I, Section 2 that counted each black individual as only three-fifths of a person for the purposes of apportionment of Representatives, omitting it and reading only the text of the 14th Amendment that apportioned Representatives according to the total number

of all male citizens. Yet, Article I, Section 3 that proscribes that the two Senators from each state be chosen by the state legislature, a passage of the Constitution subsequently amended by the 17th Amendment, was read in its original format.

The decision to not read the full text ignores the fundamental strength of the U.S. Constitution—it’s implicit recognition that the United States of America is an imperfect, ever evolving, self-correcting union. The Constitution is not a perfect document, and the Founders did not have all the answers. African American were counted as three-fifths of a person. Women were disenfranchised. The concept of privacy was glossed over. The full text of the Constitution and its Amendments should have been read today to help American recall and understand how we have strived and still strive “to form a more perfect Union.”

The Constitution was a compromise throughout. In addition to counting each black individual as only three-fifths of a person, it was virtually silent on slavery, the great injustice of the day. But after a way that almost destroyed the Union, after more than half a million died, and when brother fought brother, the Constitution was amended and updated to reflect the will of the people. Today, the American experiment continues to improve. Freedoms and protections of rights keep growing in the face of both consistent and ever-changing threats.

Langston Hughes—an American who was denied the rights and freedoms that all of us deserve—wrote in *Let America Be America Again*, 1938,

O, yes,
I say it plain,

America never was America to me,
And yet I swear this oath—
America will be!

Students attending under-performing schools, millions of Americans without health insurance, and widespread poverty demonstrate that even today, America never was America for far too many of us. But our Constitution lets us admit when we are wrong and correct our mistakes. Our collective vision of America must include an expanding sphere of freedom, liberty, and opportunity for all. And most importantly, we must never believe we are so infallible that we fail to strive for a “more perfect Union.”

CONGRATULATIONS PERRY
FAMILY

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 18, 2011

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to congratulate my good friend Richard Perry, a Washington and Lee University graduate, and his wife Kristin Perry on the birth of their daughter Liza May Perry. Liza was born on Saturday, January 1, 2011, in Washington, DC.

Liza May Perry is six pounds and two ounces of pride and joy to her loving grandparents, Anne and Robert “Skipper” Perry, Jr. of Aiken, South Carolina, and Winifred Joan Off of West Chester, Pennsylvania. I am so excited for this new blessing to the Perry family and wish them all the best.