

first signs of the closing of parts of our open society appeared after the Oklahoma City bombing, well before 9/11. This bill grows more urgent as an increasing variety of security measures proliferate throughout the country without any thought about the effects on common freedoms and ordinary public access, and without any guidance from the government or elsewhere. Take the example of government buildings. Federal building security has gotten so out of control that a tourist passing by a Federal building cannot even get in to use the restroom or enjoy the many restaurants located in areas otherwise devoid of such amenities. The security for Federal buildings has too long resided only in the hands of non-security experts, who do not take into account actual threats and, as a result, spend lavish amounts of taxpayer dollars on needless security procedures. For example, several years ago, Government Accountability Office investigators carried bomb-making materials into 10 high-security Federal buildings and then assembled them in the bathrooms. This scandal shines a light on the failure to use risk-based assessments in the allocation of resources.

The bill I reintroduce today would begin a systematic investigation that fully takes into account the importance of maintaining our democratic traditions while responding adequately to the real and substantial threat that terrorism poses. To accomplish its difficult mission, the bill authorizes a 21-member commission, with the President designating nine members and the House and Senate each designating six members, to investigate the balance of openness and security. The commission would be composed not only of military and security experts, but, for the first time, they would be at the same table with experts from such fields as business, architecture, technology, law, city planning, art, engineering, philosophy, history, sociology, and psychology. To date, questions of security most often have been left almost exclusively to security and military experts. They are indispensable participants, but these experts cannot alone resolve all the new and unprecedented issues raised by terrorism in an open society. In order to strike the security/access balance required by our democratic traditions, a diverse group of experts needs to be at the same table.

For years, parts of our open society have gradually been closed down because of terrorism and the fear of terrorism, from checkpoints on streets near the Capitol, even when there are no alerts, to applications of technology without regard to their effects on privacy.

Following the unprecedented terrorist attack on our country on 9/11, Americans expected additional and increased security adequate to protect citizens against this frightening threat. However, in our country, people also expect government to be committed and smart enough to undertake this awesome new responsibility without depriving them of their personal liberty. These times will long be remembered for the rise of terrorism in the world and in this country and the unprecedented challenges it has brought. We must provide ever-higher levels of security for our people and public spaces while maintaining a free and open democratic society. Yet this is no ordi-

nary threat that we expect to be over in a matter of years. The end point could be generations from now. The indeterminate nature of the threat adds to the necessity of putting aside ad hoc approaches to security developed in isolation from the goal of maintaining an open society.

When we have faced unprecedented and perplexing issues in the past, we have had the good sense to investigate them deeply before moving to resolve them. Examples include the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (also known as the 9/11 Commission), the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction (also known as the Silberman-Robb Commission), and the Kerner Commission, which investigated the riots that swept American cities in the 1960s and 1970s. The important difference in this bill is that the Commission seeks to act before a crisis-level erosion of basic freedoms takes hold and becomes entrenched. Because global terrorism is likely to be long lasting, we cannot afford to allow the proliferation of security measures that neither requires nor is subject to advanced civilian oversight, or analysis of alternatives and repercussions on freedom and commerce.

With no vehicles for leadership on issues of security and openness, we have been left to muddle through, using blunt 19th century approaches, such as crude blockades, unsightly barriers around beautiful monuments, and other signals that our society is closing down, all without appropriate exploration of possible alternatives. The threat of terrorism to an open society is too serious to be left to ad hoc problem-solving. Such approaches are often as inadequate as they are menacing.

We can do better, but only if we recognize and come to grips with the complexities associated with maintaining a society of free and open access in a world characterized by unprecedented terrorism. The place to begin is with a high-level commission of experts from a broad array of disciplines to help chart the new course that will be required to protect our people and our precious democratic institutions and traditions.

A TRIBUTE TO ELLEN  
SNORTLAND, 29TH CONGRES-  
SIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF  
THE YEAR—2012

**HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 28, 2012*

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Women's History Month. Each year during the month of March, we pay special tribute to the accomplishments made by our nation's most distinguished women.

