

education program. He returned to Le Grand in 1983 as Superintendent of Schools, a position he held until 1991. Dr. Duran's career with Merced College began in 1991 when he became the Vice President for Administrative Services.

Dr. Duran chaired the Community College League of California's 2010 Commission on the Future. He has served as President of the California Community Colleges (CCC) Chief Executive Officers Board of Directors and President of the CCC Economic and Workforce Development Program Advisory Committee. He was a member of the Hewlett/Irvine Foundation Task Force on Basic Skills Development, the CCLC Board of Directors, and has served as Staff Developer for the California School Leadership Academy.

In addition, Dr. Duran has been involved in numerous community organizations and initiatives, among them include the Greater Merced High Speed Rail Committee, the Merced County Regional Arts Council, the Mercy Medical Center Board of Directors, and the Merced School Employees Federal Credit Union Board of Directors. His professional associations include the UC Merced Foundation Board of Directors, the CSU Stanislaus Community Advisory Board and Center for Public Policy Studies. He is a member of the California Association of Latino Superintendents and a director of the California Dollars for Scholars Program.

Dr. Duran and his wife, Dr. Rose Mary Parga-Duran have two children in college. Dr. Parga-Duran is presently serving as the District Superintendent for the Merced City School District. Upon his graduation he is looking forward to becoming engaged in the community as well as watching his children continue to grow into adulthood. He also is looking forward to spending more time with his eldest daughter and two grandsons who live in Southern California.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Dr. Benjamin Duran for his dedication to Merced College and our community as a whole.

IN SUPPORT OF H. RES. 289 "COMMEMORATING CARIBBEAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH"

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 15, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 289, which celebrates June as Caribbean American Heritage Month and recognizes the significant contributions of Caribbean Americans that have made strengthened our country and made it better.

This month also marks the 50th anniversaries of independence for the Caribbean nations of Jamaica and of Trinidad and Tobago. Although a half century has passed since they gained their independence, the struggle they waged to win their freedom still stands as a testament to the ideals of our own great nation.

I am privileged to represent a large segment of Los Angeles County, which is home to the second largest foreign-born population of any major metropolitan area. There are an estimated 500,000 Americans of Caribbean herit-

age living, working, and enriching the quality of life in Southern California.

Mr. Speaker, Americans of Caribbean heritage have made a positive impact on virtually every aspect of American life, including the arts, science, business, education, athletics, military, and government. For example, in the area of government and public affairs America has benefitted from the contributions of Colin Powell, a former Secretary of State and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice; former Members of Congress Mervyn Dymally of California, and Shirley Chisholm of New York, and current Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE of New York; Kamala Harris, the Attorney General of California; and Maryland Lieutenant Governor Anthony Brown.

American art and culture has been enriched by the legendary performances of Sidney Poitier, Harry Belafonte, Cicely Tyson, and Sheryl Lee Ralph; the writings of authors W.E.B. DuBois and Malcolm Gladwell; the music of Grace Jones, Gil Scott-Heron, and Christopher Wallace, "The Notorious B.I.G."; and the prowess of great athletes like Carl Lewis, Tim Duncan, Patrick Ewing, Sandra Richards-Ross, Dwight Freeney, and Ndamukong Suh.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that on June 29 the Caribbean Heritage Organization will be holding the 2012 Caribbean Heritage Salute to Hollywood and the Stars gala in Los Angeles honoring industry stalwarts Sheryl Lee Ralph, Antonio Fargas, Lorraine Toussaint, and Rob Edwards.

I also wish to recognize the leadership of the Institute of Caribbean Studies. The ICS has been very effective in advocating on behalf of the Caribbean American community and each year it hosts a Legislative Conference Week as part of the month long celebration. The conference focuses the attention of policy makers and experts on issues of particular concern to the Caribbean American community such as trade, job creation and economic empowerment, Haitian disaster relief and economic reconstruction. I congratulate the ICS, the Caribbean Heritage Organization in my home county of Los Angeles, and the many community organizations and volunteers across the nation for their efforts in making Caribbean American Heritage Month the success that it is.

During this month I hope all Americans will join with me in celebrating the remarkable history, culture, and contributions of Caribbean Americans to our nation's past and future.

HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 15, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 150th anniversary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). I represent the city of Davis, which is home to the University of California, Davis (UC Davis). The USDA has a natural partner in UC Davis given its outstanding history of agricultural research and outreach. In California, USDA has reduced crop pests and disease, protected

over 120,000 wetlands in California, and worked to keep the farming culture strong. I would like to submit for the RECORD the following letter dated May 16, 2012, from Val Dolcini, the State Executive Director of the USDA Farm Service Agency in California. This letter illustrates just a few successes of USDA over the last 150 years and, with our support, their accomplishments will continue in the future.

USDA AT 150: FARMS, FOOD, JOBS

One hundred and fifty years ago, in the midst of a great Civil War, President Lincoln signed legislation to establish a Department of Agriculture to "acquire and to diffuse among the people of the United States useful information on subjects connected with agriculture . . . and to procure, propagate, and distribute among the people new and valuable seeds and plants."

Armed with these broad mandates, the "People's Department," as he called it, set about to serve American farmers and a mostly rural American landscape.

At that time, half of all Americans lived on farms, compared with about 2 percent today. The U.S. population in 1862 was about 31.4 million and today, that number has increased tenfold to almost 313 million people.

Since its inception, the department has continued to fulfill Abraham Lincoln's original vision to touch the lives of every American, every day in almost every way. Now, the modern USDA works in food science, agricultural research, nutrition assistance, bio-fuel production, economic and community development, natural resource conservation, international trade, credit and a host of other issues.

By any measure, it's been a very successful 150 years for the USDA. Americans benefit from safe, abundant and reasonably priced food. We produce 85 percent of what we consume and therefore enjoy food security.

Our food, fuel and fiber industries provides employment for more than 20 million Americans, and agricultural exports continue to post significant trade surpluses, which, in turn, have generated almost 1 million jobs alone.

Looking to the future, the USDA must continue the legacy of contributing to the strength and health of the nation by becoming a more modern and effective service provider. We must tighten our belt, just as many Americans are doing with their household budgets.

In the past few decades, American agriculture has become one of the most productive sectors of our economy, thanks to farmers, ranchers and growers adopting technology, reducing their debt and effectively managing risk.

The USDA is adopting these same strategies in its Blueprint for Stronger Service, announced by Secretary Tom Vilsack earlier this year. The blueprint aims to build a modern and efficient service organization that is closely aligned with technological innovations—and better suited to respond to 21st century agricultural challenges.

The challenges ahead are many, both for the USDA and American agriculture. But by focusing on a strong safety net for farmers and ranchers, supporting policies that encourage sustainable productivity, and promoting vibrant markets that help feed consumers at home and abroad, the "People's Department" will continue to help create jobs, support working families, strengthen rural communities and build on the success and productivity of the American farmer.

HONORING MEMBERS OF THE
MAINE DEPARTMENT OF THE
AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 15, 2012

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the members of the Maine Department of the American Legion Auxiliary, in honor of their tremendous work on behalf of the "Operation: Military Kids" program.

Our men and women in uniform put themselves at risk every day to defend our freedom and security. It is our duty as citizens to honor their sacrifices and the sacrifices made by their families. In this spirit, Operation: Military Kids was established to support children and youth who have family members deployed around the world. 945 community members representing over 43 national, state, and local organizations came together in 2011 to remind our military children that they are not alone.

I am pleased to congratulate the members of the Maine Auxiliary, and the rest of the Maine American Legion family, on securing 24 kayaks and supporting equipment for the Operation: Military Kids program. This was a remarkable effort by the community. The kayaks, valued at over \$24,000 all together, will be put to use in Maine's western mountains at the Maine Army National Guard Youth Camp in Bog Brook, ME.

Today, we celebrate the tremendous success of the American Legion's fundraising efforts and the inculcable joy those kayaks will bring to Maine's military families.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the members of the American Legion Department of Maine Auxiliary for their dedication to our military families.

SUPPORT FOR H.R. 1842, THE
DREAM ACT

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 15, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1842, The DREAM Act. I call up the House Republican leadership to bring this important legislation, which reflects fundamental American values of opportunity, responsibility, and community to the floor. The DREAM Act provides an opportunity for certain young men and women who demonstrate the responsible behavior necessary to earn the chance to become a naturalized citizen.

The DREAM Act recognizes that there are a limited number of young people who, through no fault of their own, have been living in the United States illegally since childhood. For the vast majority of these young men and women, the United States is the only country they have ever known and is the one to which they have always pledged allegiance.

By providing those who have demonstrated good moral character the ability to integrate fully into American society through military service or a college education, The DREAM Act rewards responsible and productive behavior while at the same time invests in the future prosperity of our great Nation.

