

States, with nearly 108,000 acres of parklands spread across 65 regional parks and over 1,100 miles of trails in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Approximately 14 million visitors a year from throughout the San Francisco Bay area and beyond take advantage of the vast and diverse District parklands and trails.

During his tenure, the district has acquired over 40,000 acres of new parklands, adding 17 new parks, doubling the size of 12 existing regional parks, and adding more than 200 miles of new regional trails. He has attracted more than \$105 million in matching funds—including this year's historic \$10.2 million Tiger II award. He has successfully secured stable funding through ballot measures and by creating assessment districts, and refinanced existing district bonds at lower rates, saving taxpayers over \$14 million. Every community in the East Bay has received at least one park, recreation or community center project funded through his efforts.

His dedication to serving the public through the parks and recreation procession is the legacy he will leave behind. His career has been guided by the desire to make substantive contributions to society and to people's lives. His firm leadership has helped to preserve the priceless heritage of our region's natural and cultural resources—open space, parks and trails—and to set aside park areas for enjoyment and healthful recreation for current and future generations.

Mr. Speaker, we invite our colleagues to join us in honoring General Manager Pat O'Brien for his dedicated service to the people of California and the Bay Area. We are pleased to join with his family, colleagues, and friends in congratulating Pat on a long and highly successful career and wish him a happy and healthy retirement.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA BUDGET AUTONOMY ACT OF 2011

#### HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 19, 2011*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, next to voting rights, the highest priority for District of Columbia residents is to achieve the right to control the funds they themselves raise to support their city, as resident in other jurisdictions do. Therefore, today I introduce a bill, the District of Columbia Budget Autonomy Act of 2011, to allow the District's local taxpayer-raised budget to take effect immediately when passed by the city, without being subject to affirmative congressional approval.

Control over the dollars raised by local taxpayers is central to local control, the oldest American principle. Moreover, permitting the city's local budget to become law without first coming to Congress would have multiple practical benefits for both the city and Congress. For the city, a timely budget means: eliminating the uncertainty of the congressional approval process, which has a negative effect on the city's bond rating, adding unnecessary interest costs for local taxpayers; significantly increasing the District's ability to make accurate revenue forecasts; and reducing the countless operational problems that result because the city's budget cannot be implemented until

Congress approves it. Of major importance, eliminating congressional approval of D.C.'s local budget would also align the District's fiscal year with the typical state and local government July 1st fiscal year instead of the congressional fiscal year, which starts in October, allowing ample time to prepare for the usual opening of schools in September. The D.C. local budget consumes valuable subcommittee, committee, and congressional floor time in both houses of Congress even though it is of interest only to those members who use it to promote their own issues, violating the principle of local self-government.

Increasing recognition of the hardships and delays caused by the annual appropriations process has led Congress to begin freeing the city. When I was last in the minority, I negotiated an agreement with the appropriators that has ensured that the city's local budget is always included in the first continuing resolution, if it is not approved by the start of the fiscal year. This approach has ended the lengthy delay of the budget of a big city until an appropriations bill is passed, often months after October 1st. As a result, the city has been able to spend its local funds at the next year's level, even though the budgets for federal agencies are often delayed for months. We hope that this process, which ended some serious problems in the functioning of the local government, will continue.

We nearly secured budget autonomy for the District in the last days of the lame duck session last Congress. I used an unusual procedure, getting subcommittee and committee authorizers to agree to place budget autonomy in the D.C. appropriations bill that was passed by the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government. Unfortunately, Congress passed a Continuing Resolution instead of regular appropriations bills.

If the District of Columbia Budget Autonomy Act is enacted, Congress would retain jurisdiction over the District of Columbia under article I, section 8, clause 17 of the U.S. Constitution. Because this authority allows Congress to make changes in the District's budget and laws at anytime, it is unnecessary to require a lengthy repetition of the District's budget process here. The time is overdue to permit the city to enact its local budget, the single most important step Congress could take to help the District better manage itself.