I stand today to pay tribute to Ellen Snortland of Altadena, California, who is an inspiring and extraordinary individual. Ellen has spent her life following a variety of passions ranging from human rights to journalism to self defense. Ms. Snortland received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Irvine in Theater and Film, and later a Juris Doctor, JD, from Loyola Law School, Los Angeles. After

graduating, Ellen decided that she could provide the most service to her community as an advocate for women and children, a teacher, performer and media professional.

Ms. Snortland is the author of *Beauty Bites Beast*, which has been translated in Portuguese and Spanish, featured on Dateline NBC, and sold around the world. Ellen has also performed "Now that She's Gone," a one-woman show, which is a touching piece about family and forgiveness, and in 2008, was nominated for a Pulitzer in Drama. She has performed this show in New York, Los Angeles, Kansas, and France among other cities, states and countries.

She is currently a Board Member and lead female instructor for IMPACT personal safety, and teaches young boys and girls how to defend themselves from predators, both physically and verbally. She provides valuable services to our youth which they can draw from for their entire lives.

Ellen's accomplishments and roles in our community are innumerable. She serves on the Board of 50/50 Leadership and Consumer Watchdog, and is the Past President of the United Nations Association, Pasadena/Foothills Chapter. Ellen attended the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa, in the year of 2001, and the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women for many years as part of the U.N. Press Corps as well as a NGO delegate.

Today, Ms. Snortland is a columnist for the Pasadena Weekly and a blogger for Ms. Magazine and Huffington Post. Ellen's work has been exceptional, and has proven that one woman can truly achieve all she sets her mind to.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring an outstanding woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Ellen Snortland, for her exceptional service to the community.

ANDREA HILL

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 28, 2012*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Andrea Hill for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Andrea Hill is a 7th grader at Oberon Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Andrea Hill is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Andrea Hill for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

## U.S. COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

**HON. FRANK R. WOLF**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 28, 2012*

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank Nina Shea, Dr. Don Argue, Dr. Richard Land, Dr. Elizabeth H. Prodromou and Felice Gaer for their service on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). These commissioners have made significant contributions to USCIRF's work on behalf of the cherished right of freedom of religion or belief, including its deeper integration into U.S. foreign policy and national security. Since its inception, the commission has served as a voice for the voiceless, championing the plight of those whose most basic rights are threatened.

I would especially like to recognize the tireless efforts of Nina Shea, who has served on the commission since its creation. As a stalwart advocate, prolific writer and subject matter expert, Nina has played an invaluable role on the commission and her leadership will be sorely missed. She was at the forefront of much of the commission's work on Sudan and she took a prominent role in shining a bright light on extremist Wahhabi ideology coming out of Saudi Arabia. Early on, Nina recognized the precarious plight of religious minorities, notably Christians in the Middle East, and sought to develop policy recommendations that would ensure their continued existence and flourishing in the lands they have inhabited for centuries.

As director of the Center for Religious Freedom and a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, Nina will undoubtedly continue fighting the good fight on behalf of persecuted people worldwide.

## TO HONOR AND CONGRATULATE LUMBERTON FIRE AND EMS ON THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. KEVIN BRADY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 28, 2012*

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Lumberton Fire and EMS on their 50th Anniversary.

Now 53 members strong, the proud ranks of the Lumberton Fire and EMS paid full and part-time EMS are preparing to grow again thanks to the leadership of Fire Chief James K. Philp and his team of operational officers and of course, organization President David Grass, Jr.

On Saturday, March 31, 2012, citizens from throughout Hardin County, Texas and Emergency Services District 2 will gather to celebrate the half century of service and safety that these brave first responders have provided for the people of this beautiful Southeast Texas community.

Serving some of the fastest growing communities in Texas like the City of Lumberton and its surrounding region, the Lumberton Fire and EMS serves 25,000 citizens and covers 122 square miles of territory. In 2011 alone, this Department responded to 2,102 calls for service.