Passing The DREAM Act makes our country stronger, fairer, more just. And it will also make our Nation more prosperous in the long term by providing incentives and opportunities for higher education for thousands of students who each year are unable to attend college because of their immigration status.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that The DREAM Act will reduce the deficit by \$1.4 billion over the next 10 years through increased tax revenue. Similarly, a study conducted by UCLA also estimates that DREAM Act beneficiaries have the potential to generate from \$1.4 trillion to \$3.6 trillion in income throughout their working lives.

Each year, approximately 65,000 students graduate high school without the possibility of continuing their education due to their immigration status and less than 10 percent of these students will go on to pursue college. Not only do these talented, law-abiding young individuals lose out on their extraordinary potential, but as a Nation we also run the risk of losing out on a tremendous amount of economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, The DREAM Act gives these students the opportunity to continue their academic pursuits, be officially recognized by the country in which they have spent most of their lives, and realize everything the American Dream has to offer. Young, undocumented immigrants who have just graduated from high school deserve the opportunity to follow their dreams and should not have a ceiling placed on their future because of decisions made by others and circumstances entirely beyond their control.

During my visits to schools in my district, one of the most ethnically diverse in the Nation, I have had the opportunity to meet many students who will benefit greatly from the passage of this legislation. These students have grown up attending schools in the United States and are intimately woven into our Nation's fabric. It is time that we recognize these students' achievements and allow them to step out of the shadow that prevents them from pursuing their dreams.

The Washington Post recently published an article on a young woman named Heydi Mejia, whose story exemplifies the type of situation we can hope to avoid by passing The DREAM Act. Young Heydi has lived in America from the age of 4, graduated in the top 10 percent of her class and had plans to attend college to become a nurse and return to serve her community. Her life was turned upside down when nine immigration officials showed up at her house this past December ordering her back to Guatemala, a country she barely knows, and to which she never pledged allegiance.

I was delighted to hear yesterday that Heydi and her mother have been granted a 1-year reprieve from deportation by the DHS, but this situation should not have arisen in the first place. It should not take a front page article in The Washington Post to keep a hardworking and successful young woman from being deported.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to support The DREAM Act. We are a nation of immigrants, built on the backs of those who risked everything for the dream of a country that accepts all those who are willing to work hard and make something of themselves. I believe America is still that country, and it is our fundamental duty to provide a better life to those willing to work for it.

CELEBRATING 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF C.H. "BUDDY" AND JEANETTE BELLAMY

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 15, 2012

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize a significant milestone in the lives of two of my constituents. On June 24th, C.H. "Buddy" and Jeanette Bellamy, celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

Buddy and Jeanette were both born in rural South Carolina; Buddy just outside of Loris and Jeanette in Dillon. He was the only son and she the youngest daughter of families who were familiar with hardship and difficult circumstances. In fact, it was one of those difficult circumstances that brought their lives together. Buddy was hospitalized after suffering a severe injury in his work as an auto mechanic. In the hospital, he was treated carefully and brought back to health by a young nurse named Jeanette. During the time that she cared for him, a friendship began that would soon lead to love.

Soon after, Buddy began working for Trailways as a driver, and was able to see every one of these great United States in the process. Jeanette continued nursing and has continued to focus her life on the caretaking of those in need.

Buddy and Jeanette were married in Dillon, South Carolina in 1961. They started a family with the birth of daughter Sharon and then sons, Scott and Dean, soon after. Eventually the Bellamy family settled in Clemmons, North Carolina in the Fifth Congressional District, where they still reside today. They are proud grandparents and have been blessed with eight wonderful grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Buddy and Jeanette Bellamy are proud Americans who are role models for us all. They enjoy the simple things in life that living in a country like ours offers them, including shagging to Carolina beach music. They love their family and, most importantly, they love each other. It is my distinct pleasure to represent them in Congress and to recognize them today for this wonderful milestone in their lives.

EL PASO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
DISTRICT—ASAP REGIONAL
AWARD

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 15, 2012

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate El Paso Independent School District (EPISD) on receiving a regional award for combating obesity and promoting healthier habits among its students.

Physical activity is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle. In combination with healthy eating, it can help prevent a range of chronic diseases, including heart disease, cancer, and stroke, which are the three leading causes of death. Physical activity helps control weight, builds lean muscle, reduces fat, promotes strong bone, muscle and joint development, and decreases the risk of obesity.