

for his release, saying that he was “detained only for peacefully exercising [the] right to free speech.” Prior to his arrest, Ferrer was offered the chance to go into exile and escape the regime’s brutality. However, he bravely chose to stay in Cuba and continue the struggle for freedom.

Regrettably, the arrest of Ferrer is not an isolated instance, but a common tactic of the regime. These arrests are part of an increasingly brutal campaign of oppression meant to silence Cuba’s growing pro-freedom movement. For example, we remember the daring protest of Andres Carrion Alvarez, the “mysterious” protester who dared to speak against the regime’s oppression during the Pope’s visit last month. Like Ferrer, he also languishes in prison for exercising his fundamental right to speak.

In fact, according to the Cuban Commission on Human Rights and National Reconciliation, the number of political arrests more than doubled in 2011 from those in 2010. This year, the regime is on course to make even more arrests. For the first three months in 2012, the Castro dictatorship has made 2,393 political arrests.

The days of the aging Castro dictatorship are numbered, and soon the real criminals will be held accountable for their crimes. Until then, we must call on the international community to stand with brave pro-democracy activists like Ferrer, and we must continue to recognize those who refuse to stay silent in the face of brutal oppression.

The Cuban people are demanding freedom, and many pay a high price for their courage. Here in the halls of Congress, the Cuban people are never forgotten. While Ferrer waits in a dark, humid cell covered with insect bites and growing thinner each day, he is never alone.

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL DAY OF REASON

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 27, 2012

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Thursday, May 3, 2012 as the 2012 National Day of Reason.

The National Day of Reason celebrates the application of reason and the positive impact it has had on humanity. It is also an opportunity to reaffirm the Constitutional separation of religion and government.

On March 24, I was proud to address the tens of thousands of Americans who gathered on the Mall for the Reason Rally. These individuals came from all around the country to deliver a simple message: Reason must be the guiding principle of our democracy. In a nation of citizens from so many different backgrounds and beliefs, the only way we can solve our problems is through cultivating intelligent, moral, and ethical interactions among all people.

Our Nation faces many problems—bringing our troops home from Afghanistan, creating jobs, educating our children, and protecting our safety net from irresponsible cuts. We will solve these issues through the application of reason. We must also protect women’s reproductive choices, the integrity of scientific re-

search, and our public education system from those who would hide behind religious dogma to undermine them.

Finally, the National Day of Reason is about taking time to improve our communities. Every year, events are held on this day that demonstrate the desire of secular Americans to help their fellow citizens and our Nation as a whole. Community service events, such as food drives and blood drives, are just some of the ways that people will be working to help those in need on the Day of Reason and throughout the year.

I encourage everyone to join in observing this day and focusing upon the employment of reason, critical thinking, the scientific method, and free inquiry to improve our world and our Nation.

IN RECOGNITION OF WORKERS’ MEMORIAL DAY

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 27, 2012

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to observe April 28 as Workers’ Memorial Day and to commemorate all the workers who have suffered or died from workplace injury and disease. April 28 marks a day of solidarity with workers around the world and of renewed commitment to occupational safety and health.

Since the creation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in 1970, the safety and rights of workers has become a high priority. Workplace fatalities have dropped by 65 percent. We have made significant progress in protecting Americans’ right to a safe and healthy workplace. However, we can and must do more to protect our workers and hold accountable employers who do not comply with safety standards and regulations. Even one death or injury is one too many.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, 3.3 million people in the United States suffer a workplace injury each year, and 12 Americans are killed each day on the job. The direct and indirect costs of these occupational injuries in the year 2010 alone are estimated to fall between \$159 and \$318 billion. The sad truth is that these injuries and deaths are entirely preventable.

As a proud member of the Congressional Labor and Working Families Caucus, I have strongly supported legislation to protect the safety and wellbeing of American workers and their families. I was a cosponsor of the “Protecting America’s Workers Act,” which would increase protections for whistle-blowers, increase the penalties for certain violations, and give more rights to injured workers. I have opposed any effort to repeal, delay, or weaken the enactment of any health and safety standards.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join workers and union members across the country in recognizing Workers’ Memorial Day and keeping in mind its slogan: “Remember the dead, fight for the living.” On this day, I would like to honor those who have lost their lives simply by going to work and their families who have sacrificed so much.

TRIBUTE TO HAROLD PHILLIPS

HON. JON RUNYAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 27, 2012

Mr. RUNYAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to pay tribute to a true American hero, Harold Phillips of Moorestown, New Jersey for his courageous and dedicated service to our Nation.

