

pushed us all to a better state of affairs through engagement in initiatives like the National Cyber Security Summit, TechNet New England, the Cyber Security Industry Alliance, and many others. He has also testified in Congress on a number of occasions, lending his expertise to our deliberations here in order to ensure that our nation remains a leader in cyberspace. Art retains the special ability to see beyond the visible arc of technological advances and effectively communicate about an incredibly dynamic landscape in order to positively impact policy.

I am honored to extend my deep gratitude and praise to Art as he retires, and to be able to call him a friend. I wish him the best of luck in all future endeavors.

FAIRNESS IN STUDENT LOAN
LENDING ACT

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2015

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, in an effort to provide students and families much needed relief and protection from crippling student loan debt, Congressman JIM McDERMOTT (D-WA), a senior member of the Budget and Ways and Means Committees, today introduced legislation that would save students and parents thousands of dollars by allowing student loan borrowers to refinance their federal and private student loans. The Fairness in Student Loan Lending Act will also allow holders of private student loans the ability to discharge their debt in bankruptcy, which is not currently permitted.

Federal law currently prevents responsible student loan borrowers with federal student loans in good standing from refinancing their loans to a lower rate. This has left millions of students and parents holding loans with interest rates of 7 percent. Under the Fairness in Student Loan Lending Act, student loan borrowers in good standing will be able to refinance their loans to a rate equal to the 10-year Treasury note on the last day of business of the previous month plus one percent. For example, a borrower who refinances on February 2015 would refinance to a rate of 2.64%.

While federal law allows borrowers to discharge many types of debt during bankruptcy, including car loans and gambling debt, student loan holders are not permitted to discharge their student loans during bankruptcy. The Fairness in Student Loan Lending Act provides a mechanism that allows borrowers holding private loans the ability to discharge these private loans during bankruptcy.

HONORING DONNA WILTSHERE

HON. RODNEY DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2015

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor Donna Wiltshire who recently retired from the United States Department of Agriculture after serving Illinoisans for over 43 years. In 1971, Ms. Wiltshire began her career with the Farmers Home Administra-

tion as a Clerk Stenographer on the State Office's Housing Staff. After 15 years, she was promoted to Single Family Housing Specialist where she proudly served Illinois for the remainder of her career. She cherished opportunities to posit her own thoughts and to hear the ideas of others, creating a vibrant and constructive working environment for all around her.

Ms. Wiltshire's dedication and passion for rural development is seemingly unmatched and has not gone unrecognized by her colleagues. Ms. Wiltshire worked tirelessly to assist families with the home ownership process, knowing that home ownership has a lasting effect on families and communities.

In her retirement, Ms. Wiltshire looks forward to spending more time with her four grandchildren and continuing her life of service through her church.

I am proud to honor Donna Wiltshire today and would like to wish her a happy and fulfilling retirement and thank her for her service and dedication to the entire community.

IN HONOR OF THE REVEREND
CURTIS RAINES, SR.

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2015

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart and solemn remembrance that I rise today to pay tribute to the Reverend Curtis Raines, Sr., President of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia and beloved Pastor of New Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church in Macon, Georgia and Mount Zion Baptist Church in Bolingbroke, Georgia.

Sadly, Rev. Raines passed away on Saturday, February 21, 2015. He leaves in his wake many heavy hearts among his church family, his supporters, and his community. On Friday, February 27, 2015, a memorial service will be held in his honor at New Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church in Macon, followed by a Homegoing Celebration on Saturday, February 28, 2015 at Fellowship Bible Baptist Church in Warner Robins, Georgia.

A Georgia man through and through, Rev. Raines was born on September 22, 1947. He studied at public schools in Upson County before attending the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Tennessee, the Georgia Baptist Theological Seminary, and Mercer University in Macon. He was licensed in the ministry in 1980 and ordained as a minister in 1981. He earned a Bachelor of Theology degree and a Master of Pastoral Ministry degree from Emmanuel Bible College in 1995 and 1997, respectively.

Rev. Raines worked at Warner Robins Air Force Base as Production General Manager of Sheet Metal Manufacturing for more than 27 years until his retirement in 1993. He has served as Pastor of New Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church for 30 years and Mount Zion Baptist Church for 27 years. Throughout his pastoral career, always seeking to improve the craft of Christian ministry and discipleship, Rev. Raines became Vice President and, later, President of the General Missionary Baptist Convention of Georgia, Inc. (GMBC). Founded in 1870, the GMBC is the largest organization of African Americans in the state of

Georgia. A revered leader, Rev. Raines oversaw a membership of over 800 churches, representing over 550,000 African-American Baptists in Georgia.