Members of Congress were sent here to do the business of the nation. Members have no reason to be interested in or to become knowledgeable about the local budget of a single city. In the past, the House and Senate have more often than not passed the District's budget as is. Our bill takes the Congress in the direction it is already moving. Congressional interference into one of the most vital rights to self-government should end this year with enactment of the District of Columbia Budget Autonomy Act of 2011.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 19, 2011*

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 12, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

#### VAN WEZEL PERFORMING ARTS HALL

#### HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 19, 2011*

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the accomplishments of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall's education programs and the work of the Van Wezel Foundation in support of arts education.

I also recognize Mary Bense, Executive Director of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall in Sarasota, Florida for her service in support of the educational programs and community engagement activities of the Van Wezel.

The mission of the Van Wezel Foundation is to enrich the Gulf Coast community, with an emphasis on children, through the performing arts while supporting the needs of the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall.

The arts education and community engagement programs of the Van Wezel are celebrating their fourteenth year, are nationally known, and are a major factor in the integration of arts education within our region's schools.

Each year tens of thousands of students, educators and lifelong learners from four counties are introduced to national performing arts programming through the support of the Van Wezel Foundation.

Annually, over 23,000 students from DeSoto, Charlotte, Manatee and Sarasota County Schools attend the School-time performances conducted by the Van Wezel and supported by the Foundation.

Each year the Van Wezel, in collaboration with the Kennedy Center and local school districts provide specialized workshops to train teachers of science, math, history, social studies and literacy on ways to use the arts to enhance the presentation of their subject materials.

The Van Wezel is affiliated with the Partners in Education Program of the Kennedy Center and is one of the only projects nationally that has conducted a longitudinal study on the impact of integrative arts education on student learning and achievement. It is the only Kennedy partner in the country to have received seven national research grants on the impact of the arts and education programs within county schools.

Furthermore, the Van Wezel Education Department and the Manatee County schools are in the second year of Project Stage, a project funded through a U.S. Department of Education three year grant to increase literacy in elementary schools.

Under the leadership of Mary Bense, the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall and the Van Wezel Foundation have made a remarkable contribution to the cultural life of our community and education of our children.

#### DR. WILLIAM HALE

#### HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 19, 2011*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Dr. William Hale. Dr. Hale

began his service in the medical field as an Army medic during World War II. After leaving the Army, he studied at the University of West Virginia, the University of Florida, and then received his doctor of medicine degree from the Medical College of Virginia.

He served his patients with compassion and care in the Tampa Bay area as an internist at Mease Hospital, and after just 8 years he was elected to lead the medical staff.

Dr. Hale was a proactive practitioner, realizing and emphasizing the importance of preventative health care in the community. After retiring from active practice, Dr. Hale founded the Dunedin Hypertension Screening Program in 1975 to screen elderly patients for medical disorders. His program garnered attention from his colleagues throughout the world and took root on a state level as the Florida Geriatric Research Program.

Dr. Hale was much more than just an excellent and innovative physician. Those who know him point to his caring nature. He was quick to help those who needed it the most, be it handicapped children, someone undergoing a difficult time in life, or arming the public with information on how to be healthier. He saw the needs of others and selflessly gave of himself so that they could live better.

Mr. Speaker, the Tampa Bay area was so blessed to have Dr. Hale's talent and graces. May his spirit always live on in the hearts of those he touched.

#### CONGRATULATING THE SHELTON VIKINGS MIDGET AND PEE WEE CHEERLEADERS ON THEIR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES

#### HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 19, 2011*

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to the Shelton Vikings Midget and Pee Wee Cheerleading squads who captured the National Championship titles in their divisions at the Pop Warner National Competition which was held last month in Buena Vista, Florida. This is a remarkable accomplishment for these young girls and we could not be more proud of them!

The Viking Midget Cheerleading squad is a group of thirteen and fourteen year old girls who have been cheering together since age seven. The Pee Wee team is made up of ten to twelve year old girls. During this past season, each of these squads have won the titles of Southern Connecticut Champions, Connecticut State Champions, New England Qualifier Champions and New England Regional Champions. In their first ever trip to the National Championships, the Midget Cheerleading squad competed against nineteen other squads from across the country to take home the title and the Pee Wee squad competed against eight other teams to do the same. These are the first ever National titles for Shelton and, for the Midget squad, it is even more meaningful because it was the last year that they will be eligible to compete in the Pop Warner Cheerleading league.