In 1942, President Roosevelt established a presidential directive giving African Americans an opportunity to be recruited into the United States Marine Corps, USMC. These African Americans, from all states, were not sent to the traditional Marine Corps boot camps of Parris Island, South Carolina and San Diego, California. Instead, African American Marines were segregated—experiencing basic training at Montford Point—a facility at Camp Lejeune near Jacksonville, North Carolina. Approximately twenty thousand African American Marines received basic training at Camp Montford Point between 1942 and 1949. The Montford Point Marines fought courageously during World War II in key battles such as Iwo Jima, Okinawa and Saipan.

Harold Phillips, a lifelong Burlington County resident, joined the Marines right out of high school in 1943, and went to Montford Point for Marine Corps boot camp. Harold went on to serve as a member of the Marine Corps’ first African-American combat unit, the 51st Defense Battalion. Like other African American servicemen, he served during a period of considerable racial discrimination but persevered and his example paved the way for future generations of African Americans to serve their country honorably in the military.

I was proud to cosponsor H.R. 2447, a bill to grant the Congressional Gold Medal to the Montford Point Marines, which was signed into law November 23, 2011. For their dedicated service to our Nation, I hope Harold Phillips and the other Montford Point Marines will soon be awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor Congress can bestow.

Harold has lived a life of patriotism and service to his community, his state and his country. He is a pioneer who forged a path for future generations of African American men and women to serve their country in the Armed Services. I am proud to call Harold Phillips my constituent and I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking him for his service.

CONGRATULATING LT. COLONEL FREDRICK L. SPAULDING FOR WINNING THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 27, 2012

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I am honored and humbled to rise today to honor a fellow Hoosier, Lt. Colonel Fredrick L. Spaulding, who was recently awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, our Nation’s second highest award for military valor, for his extraordinary heroism at the Battle of Fire Base Ripcord during the Vietnam War.

Between April and July 1970, the United States and North Vietnamese forces fought for control of Fire Support Base Ripcord in the A Shau Valley. July of that year saw the heaviest fighting for control of the base. This battle would mark the last major confrontation between U.S. ground forces and North Vietnamese forces in the war. Then-Captain Spaulding was tasked with planning and coordinating all air assets involved in the orderly withdrawal of the two U.S. Companies being besieged at the Base by elements of four North Vietnamese Army divisions.

Although our soldiers fought bravely they were significantly outnumbered by the North Vietnamese. By July 22nd, the United States' position became completely untenable; and due to heavy anti-aircraft fire from the enemy, extraction of U.S. soldiers had to be suspended. Throughout the night the U.S. troops hung on often being forced to engage in hand to hand combat to defend themselves.

On July 23rd—the last day of the battle—Captain Spaulding voluntarily left the safety of Camp Evans to provide direct aid to his besieged comrades and over the course of the day—at great personal risk—he helped safely extract the final U.S. personnel.

According to the official account, Captain Spaulding “took command of a Scout helicopter to locate, mark and direct fire from all available land and air assets against enemy positions. While taking intense fire, Captain Spaulding directly exposed himself to enemy fire while marking enemy positions with smoke grenades. . . . Once the grenades were exhausted Captain Spaulding fired his sidearm at the enemy until his helicopter was rendered inoperable by the mounting enemy fire. When the pilot refused to continue the mission, Captain Spaulding procured a second helicopter. The second aircraft was subsequently damaged by enemy fire, as was the third helicopter that Spaulding obtained. In a fourth helicopter, Captain Spaulding returned to the area of operations to successfully continue the evacuation of the two besieged companies by continuing to draw fire upon himself and the aircraft.”

Major General Benjamin L. Harrison who was Colonel and Commanding Officer of the 3rd Brigade 101st Airborne Division at the time of the Battle of Ripcord, described Captain Spaulding as: “. . . one of the most outstanding combat officers I have observed during my two tours in Vietnam . . . his battle skill was instrumental in saving many lives that day.”

Four years ago, with the support of some of Colonel Spaulding's old comrades, I petitioned the Army to recommend the Colonel for the Congressional Medal of Honor for his action during the Battle of Ripcord. Although the Army concurred that Colonel Spaulding's actions were extraordinary and worthy of suitable recognition, they declined to support the petition for the Congressional Medal of Honor. I personally believe that the Army is wrong in this instance. There is no doubt in my mind that Colonel Spaulding earned the Congressional Medal of Honor that day. Nevertheless, it is my distinct honor to congratulate Colonel Spaulding on his receiving the Distinguished Service Cross.

In addition to his military honors, Colonel Spaulding's leadership and mentoring abilities has been recognized by his peers through membership in the Army Ranger Hall of Fame,

the Officer Candidate School (OCS) Hall of Fame, Distinguished Member of the Regiment (506th Airborne Infantry Regiment), and the presidency of the 82nd Airborne Division Association.

