

lie ahead, we must continue to stand unwaveringly with Israel. As the modern State of Israel celebrates 64 years, I join with countless others to extend my congratulations to the Jewish people—in Israel, in the United States, and around the world. And I offer my heartfelt prayers for the safety, peace, and prosperity of the State of Israel.

EMANCIPATION DAY IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 16, 2012

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, on Emancipation Day in the District of Columbia, I ask the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing the 150th anniversary of President Lincoln's signing of the District of Columbia Compensated Emancipation Act, which freed 3,100 slaves of African descent in the nation's capital. I have introduced a resolution today in honor of this historic day. The record should also reflect that the District of Columbia Council passed the following resolution in honor of the anniversary:

A CEREMONIAL RESOLUTION 19-207

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MARCH 6, 2012

To recognize and preserve the cultural history and heritage of the District of Columbia; to formally recognize the 150th anniversary of District of Columbia Emancipation Day on April 16, 2012, as an important day in the history of the District of Columbia and the United States in that, on April 16, 1862, 9 months before President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863 to begin to end institutionalized slavery in America, President Lincoln signed the District of Columbia Compensated Emancipation Act to release the 3,100 enslaved persons of African descent held in the nation's capital, making them the "first freed" by the federal government, at a cost of nearly \$1 million, in 1862 funds, paid to the people who enslaved them; to recognize that, after the Civil War, formerly enslaved people and others commemorated the signing of the 1862 act by parading down Pennsylvania Avenue in festive attire, with music and marching bands, proclaiming and celebrating freedom in the District of Columbia Emancipation Day Parade, which was received by every sitting President of the United States from 1866 to 1901; and to recognize that, on March 7, 2000, the Council of the District of Columbia voted unanimously to establish April 16th as a legal private holiday, the Emancipation Day Parade resumed in the nation's capital in 2002, and, on April 5, 2005, District of Columbia Emancipation Day was made a legal public holiday, recognized annually on April 16th.

Whereas, on April 16, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the District of Columbia Compensated Emancipation Act ("Emancipation Act") during the Civil War;

Whereas, the Emancipation Act provided for immediate emancipation of 3,100 enslaved men, women, and children of African descent held in bondage in the District of Columbia;

Whereas, the Emancipation Act authorized compensation of up to \$300 for each of the 3,100 enslaved men, women, and children held in bondage by those loyal to the Union, voluntary colonization of the formerly enslaved to colonies outside of America, and pay-

ments of up to \$100 to each formerly enslaved person who agreed to leave America;

Whereas, the Emancipation Act authorized the federal government to pay approximately \$1 million, in 1862 funds, for the freedom of 3,100 enslaved men, women, and children of African descent in the District of Columbia;

Whereas, the Emancipation Act ended the bondage of 3,100 enslaved men, women, and children of African descent in the District of Columbia, and made them the "first freed" by the federal government during the Civil War;

Whereas, nine months after the signing of the Emancipation Act, on January 1, 1863, President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, to begin to end institutionalized enslavement of people of African descent in Confederate states;

Whereas, on April 9, 1865, the Confederacy surrendered, marking the beginning of the end of the Civil War, and on August 20, 1866, President Andrew Johnson signed a Proclamation Declaring that Peace, Order, Tranquility and Civil Authority Now Exists in and Throughout the Whole of the United States of America;

Whereas, in December 1865, the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified establishing that "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction";

Whereas, in April 1866, to commemorate the signing of the Emancipation Act, the formerly enslaved people and others, in festive attire, with music and marching bands, started an annual tradition of parading down Pennsylvania Avenue, proclaiming and celebrating the anniversary of their freedom;

Whereas, the District of Columbia Emancipation Day Parade was received by every sitting President of the United States from 1866 to 1901;

Whereas, on March 7, 2000, at the Twenty Seventh Legislative Session of the Council of the District of Columbia, Councilmember Vincent B. Orange, Sr. (D-Ward 5) authored and introduced, with Carol Schwartz (R-At Large), the historic District of Columbia Emancipation Day Amendment Act of 2000, effective April 3, 2001 (D.C. Law 13-237; D.C. Official Code 1-612.02a, 32-1201), and on that same date moved an emergency version of the legislation that established April 16th as a legal private holiday;

Whereas, the District of Columbia Emancipation Day Emergency Amendment Act of 2000, which established April 16th as a legal private holiday, was passed unanimously by the Council on March 7, 2000, and signed into law on March 22, 2000 by Mayor Anthony A. Williams;

Whereas, on April 16, 2000, to properly preserve the historical and cultural significance of the District of Columbia Emancipation Day, Councilmember Orange hosted a celebration program in the historic 15th Street Presbyterian Church, founded in 1841 as the First Colored Presbyterian Church;

