

upon the realization of her vision and to recognize her for her dedication to the Rochester, New York community.

July 7, 2012 will mark the official kick off of the Conkey Cruisers, a free neighborhood "biking to better health" program that will journey throughout the northeast crescent of Rochester, otherwise known as the Conkey-Clifford Neighborhood. The Conkey Cruisers is an official 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that has singlehandedly unified an inner city neighborhood by addressing two important factors: crime and health.

Just one year ago, Ms. Bowick was out running in her neighborhood when she had two disturbing encounters. First, a young boy called out to her, "Hey, lady! Are you on probation?" He assumed that Ms. Bowick was running from the police, as he apparently had little understanding of any other reason for running in that particular neighborhood. Soon after, an older man accused Ms. Bowick of being an undercover cop, boldly stating, "She is the police, because nobody exercises in this neighborhood!"

These encounters inspired Ms. Bowick to start an exercise program in the ConkeyClifford Neighborhood. The program advocates "Getting fit, one street, one person, one bike at a time." As a registered nurse, Ms. Bowick understands the health benefits of regular exercise, particularly at a time when our nation is experiencing an epidemic of obesity. Her efforts are getting an entire neighborhood up and moving, all the while restoring safety and a sense of home back to the residents.

The signature black, yellow and white Conkey Cruiser t-shirts can now be seen daily on the streets of Conkey Avenue, as neighbors both young and old exercise on their bikes. Beginning July 7th, youth from the Conkey-Clifford neighborhood will participate in the six-week, five days a week free Conkey Cruisers program, which provides an introduction to safe bicycling and healthy eating, as well as an opportunity to earn President Obama's Active Lifestyle Award.

I am proud that such dedicated individuals call my district home, and that they have committed themselves to improving their neighborhoods, increasing safety, and pursuing health for all of our residents. I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Theresa Lou Bowick and the Conkey Cruisers.

IN RECOGNITION STEVEN ROLLINS

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Stephen Rollins upon his retirement after twenty-five years of public service as Town Administrator and Town Manager of Hanover.

Mr. Rollins' career in public service began in 1973 when he worked for the Illinois Department of Local Government Affairs following his graduation from The University of Vermont. Since then, he has proved himself to be an innovative and efficient administrator in a variety of public service roles. He was a leader in the centralization of the Hanover town government, and was instrumental in streamlining the

town's process for grants and expenditures. Mr. Rollins has received national recognition for his work on Hanover's health plan and local praise for his simplification of the town's yearly budget.

As town administrator, Mr. Rollins demonstrated his flexibility and leadership ability. Not only were these characteristics seen in the day-to-day operations of local government, but they were also evident in crisis situations—perhaps, most memorably, when Hanover's town hall was severely damaged in a fire. As de facto contractor overseeing the town hall's renovations, Mr. Rollins repeatedly demonstrated his ability to improvise and assume unconventional roles when necessary. It was therefore very fitting when he was given the title of Town Manager in August of 2010, and became the town's first person to occupy this position. In his role as a representative of Hanover, Mr. Rollins typified the best of what the town has to offer. Always putting the community first, he dedicated his career to making local government work for the people.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Stephen Rollins on this remarkable occasion. I ask that my colleagues join me in wishing him a wonderful retirement and many years of happiness, as well as in thanking him for working tirelessly to build the town of Hanover into the beautiful community we know today.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE REHAB AND AHMED AMER FOSTER CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2012

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduced the Rehab and Ahmed Amer Foster Care Improvement Act of 2012. The Act will enhance the existing federal policy of encouraging state foster care programs to place children in the care of willing and able relatives.

This legislation accomplishes that goal by requiring States that receive federal funding for foster care programs to add certain procedural enhancements to their foster care programs so as to ensure a more fair placement decision-making process.

Specifically, my bill requires that, within 90 days after a State makes a foster care placement decision, the State must provide notice of such decision to the following affected parties:

- the child's parents;
- relatives who have informed the State of their interest in caring for the child;
- the guardian;
- the guardian ad litem of the child;
- the attorney for the child;
- the attorney for each parent of the child;
- the prosecutor involved; and
- the child if he or she is able to express an opinion regarding placement.

Additionally, States must establish procedures that:

- allow any of the parties who receive notice of the State's placement decision to request, within five days after receipt of the notice, documentation of the reasons for the State's decision;
- allow the child's attorney to petition the court involved to review the decision; and

require the court to commence such review within seven days after receipt of the petition and conduct such review on the record.