Even after his retirement from the Army, and with the unwavering support of his wife Micki, Colonel Spaulding continued to serve his community, state and country. To his community he donated his time to coach the local high school golf team, and he frequently speaks at various school and association events about the value of military service. To his beloved state of Indiana, he has shared his extensive military experience and knowledge by helping to train the men and women of the Indiana National Guard. To his country, he was instrumental in launching a new company dedicated to national defense and the training of veterans.

Colonel Spaulding's life of service, and his unselfish heroism and acts of bravery while in combat, are an inspiration to all Americans. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing this outstanding Hoosier! Thank you and congratulations, Colonel.

IN HONOR OF THOMAS L.P.
O'DONNELL OF HINGHAM, MA

HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 27, 2012

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mr. Thomas L.P. O'Donnell, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to his hometown of Hingham, MA, and to commend him for over fifty years of dedicated service to his community.

Tom is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School. He was elected First Marshall of his class and has served as an elected director of the Harvard Alumni Association as well as an Overseer of Harvard University. He currently is a retired partner at Ropes & Gray LLP in Boston, where he has practiced law since 1949.

Tom and his wife Carol moved to Hingham in 1955, just three years after they were married. Tom served as a member and chairman of the Advisory Committee and of the Board of Appeals. Mr. O'Donnell was first elected Town Moderator in 1967, and he has been re-elected every year since then. Mr. O'Donnell served in the United States Navy during World War II, and was recalled during the Korean War, attaining the rank of Lieutenant.

Tom has been active in educational, charitable, and civic affairs. He helped in the effort by the Trustees of Reservations to acquire World's End in 1967. This is perhaps the most visited place in Hingham. In 2001, both Tom and his wife, Carol, were recipients of the Alexis de Tocqueville award from the United Way of Massachusetts Bay.

Mr. Speaker, Tom is known for his quick wit, his sense of humor, his loyalty to his friends, and his unquestioned integrity. He had the good fortune to marry Carol in 1952, and they were married for 58 years. They raised four children and have been blessed with nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to take the floor of the House today to join with Thomas L.P. O'Donnell's family, friends, and con-

temporaries to thank him for his remarkable service to his community of Hingham and to the United States of America.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND
LEGACY OF DR. LEROY T. WALKER

G.K. BUTTERFIELD

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 27, 2012

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life of my dear friend, American coaching legend and pioneer, Dr. LeRoy T. Walker or “Doc” as he was affectionately known. Dr. Walker's life touched countless athletes, students and loved ones worldwide before he entered into eternal rest on April 23, at the age of 93.

Born the youngest of 13 children and the grandson of slaves, Dr. Walker's inherent goodwill and tenacity catapulted him to unknown heights, breaking athletic records and color barriers. He excelled at Benedict College as an honor student and varsity tri-athlete in football, basketball and track. Initially, Dr. Walker sought to pursue a career in medicine, but due to extremely long wait lists at medical colleges that would admit African-Americans, he chose another path instead. With his heart set on service, he went on to earn a master's in health and physical education from Columbia University and a doctorate in exercise physiology and biomechanics from New York University.

Dr. Walker knew that his education was not only for his personal betterment, but would benefit his surrounding community as well. Instead of accepting lucrative offers upon graduating, he chose to use his skills in academia in hopes of extending the same opportunities afforded to him.

He began his coaching career in 1945 as the basketball and football coach for N.C. College for Negroes—now known as North Carolina Central University (NCCU). He later founded the college's first track and field team as a way to keep his athletes in shape during the off-season.

It was during his tenure at NCCU, I had the pleasure of meeting and befriending the man with a golden heart. Upon the news of his passing, many of his former athletes expressed condolences, referring to him as the smartest individual they've ever known and always “ahead of the game.”

At the Montreal games in 1976, Dr. Walker placed NCCU and Durham, North Carolina in the public eye, when he was named the first African-American U.S. Olympic track and field coach. The American team brought home 22 medals that year. In total, Dr. Walker coached and mentored 11 Olympic medalists, 30 national champions, and 100 All-Americans.

A man dedicated to both athletics and academics, he served as Vice-Chancellor and Chancellor of the NCCU. His relentless devotion to students in the classroom and on the sports fields compelled the NCCU to grant Dr. Walker the title of Chancellor Emeritus of the university.

In 1986, his dynamic leadership and knack for coaching athletes into medalists led to his induction into the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame. He later would be named U.S. Olympic Committee President in 1996, the first African-