Whereas, on April 16, 2002, after a 100-year absence, the District of Columbia, spearheaded by Councilmember Orange with the support of Mayor Anthony Williams, returned the Emancipation Day Parade to Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., along with public activities on Freedom Plaza and evening fireworks (D.C. Official Code 1-182);

Whereas, the District of Columbia Emancipation Day Parade and Fund Act of 2004, effective March 17, 2005 (D.C. Law 15-240; D.C. Official Code 1-181 et seq.), established the Emancipation Day Fund to receive and disburse monies for the Emancipation Day Parade and activities associated with the cele-

bration and commemoration of the District of Columbia Emancipation Day;

Whereas, the District of Columbia Emancipation Day Amendment Act of 2004, effective April 5, 2005 (D.C. Law 15-288; D.C. Official Code 1-612.02(a)(11)), established April 16th as a legal public holiday;

Whereas, on April 16, 2005, District of Columbia Emancipation Day was observed for the first time as a legal public holiday, for the purpose of pay and leave of employees scheduled to work on that day (D.C. Official Code 1-612.02(c)(2));

Whereas, April 16, 2012, is the 150th anniversary of District of Columbia Emancipation Day, which symbolizes the triumph of people of African descent over the cruelty of institutionalized slavery and the goodwill of people opposed to the injustice of slavery in a democracy;

Whereas, the Council of the District of Columbia remembers and pays homage to the millions of people of African descent enslaved for more than 2 centuries in America for their courage and determination;

Whereas, the Council of the District of Columbia remembers and pays homage to President Abraham Lincoln for his courage and determination to begin to end the inhumanity and injustice of institutionalized slavery by signing the District of Columbia Compensated Emancipation Act on April 16, 1862;

Whereas, the alignment of the (1) election of the first African-American President of the United States, Barack H. Obama; (2) dedication of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial; (3) groundbreaking for the National Museum of African American History and Culture; (4) 150th anniversary of the District of Columbia Emancipation Day; and (5) 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 2013, are historically important for the District of Columbia and for the United States; and

Whereas, the 150th anniversary of District of Columbia Emancipation Day is a singularly important occasion that links the historic Presidency of Abraham Lincoln with the equally historic Presidency of Barack H. Obama, as the first President of the United States of African descent.

Resolved, by the Council of the District of Columbia, That this resolution may be cited as the "District of Columbia Emancipation Day—150th Anniversary Recognition Resolution of 2012".

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia finds the 150th anniversary of District of Columbia Emancipation Day is an important, historic occasion for the District of Columbia and the nation and serves as an appropriate time to reflect on how far the District of Columbia and the United States have progressed since institutionalized enslavement of people of African descent. Most importantly, the 150th anniversary reminds us to reaffirm our commitment to forge a more just and united country that truly reflects the ideals of its founders and instills in its people a broad sense of duty to be responsible and conscientious stewards of freedom and democracy.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon the first date of publication in the District of Columbia Register.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, April 16, 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 \$15,615,726,037,322.66. We've added \$4,988,848,988,409.58 to our debt in 3 years. This is debt our nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.

HONORING DREW LISCUM

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 16, 2012

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share these with my House colleagues.

Drew Liscum is a senior at Kempner High School in Fort Bend County, Texas. His essay topic is: In your opinion, what role should government play in our lives?

People as a whole seem to receive adequate information about what the government actually does in a very unique way. The reason being is that the government, in about every country, controls what is seen and what is not seen. They control key aspects to people's lives. I believe in the truth . . . whether it hurts me or not.

For instance, why is it said nationwide and even worldwide, that politicians are "liars." Well maybe it's because they are simply talented at hiding the blunt truth. When a friend asks for an opinion about their hair or if they look good, it's ok to throw in a white lie to not hurt their feelings. But when you lie to your country, it's different on so many levels. I'm not saying that our government lies, but I'm not saying that they tell the truth either. People refer to government as a system for the way it works. If you're in the government, your punishments are much less crucial than that of an average citizen. For example, a man named Michael Lund was arrested on October 28th, 2011 for driving while intoxicated. He was trying to cut through a blocked off accident scene a little after eleven-thirty. Michael Lund is the captain of the Sugar Land Police Department. The men that arrested him were Stafford Policemen. The same types of charges were also given to a dear friend of mine. His charges were not withheld or cut back. The point is that the government should be equal in every aspect. Whether it's a case or the truth being put forward, everyone should know the same and be treated the same.