The harrowing story of Rehab and Ahmed Amer of Dearborn, Michigan prompted me to craft this bill.

In 1985, the Amers lost two of their children to Michigan's foster care system after Rehab had been subject to criminal charges related to the death of her two-year-old son Samier, who died because of head injuries resulting from a fall in a bathtub.

Although Rehab had been acquitted in August 1986 of any criminal wrongdoing in connection with Samier's death, the State refused to return the Amers' other two children to them and, in fact, removed a third child from the Amers' custody four months after Rehab's acquittal.

As a temporary alternative, Rehab's brother petitioned to be a foster parent to the Amers' three children, but was denied his petition even though he had previously served as a foster parent for other children.

It is important to note that the Amers are Muslim. Nevertheless, the State, rather than placing the Amers' children with a foster family of the same faith and cultural background, sent them to live with an evangelical Christian family, which re-named the Amers' children—Mohamed Ali, Sueheir, and Zinabe—with Christian names and raised them as Christians.

Today, only the oldest of the Amers' three living children, Mohamed Ali, now known as Adam, communicates with them.

In reaction to the Amers' story, Michigan enacted what became known as the Amer Law. That law requires foster care placement agencies in Michigan to consider and give special preference for relatives when making a foster care placement decision.

The Amer Law is consistent with federal foster care policy, which also seeks to give preference to a child's relatives and, for Native American children, a family of the same cultural background as the child, when making placement decisions.

The Amer Law, however, has several provisions that go beyond current federal law to ensure due process. In sum, this law gives parents, relatives, guardians, and the child in certain cases additional procedural rights, including the right to written notice and an explanation of a placement decision. In addition, it authorizes judicial review of a placement decision by a foster care agency.

My legislation simply adds these enhanced due process features of the Amer Law to existing federal foster care law.

The best interests of the child should always be the overriding consideration when making foster care placement decisions. That standard, however, should also require foster care agencies to give special preference to placing a child with relatives, where the child can be raised in the same culture or religion as his or her own, all other things being equal.

I thank Rehab and Ahmed Amer for bringing this issue to light and for their tireless efforts to make the foster care placement process fairer for everyone, first in Michigan, and, now, nationally.

HONORING GUS MACHADO FOR HIS DEDICATION TO THE SOUTH FLORIDA COMMUNITY

HON. DAVID RIVERA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

Mr. RIVERA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the outstanding accomplishments of Mr. Gus Machado, who exemplifies the virtues of hard work, dedication, and contribution to the community.

Mr. Machado was born in Cuba, and came to the United States when he was only fifteen years old where he studied at the Edwards Military Institute in North Carolina and Greenville College before working for the Caterpillar Tractor Company in Illinois.

In 1956, he moved to Miami with no more than a few thousand dollars. He used the money to get started in the automotive business by investing in a gas station and sending used cars to Cuba until Castro established himself as the nation's dictator and targeted free enterprise. Nevertheless, Mr. Machado persevered by refocusing his business operations to the Cuban exile community in South Florida. He began concentrating on the retail aspect of car sales and utilized his keen insight to business to identify and cater to the emerging demands of the market. For example, in 1973, he began a business that exported vehicles to Puerto Rico to fulfill the high demand in the area. Soon after, the only other General Motors distributor in Puerto Rico closed down, leaving Mr. Machado as the main dealer in the market.

Throughout the following years, his business endeavors multiplied and he established himself as one of the most successful automotive dealers in the country. In 1984, he purchased a Ford dealership in Hialeah and quickly became the #1 Ford dealer in Miami-Dade County.

Today, Mr. Gus Machado is one of the most respected and successful car dealers in the country. When the recession hit, the future of the auto industry looked very grim. Like many other Americans, Mr. Machado's business faced unprecedented hardship. Nevertheless, he took a bold risk by expanding his domain and buying another Ford dealership in Kendall. Like many of his other ventures, this too proved fruitful. He continues to provide his services to the community, and has been honored with countless awards for his work, including the Ford Motor company's highest honor, the President's Award.

Furthermore, Mr. Machado has established himself as one of the most generous philanthropists in South Florida. His endeavors include the establishment of the Gus Machado Family Foundation, which provides hundreds of children with backpacks and school supplies every year, and the founding of the Gus Machado Classic Charity Golf Tournament benefiting the American Cancer Society, among many, many others.