He further enriched the spiritual lives of those around him by serving as President of Congress of the Mount Pleasant Association, Secretary of the Union Baptist and Educational Association, Chairman of the Board for the Adopt-A-Role Model in Macon, President of the Sixth District-General Missionary Baptist Convention, President of the Bellevue/Hillcrest Ministerial Association, and member on the Board of Directors for Parents to Support Public Schools, Board of Directors of the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc., and Board of Trustees at Wesley Glen Ministries.

A charismatic leader with an infectious spiritual zeal, Rev. Raines was known and loved in the Middle Georgia area and throughout the state. He has received numerous awards and commendations for his good works in Macon and in Bibb County. Rev. Raines was truly a man of integrity who exuded the genuine principles and values of Christian discipleship.

George Washington Carver once said, "No individual has any right to come into the world and go out of it without leaving behind distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it." Through his impact on the spirit, the faith, and the very wellbeing of his community, Rev. Raines certainly fulfilled his higher calling. We are all so blessed that Rev. Raines passed this way and during his life's journey did so much for so many for so long.

Rev. Raines accomplished many things throughout his life but none of this would have been possible without the love and support of his beloved wife, Barbara, and children, Shun, Curtis, Jr., Varina, and Bryant.

Mr. Speaker, my wife Vivian and I, along with the more than 700,000 residents of Georgia's Second Congressional District salute Reverend Curtis Raines, Sr. for his outstanding accomplishments in the ministry and for his dedication to his community. I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join us in extending our deepest sympathies to Rev. Raines's family, friends and loved ones during this difficult time. We pray that they will be consoled and comforted by an abiding faith and the Holy Spirit in the days, weeks and months ahead.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF NORTHWEST FLORIDA'S BE-
LOVED J. EARLE BOWDEN

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2015

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the life and legacy of one of Pensacola's most influential and beloved citizens, J. Earle Bowden. A native and near life-long resident of the Florida Panhandle, Mr. Bowden was known throughout the community for his decades as a journalist and editor-in-chief of the Pensacola News Journal, as well as for his tireless work preserving the local historical sites and natural treasures. All of Northwest Florida mourns the loss of a true icon.

J. Earle Bowden was born and raised in the small town of Altha, Florida, and after his high school graduation, he studied journalism at

Florida State, where he also wrote for the Florida Flambeau. Following his college studies, Mr. Bowden joined the United States Air Force, where he served as a military journalist during the Korean War. After completing his military service, Mr. Bowden moved back to Northwest Florida to raise his family and pursue a career in journalism, and in the fall of 1953, propitious circumstances and his considerable talent landed Mr. Bowden a position as a writer with the Pensacola News Journal.

First a sports writer and cartoonist for the paper, Mr. Bowden's journalistic talent, dedication to the Northwest Florida community, and assiduous work ethic saw him rise through the ranks, becoming editor of the News Journal's editorial page in 1965 and editor-in-chief of the entire paper one year later. It was in his position heading the paper's editorial pages that Mr. Bowden began to forge his legacy and cement his impact on the greater Pensacola area. We are blessed to have perhaps the world's most beautiful beaches located in Northwest Florida, and, in 1965, Mr. Bowden began advocating for the creation of a national park as a way to preserve this natural beauty. Thanks in large part to his efforts, Mr. Bowden's dream was realized just a few years later when legislation was signed into law on January 8, 1971 to establish the Gulf Islands National Seashore. Today, Gulf Islands National Seashore is one of the most visited components of the National Park System, and, in recognition of his work, the road linking eastern Pensacola Beach to Navarre Beach is named Earle Bowden Way.

In addition to his successful work preserving the Northwest Florida environment, Mr. Bowden was also deeply dedicated and involved with the preservation of the many important historical landmarks in Northwest Florida. He helped found several important organizations, including the Seville Square Historic District and the Historic Pensacola Preservation Board. He also served in numerous leadership capacities, including as president of West Florida Historic Preservation Inc., whose headquarters is named in his honor, president of the Pensacola Historical Society, president of the University of West Florida Foundation, chairman of the City of Pensacola Architectural Review Board, president of the Pensacola Bay Area Coalition on Literacy, and general chairman for the Galvez Bicentennial Celebration, amongst many others.

Mr. Bowden was also deeply committed to advancing the field of journalism and writing, as evidenced by his long tenure teaching journalistic writing at the University of West Florida, which awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1985. Mr. Bowden was also a widely published author of non-fiction, fiction, and illustration books. Among his published writings are the novel "Look and Tremble," his memoir "Always the Rivers Flow," a pictorial history "Pensacola: Florida's First Place City", and the non-fiction book "Gulf Islands: The Sands of All, Preserving America's Largest National Seashore." He also contributed writing, editing, and illustration to several books on Pensacola history including: "Florida in the Civil War: 1860 through Reconstruction"; "Siege! Spain and Britain: Battle of Pensacola"; "Iron Horse in the Pinelands: Building West Florida's Railroad 1881–1883"; and "Guardians on the Gulf and Pensacola: Spaniards to Space Age."