In the documentary, "Dear Zachary," a man, Andrew Bagby, was killed in 2001 after breaking up with his girlfriend. After she denied murdering him to several cops and people, she moved to Canada. Bagby's family still pressed charges against her, but now it was a little more difficult. Shortly after living in Canada, she announced herself to be Pregnant. Andrews parents now became a bigger part of the picture. They wanted to gain custody of Zachary. On August 18th, Shirley Turner takes her son, Zacahary, far out into the middle of the ocean and drowns

the both of them. On December 15th, 2010, Governor General David Johnston gave Royal Assent to Bill C-464: An Act To Amend the Criminal Code, making it law in Canada. The bill has added an amendment to Canada's criminal code giving courts the right to refuse bail to someone charged with a serious crime who is deemed a potential danger to children under the age of 18.

The argument on what role the government should play in our lives will go on forever. The problem is that they need to be there for us when we need them, and also know when to step down and let us live our own lives. People such as Shirley Turner should be taken care of here in America while she is extremely dangerous and all evidence is pointing towards her. The government needs to understand to play their own role before they decide to play it in ours.

HONORING MR. HEZEKIAH WATKINS FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 16, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an extraordinary civil rights activist, Mr. Hezekiah Watkins. Mr. Watkins is a lifelong resident of Jackson, Mississippi. He graduated from Lanier High School and continued his education at Utica Junior College, Southern Illinois University and East Tennessee State University.

Mr. Watkins became a lifelong proponent of justice after his involvement in the Civil Rights Movement. In 1961, the "Freedom Fighters" banned together in Jackson, Mississippi to demonstrate against state segregation laws, and for doing so, 328 people were arrested with the charge "breach of peace." At the age of 13, Mr. Watkins was the youngest to be arrested and sent to Parchman Prison during the Freedom Riders movement. He continued his involvement in Mississippi's fight for civil rights, and as a result was arrested over 100 times more in years to follow. These experiences caused him to commit to improving the quality of life and opportunities for young African American youth and all of mankind.

Mr. Watkins began his career as a young entrepreneur and took on full time employment with Jackson Hinds Comprehensive Health Center and Hinds County Human Recourses Agency.

He is currently employed with the Jackson Medical Mall and owner of the Corner Food Market and Deli in Jackson, Mississippi. Mr. Watkins continues his activism for justice as a community leader who promotes community and civic involvement in Mississippi's African American youth.

Mr. Watkins has been married for the past 23 years to the former Chris Tanner. Together, they delight in the joys of three children, Marvin, Quentin, and Kristi. They also have four grandchildren, Quentin II, Brandon, Corey and Mason.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Hezekiah Watkins for his dedication and service as a Civil Rights advocate and pioneer during the 1960s Civil Rights Movement.

HONORING THE SOCIETY OF SANTA MARIA MADDALENA SOCIETY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 16, 2012

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me the greatest pleasure to rise today to extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to the Society of Santa Maria Maddalena of New Haven—the oldest American fraternal organization in Connecticut—for their many invaluable contributions to our community.

Located in Wooster Square, the neighborhood in New Haven where I grew up, the Society of Maria Maddalena has played an important role in forging the strong bonds of our community. Founded in 1898 by immigrants from the town of Atrani in the Salerno Province, south of Naples, Italy, the Society of Maria Maddalena has been a resource for neighborhood families for generations. Named for the patron saint of Atrani, the Society of Maria Maddalena was originally established to assist fellow Atrani immigrants with housing, employment, English translating, and legal matters. It was a place where families faced with the many challenges of starting a new life in a new country could turn for support, comfort, and friendship. Over the years, the Society's purpose has become more community oriented, helping any worthwhile cause or individual regardless of ethnic background. It has donated tens of thousands of dollars to numerous charities and organizations in New Haven and across the State. St. Michael's Church in New Haven, the Salvation Army, Columbus House, Connecticut Hospice, and Iwo Jima Survivors are just a few of those organizations who have benefitted from their generosity. The Society has also provided scholarships to inner city youths.

The Santa Maria Maddalena Society preserves the traditions, heritage and culture of its members' ancestors, and also maintains ties to Atrani by providing assistance to the Santa Maria Maddalena Church in Italy and the society's Italian sister organization for its annual Festa to Santa Maria Maddalena which coincides with the feast day in Connecticut. During the week of July 22, a replica of the original statue of the saint, which was brought to the United States in 1914, is carried through the streets of Wooster Square. The saint is adorned with jewelry provided by the original members of the society. The feast procession culminates at St. Michael's Catholic Church where a high mass is celebrated. The feast celebration extends for four days with Italian music and food, and on Saturday evening, Neapolitan music is featured. The holiday is a time for reuniting with friends and providing younger generations with opportunities to learn about their culture.

People across the country struggle to create a sense of community—a sense of belonging. Over the course of its one hundred-fourteen-year history, the Society of Maria Maddalena has helped the families of Wooster Square do just that. For their many invaluable contributions as well as their continued support and friendship, I am proud to stand today to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to the members, past and present, of the Society of Maria Maddalena. The bonds of community