

establishment of the Peace Corps, remarked that, "The initial reactions to the Peace Corps proposal are convincing proof that we have, in this country, an immense reservoir of such men and women—eager to sacrifice their energies and time and toil to the cause of world peace and human progress." As the proud father of a Peace Corps volunteer, I know what was true in 1961 is true today; Peace Corps Volunteers are an outstanding group of men and women serving the cause of humanity across the globe.

During this National Peace Corps Week, I want to honor the service and commitment of the Peace Corps Volunteers from Oregon's 3rd Congressional district and express my pride in my fellow Oregonians who have chosen to devote years of their lives in service to others.

In particular, I want to recognize those Peace Corps Volunteers who have begun their service in the past year: Laura Baetscher (Honduras); Laura Bradford (Belize); Meaghan Corwin (Armenia); Paul Council (Moldova); Reiana Darosa (Guatemala); Anna Dinh (Cameroon); Alana Harris (Guatemala); Matthew Jones (Malawi); Daniel Koza (Uganda); Serene Loh (Botswana); Elizabeth Nolan (Nicaragua); David Schilmoeller (Bulgaria); Lacey Sugarman (Uganda); Allison Wells (Jordan); and Erik Wells (Jordan).

Their work to empower people and communities in developing countries is an invaluable contribution to creating a safe and prosperous world, building bridges between America and the world, and establishing a better future for people everywhere.

THE TAXPAYER'S FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Taxpayers' Freedom of Conscience Act, which forbids federal funds from being used for population control or "family planning." The recent executive order allowing those who perform and/or promote abortion overseas to receive taxpayer money brings new urgency to the need to protect pro-life Americans from being forced to subsidize abortion.

It is not enough to say that "family planning" groups may not use federal funds to perform or promote abortion. After all, since money is fungible, federal funding of any activities of these organizations forces taxpayers to underwrite the organizations' abortion activities. Thus, the Taxpayers' Freedom of Conscience Act is the only way to protect taxpayers from having to support what they "disbelieve and abhor."

Thomas Jefferson eloquently made the case for Taxpayer's Freedom of Conscience Act when he said that: "To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical."

I hope all my colleagues will join me in helping end the "sinful and tyrannical" policy of forcing pro-life Americans to subsidize, either directly or indirectly, abortion by cosponsoring the Taxpayer's Freedom of Conscience Act.

HONORING MR. BEN GRAY

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Mr. TERRY. Madam Speaker, Black History Month provides a wonderful opportunity to recognize the many successful and talented African-Americans in my district. Today it is my great honor to recognize one in particular—Mr. Ben Gray.

Ben Gray is an outstanding advocate for the youth of Omaha, Nebraska. After graduating from high school, Gray joined the U.S. Air Force. In 1973, he joined KETV television station located in Omaha. During his time at KETV, he worked his way from photo lab assistant to news photographer and producer and host of "Kaleidoscope", a weekly half-hour public service program. He has received local and national awards as a reporter and photographer.

Ben is actively involved with at-risk youth volunteering his time with C.W. Boxing Club. He is also Chairman of the Omaha Public Schools African-American Achievement Council, a group that works to close the achievement gap between black and white students. Ben is a familiar face, as he remains active in promoting equal rights and helping students to achieve success. He is active, involved and committed to helping children and bettering our community. Our nation would benefit from more people like Ben.

RECOGNIZING BOSNIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. RUSS CARNAHAN

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bosnian independence. As a founding member and Co-Chairman of the Bosnian Caucus, and having the distinct pleasure of representing a growing, vibrant community of Bosnian-Americans in St. Louis, Missouri—one of the largest Bosnian-American communities in the U.S.—I am pleased to offer these encouraging words to recognize March 1 as Bosnian Independence Day.

Their appreciation for this country and opportunities it affords is reflected in their hard work and determination to make a difference in their communities and nation. Collectively, and as self-reliant individuals they have reinvigorated our St. Louis region, and exemplify the definition of good neighbors and friends.

With an understanding that this nation's greatness was built by those who sought out America and all she has to offer, we can during these hard times take comfort, learn by their example, and see that with a sense of community and purpose there is no challenge too great to overcome.

Today, I join Bosnian-Americans with great pride and hearty congratulations.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TEACHING GEOGRAPHY IS FUNDAMENTAL ACT

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Teaching Geography is Fundamental Act, a bill to help ensure that all young people acquire the vital global knowledge they need to compete in today's increasingly-connected world. I thank my colleagues, Representatives BLUNT, WALZ, and EHLERS, for their leadership and hard work on this issue.

Madam Speaker, our nation is facing a crisis in geographic knowledge. Sixty-three percent of young adults cannot locate Iraq on a map of the Middle East. Seventy-five percent cannot find Iran. Half cannot locate New York on a map of the United States.

These statistics are emblematic of a general lack of knowledge about the world that is troubling in a time when the United States must compete in a global marketplace. We need Americans to know and understand the countries and cultures that are or could become our political and economic partners. It is unacceptable that seventy-one percent of young Americans do not know that the United States is the world's largest exporter of goods. It is unacceptable that, despite the fact that it is the world's largest democracy, nearly half of young adults do not know where India is located.

We need to improve our children's understanding of their world both within and beyond our country's borders. The Teaching Geography is Fundamental Act will do just that. It would authorize federal funding to improve student achievement, increase teacher training, encourage education research, and develop effective instructional materials and strategies for geography education. It will leverage and expand support for geography education partnerships. And it will prepare America's students to move forward and succeed in a rapidly-changing, competitive, global economy.

It is time to be sure that American citizens are informed citizens of the world. I ask my colleagues to join Congressmen BLUNT, WALZ, EHLERS, and me and support the Teaching Geography is Fundamental Act.

PAYDAY LOAN REFORM ACT OF 2009

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the "Payday Loan Reform Act of 2009." During turbulent economic times like these, many Americans are searching for ways to meet their financial obligations. It is unfortunate that some in the financial services industry have actually profited from the financial pain of hard-working citizens who are doing their very best to provide for their families. This Congress should not and will not sit back and watch that happen.