In recognition of Mr. Bowden's incalculable contributions to Northwest Florida, he has re-

ceived dozens of awards from a wide range of organizations including: the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation's Florida Preservationist of the Year; two national awards for editorial writing from the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge; the Pensacola Kiwanis Club Civic Award; the BIP Awards' Professional Leader of the Year; Pensacola Junior College's Distinguished Citizen of the Year; the Law Day Liberty Bell Award; the PACE Pioneer Award; FSU Distinguished Alumnus; and three statewide awards from Florida Architects for his work in historic preservation.

Mr. Speaker, throughout his long and distinguished life, J. Earle Bowden worked tirelessly on behalf of the Northwest Florida community that he loved. Although he was a man of letters, his impact on our community cannot be fully captured in words, and his legacy will forever live on in the many historical sites and natural resources that he worked so judiciously to protect. On behalf of the United States Congress, I am proud to recognize the life and lasting legacy of J. Earle Bowden. My wife Vicki and I extend our deepest prayers and condolences to his wife Mary Louise Bowden; sons, Steven Earle Bowden (wife, Pamela House) and Randall Clark Bowden; granddaughter, Jessica Johanna Bowden; brother, Franklin Lamar Bowden; nephews, Franklin Lamar Bowden, Jr. and James Marlon Bowden; and the entire Bowden family.

HONORING HARLON BLOCK, ON THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF IWO JIMA

HON. FILEMON VELA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2015

Mr. VELA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor South Texas native Harlon Block. Seventy years ago, he was one of six men who were part of an iconic photo that would lift the spirits of an entire nation—the raising of the American flag on Iwo Jima.

Born in Yorktown, Texas, in 1924, Corporal Block later moved with his family to Weslaco, Texas in the Rio Grande Valley.

Harlon Block attended Weslaco High School, where he led the Weslaco Panther football team to a conference championship and was named All South Texas End. Before the end of his senior year, Corporal Block and seven of his teammates enlisted in the Marine Corps. As a result, the school accelerated their studies and held a special early graduation ceremony in January 1943.

Harlon Block left for Marine Corps basic training in February 1943, and he then attended parachute training school. Corporal Block was assigned to the First Marine Parachute Regiment. After the Parachute Regiment was disbanded, he was transferred to Company E, Second Battalion, 28th Marines, Fifth Marine Division.

On February 19, 1945, Corporal Block and his company took part in the invasion of the heavily defended island of Iwo Jima. One day into the battle, Corporal Block and the 28th Marines began their assault on Mount Suribachi, a 550-foot-high extinct volcano. After a three-day onslaught, the unit reached the top and defeated the last remaining Japanese defenders. Corporal Block, along with

Sergeant Michael Strank, Corporal René Arthur Gagnon, Corporal Ira Hayes, Private First Class Franklin Runyon Soursley, and Pharmacist's Mate Second Class John "Doc" Bradley, defiantly raised the U.S. flag atop the mountain. Corporal Block guided the base of the pole into the volcanic ash while the others raised the flag upward. This is the scene that was captured in the famous photo at the Battle of Iwo Jima.

Corporal Harlon Henry Block was killed in action on March 1, 1945 and never saw the famous photo.

His remains were interred beside the Iwo Jima Memorial at the Marine Military Academy in Harlingen, Texas, which is a replica of the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Virginia. On several occasions I have had the opportunity to visit the memorial located in my Congressional District, and each time I am moved by the courage and dedication of those who fought to win World War II. This memorial is a special place for the Rio Grande Valley, and serves as a reminder that our armed forces and our nation can overcome the greatest of odds. Today, we remember the bravery and valor of Corporal Block and all those who fought at the Battle of Iwo Jima.

KHOJALY TRAGEDY

HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2015

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to again ask my colleagues to join me in remembering the devastating atrocities that took place in Azerbaijani town of Khojaly on February 26, 1992. Thanks to Armenian and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) forces over the course of 22 hours, 613 civilian lives were lost. Innocent children, women and elderly men were brutally murdered.

Since this tragedy took place in the early 1990s, Azerbaijan has worked to heal and become a successful country, with a booming economy. As a result, the economy of Azerbaijan is the fastest growing among the CIS states. In the turbulent geopolitical region, Azerbaijan is a reliable partner of the United States. Moreover, Azerbaijan is a close ally and trade partner with another strong American ally—Israel—in the region.

Mr. Speaker, we must stand close by our allies. That is why I urge my colleagues to recognize the human tragedy that occurred in Azerbaijan 23 years ago. Please, join me and all of our our Azerbaijani friends in commemorating the lives lost during the Khojaly massacre.

DEFENDING OUR GREAT LAKES ACT OF 2015

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2015

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to come from the State of Michigan, the Great Lakes State. In Michigan, our very identity is defined by the Great Lakes. For so many of us from Michigan, our lives revolve