Chartered on April 2, 1962 under the name Chance-Loeb Volunteer Fire Department, this department grew into the Lumberton Volunteer Fire Department just six years later.

In 1998, the name changed to Lumberton Fire/Rescue Services and then in 2003, the department began working in tandem with the EMS department in order to better serve the citizens of Lumberton and the surrounding community.

The two groups started the long process of merging both non-profit, tax exempt departments into one stronger, unified organization near the end of 2004.

In February of 2005, Lumberton Volunteer Fire-Rescue and Lumberton Emergency Medical Services were formally merged into the department we honor today—the Lumberton Fire & EMS.

This is a department that has been there throughout wildfires, hurricanes, tropical storms and so much more.

I am honored by their selfless service for these 50 golden years in the golden triangle. This is truly a significant milestone for this community and its dedicated firefighters, volunteers, and citizens who show their commitment every time someone calls 9-1-1 for help.

## CDLS FOR VETERANS ACT

**HON. JANICE HAHN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 28, 2012*

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, as our men and women return from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have a duty to honor their sacrifice and service. They are returning to an economy that has not yet fully recovered and, especially for those veterans under 35, they will face a higher rate of unemployment than the national average.

These servicemen and women come home with valuable experience and training, but often find that there is a disconnect between their service and requirements for employment in the civilian world. These men and women should not be forced to start over in their training for good-paying jobs like commercial truck driving.

The men and women who operated heavy machinery and combat vehicles come home with a wealth of knowledge and first hand experience. Our communities cannot afford to let this expertise go unused. Currently, if these professionals want to use their skills to become professional drivers, they need to go through training for a Commercial Driver's License as if they had no experience at all.

That is why I am introducing the "Commercial Drivers Licenses for Veterans Act." This legislation will provide grants to states to provide for the expedited training and licensing of veterans with prior experience operating heavy machinery and combat vehicles.

By passing this bill, we will not only ensure that our communities have the professional drivers they need, but we will show the men and women who have served our country that we value their experience and expertise.

ALICIA CHAVEZ

**HON. ED PERLMUTTER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 28, 2012*

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and applaud Alicia Chavez for receiving the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. Alicia Chavez is an 8th grader at Moore Middle School and received this award because her determination and hard work have allowed her to overcome adversities.

The dedication demonstrated by Alicia Chavez is exemplary of the type of achievement that can be attained with hard work and perseverance. It is essential students at all levels strive to make the most of their education and develop a work ethic which will guide them for the rest of their lives.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Alicia Chavez for winning the Arvada Wheat Ridge Service Ambassadors for Youth award. I have no doubt she will exhibit the same dedication and character in all her future accomplishments.

## HONORING MS. MARY SCOTT RUSSELL

**HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 28, 2012*

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Women's History month I rise today to honor Ms. Mary Scott Russell, a dedicated and committed individual to the community of South Florida.

Ms. Russell, a native to Miami, is currently serving her fifth year as president of the Chamber of Commerce for Greater South Dade. She has served South Florida with distinction and admiration over the past two decades in various capacities. Ms. Russell served as the third female Mayor for the City of South Miami, Vice Mayor, Commissioner, and as chair of the City's Environmental Review and Preservation Board. During her tenure as Mayor, she created the Junior Commission for Women, allowing young women in the community to participate in an advisory group to the Mayor and City Commission on issues that affect their gender and age group.

Additionally, Ms. Russell was appointed President of the Miami Dade League of Cities, the fourth female leader of the organization in 50 years. Her dedication to issues concerning children and the environment is evident through her service on the Board of the Children's trust, and on the Fairchild Palms Board of Directors over the past 7 years.

Amongst her many roles and duties, she has found time to be a member of many organizations including, the General Obligation Bond Citizen Advisory Committee, Miami Dade College Center for Service Excellence Advisory Board, the College of Business and Technology Advisory Board, and the Informed Families South Miami Drug Free Coalition.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to Ms. Mary Scott Russell. She is not only a great mother, friend, and servant to the community, but also a leader who dedicates countless hours to making a difference for those