These girls are an extraordinarily talented group who have dedicated countless hours to practice and competition. Cheerleading, like so

many other sports, requires perseverance, training, coordination, and above all teamwork—all skills that will continue to serve these young women well throughout their lives. Their success at the National Championships is a testament to all of their hard work.

I would also like to take a moment to extend a special note of thanks and appreciation to the coaches, parents, and volunteers whose support has enabled the girls to practice and travel for their competitions. Without their efforts, the success of the Vikings Cheerleaders would not be possible.

I am thrilled to join the Shelton community in extending my sincere congratulations and very best wishes to the Shelton Vikings Midget and Pee Wee Cheerleaders—2010 Pop Warner National Champions. You have made us all proud!

#### TRIBUTE TO CHARLES SUMNER, BORN JANUARY 6, 1811

#### HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 19, 2011*

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Charles Sumner and I join with many of my constituents in celebrating the bicentennial of his birth, January 6, 2011. Commemorations are sponsored by the Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters National Site, the Boston African American National Historic Site, the Museum of African American History, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and other learned societies and civic groups.

Charles Sumner was born in Boston and educated at Boston Latin School, Harvard College and Harvard Law School. Like many educated Bostonians of his time, he was interested in events in Europe, where he travelled extensively between 1837 and 1840. Later, he and his friend Henry Wadsworth Longfellow would compare slaveholders in the American south to aristocrats whose privileges were swept away by revolution on the continent. Sumner returned to help found the Free Soil Party but he did not succeed in election to this House in 1848. He was elected to the Senate two years later on the Free Soil Ticket. In 1856, Sumner, who refused to compromise on the issue of slavery, was savagely beaten on the floor of the Senate. Interests might be conciliated but about rights he was adamant. Massachusetts re-elected him, as a Republican, while his recovery was still in doubt, so that his empty seat would serve as a reproach to slaveholders. He returned to serve until his death in 1874.

I am grateful to John Stauffer, chair of the History of American Civilization and professor of English and African and African American Studies at Harvard University, for suggesting Ralph Waldo Emerson's tribute: Sumner's moral instinct and character are so exceptionally pure that he must have perpetual magnetism for honest men; his ability and working energy such, that every good friend of the Republic must stand by him.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 19, 2011*

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, on January 18, 2011, I missed rollcall vote 12. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" or "aye."

#### TRIBUTE TO ARIEL B. WALDMAN

#### HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 19, 2011*

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, for myself and Mr. GOODLATTE, as the Chair and Ranking Member respectively of the Committee on the Judiciary's Task Force on Judicial Impeachment in the previous Congress, we would like to take this opportunity to recognize Arid B. Waldman who recently left the House to take a position with the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia. Mr. Waldman served in the Office of the General Counsel for 18 months as an Assistant Counsel. We will miss him.

Mr. Waldman provided important legal advice and representation to the Committee and Task Force, particularly in connection with federal court litigation that arose out of an impeachment investigation and proceeding involving a federal judge from Louisiana. We and our respective staffs relied on his expertise and judgment to prepare legal pleadings and briefs, which ably and effectively defended the Task Force's ability to conduct its inquiry, and which resulted in rulings favorable to the Committee and Task Force in each instance.

Mr. Waldman served the House with distinction, and we know he will serve the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia with that same level of distinction. We thank him for his service to the House and extend to him our very best wishes for his continued success.

#### STOP THE OVERPRINTING (STOP) ACT

SPEECH OF

#### HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 18, 2011*

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few minutes today to discuss the continued need in Congress for reduced administrative spending and increased accountability to the American people.

In a time when we are keenly aware of the need for civility and cooperation in order to improve the American quality of life, I believe there is at least one thing both Democrats and Republicans can agree on and which should be the springboard towards meaningful change.

This belief is that the federal government has an obligation to the American people to be stewards of their hard-earned taxpayer dollars by operating in an efficient manner and to reduce spending whenever possible.