Mr. Machado has also worked hard to promote the transition to democracy in his native Cuba, the most oppressive nation in the Western Hemisphere. His dedication to the cause of liberty and freedom is truly remarkable.

Due to his hard work, his ambition, and his generosity, Mr. Machado embodies the American Dream. He is a model citizen for aspiring

businessmen and civic leaders because he reminds us of what it truly means to be an American.

However, I doubt that he could have made it this far without the support of his wonderful family and particularly his loving wife Lilliam who has organized many charitable events in our community.

On June 29th, the community will show its appreciation by dedicating "Gus Machado Way" in his honor. On behalf of the South Florida community, I thank Mr. Machado for everything he has done for this community, and I take great pride in being a part of this celebration.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 20, 2009, the day President Obama took office, the national debt was \$10,626,877,048,913.08.

Today, it is \$15,782,570,144,097.96. We've added \$5,155,693,095,184.88 to our debt in just over 3 years. This is debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

Forty-nine years ago today, John F. Kennedy delivered his *Ich bin ein Berliner* speech in West Berlin. At that time, America had the economic security to challenge her communist foe. We must rid ourselves of this crippling debt.

CONGRATULATORY REMARKS FOR OBTAINING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SANDY ADAMS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

Mrs. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Austin N. Krohne for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

For his Eagle Scout project, Austin coordinated an oyster reef restoration project to benefit marine flora and fauna, and to improve water quality within the Indian River Lagoon. Throughout the history of the Boy Scouts of America, the rank of Eagle Scout has only been attained through dedication to concepts such as honor, duty, country and charity. By applying these concepts to daily life, Austin has proven his true and complete understanding of their meanings, and thereby deserves this honor.

I offer my congratulations on a job well done and best wishes for the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE PATRIOT LEDGER'S 175TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. WILLIAM R. KEATING

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 175th birthday of The Patriot

Ledger, the long-standing newspaper of record for Massachusetts' South Shore communities.

Headquartered and published in Quincy since its inception, The Patriot Ledger is one of Massachusetts' oldest local daily newspapers and serves twenty-six communities on the South Shore with approximately 55,000 residents in its circulation. Founded on January 7, 1837, the paper was originally known as the Quincy Patriot and was once the hometown newspaper of President John Quincy Adams. When Adams was serving in the House of Representatives following his presidency, he frequently wrote letters to the editor regarding the many issues that the House was facing at the time, such as the abolishment of slavery, the admission of Texas as a state, and the heated debates that Members of Congress often had with one another. The Patriot Ledger has served as a trusted chronicler of local and national news ever since, and it continues to be one of the region's most popular daily papers.

In addition to providing important and reliable news to the South Shore every day, The Patriot Ledger has frequently been at the forefront of many aspects of newspaper production and technology. In the 1950's, experimentation by the paper's printing staff led to the development of the first practical photo-typesetting machine, an innovation that attracted the attention of newspaper executives around the world. The paper was also among the first in the nation to establish zoned editions for local news and advertising, and it paved the way in establishing many other modern features of the print news industry. Such features pioneered by The Patriot Ledger include the use of 35-millimeter photography, the transmission of daily editions to the printer via facsimile, the use of a computer editing system, and the installation of a two-way radio system for spot news coverage. While many newspapers struggle with the technological advancements of the twenty-first century, The Patriot Ledger continues to grow and move forward.

As a result of its excellence in reporting and its frequent innovation, The Patriot Ledger has been the recipient of many awards throughout its 175-year tenure. It was named as the New England Press Association's Newspaper of the Year in 2005 and 2006, and won the title of the New England Newspaper Association's Newspaper of the Year in 2007. Among the awards The Patriot Ledger received in 2011 were seven national journalism awards from Suburban Newspapers of America and six additional awards from the New England Associated Press News Executives Association. Already this year, the paper has been awarded two national prizes from the Society of American Business Editors and Writers, including the General Excellence award for the paper's business section. Notably, The Patriot Ledger was the only daily paper with a circulation of less than 100,000 to be recognized.

Mr. Speaker, it brings me great pride to honor The Patriot Ledger as the newspaper celebrates 175 years of publication. I fondly remember reading it when I was young and look forward to reading it for many more years to come. I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing this great paper that has long been woven into the fabric of our country's history.