

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

WELCOMING THE 39TH BIENNIAL CLERGY-LAITY CONGRESS OF THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF AMERICA TO WASHINGTON, DC

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2008

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I would like to welcome more than 700 delegates and 1500 total participants to the 39th Biennial Clergy-Laity Congress of the Greek Orthodox Church of America to Washington, DC. The theme of the 39th Biennial Congress is Gather My People to My Home, which recognizes the value of each person and, as Archbishop Demetrios of America has written, acknowledges that many people are struggling and seeking a spiritual home where they can find peace and hope.

The Greek Orthodox community in San Francisco is an example of the beautiful diversity of my hometown. I am proud that several of my constituents, including Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco and Fathers Stephen Kyriacou and Aris Metrakos and lay leaders from the Holy Trinity Church and Annunciation Cathedral of San Francisco, will be in Washington for the Congress this week. I would also like to congratulate my friend Andy Manatos who will serve as the Chairman of Clergy Laity Congress during this conference.

The House of Representatives is blessed to have had many Greek Orthodox members of Congress over the years. Today, the community is well-represented by leaders such as JOHN SARBANES of Maryland, ZACK SPACE of Ohio, NIKI TSONGAS of Massachusetts and GUS BILIRAKIS of Florida.

Members of Congress have expressed strong support for the Greek Orthodox community through the years including awarding the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian award bestowed by the Congress, to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in recognition of his outstanding and enduring contributions toward religious understanding and peace.

The religious freedom of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Greek Orthodox community continues to be a top priority for Members of Congress. A bipartisan group of members on the House Foreign Affairs Committee recently sent a letter to the Prime Minister of Turkey urging him to do everything possible to preserve the Ecumenical Patriarchate and to end restrictions and practices which threaten the viability of this nearly 2,000-year old spiritual beacon. The millions of Orthodox Christians in America and around the world can be assured that Congress will continue to advocate for their right to worship and practice their faith without undue government interference.

As Greek Orthodox clergy, parishioners, and hierarchs visit our nation's capitol this week, I thank them for their leadership and wish them a successful conference.

ENCOURAGE INITIATIVE AND
SELF-ESTEEM

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2008

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge support for a bill I have just introduced, H.R. 6457, the "Encourage Initiative and Promote Self-Esteem Act".

There are many people in our country who receive Social Security Disability benefits (SSD) because they have a "waxing and waning" disease—Behcet's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Lupus, Parkinson's, Cancer, AIDS and Arthritis are examples of "waxing and waning" diseases.

This process of seeking SSD and keeping it is often times an adversarial one. The climate of suspicion that applicants and recipients say they feel leaves many to view the Social Security Administration (SSA) with a jaundiced eye. Everyone who actually gains disability benefits remembers the hoops of fire they had to jump through during the application process. As a result, many people often do not consider a try at working, fearing that the SSA will use that against them to deny future benefits. With concerns over fraudulent claims, I can understand how this environment came to be. But that doesn't make it right.

For people with "waxing and waning" diseases and conditions, they know that they will have good days and bad. They know that, barring a cure, they will always be sick, but that does not diminish their spirit. There needs to be a program that encourages people in this situation to secure temporary employment when they feel they can work without placing their SSD at risk for the times they cannot work.

H.R. 6457 would install a system based on a sliding scale. The more money one earns, the fewer benefits he or she receives. But there will be a built-in incentive to stay the course because the total monthly income when working will be more than either the work income or SSD.

Imagine a situation where those on SSD who have diseases that "wax and wane" could work, without fear, when able. That would be a lot of money put back into the Treasury in payroll withholdings and taxes—and more money put into the economy in increased purchasing, not to mention the contribution to society and elevated self-esteem of the workers. Think about the faith these people would have in a system of government that treats its people with dignity and respect instead of suspicion and contempt.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 6457 to improve the lives of thousands of Americans.

IN HONOR OF MR. WILLIAM T.
MUNS

HON. JASON ALTMIRE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2008

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. William T. Muns, a native son of Beaver County, Pennsylvania who is an outstanding champion for veterans.

From 1965 thru 1968, Bill proudly served his country as a member of the United States Army. This service included a one year tour in Vietnam, serving as a Financial Liaison Specialist with the 709th Maintenance Battalion in the Mekong Delta Area. Upon his return stateside, he completed his enlistment with the 82nd Airborne Division, Ft. Bragg, North Carolina.

In September 2001, Bill accepted his current position as Beaver County Director of Veterans Affairs. Since taking this position, Bill and his staff have increased the federal benefits for county veterans from \$14 million to \$42 million. This exceptional service has been recognized by the Pennsylvania State Adjutant General.

As a charter life member of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 862, Bill has served as treasurer and was recognized as Vietnam Veteran of the Year for 2002. In addition to this prestigious award, Bill has also received a number of honors from the community, including being named Beaver County Jaycees Man of the Year 2003, the State Veterans Service Officer Award for 2005–2006, and the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 862 Distinguished Service Award for 2001.

Bill is also a husband, father, and grandfather. He is married to Virginia Martin Muns and together they have three children—Laura Evangelista, Ted Muns, and Jenn Basinger. Bill and Ginger also have five grandchildren—Rebecca, Gabriella and Adam Evangelista, and Mason and Ethan Muns.

Bill and Ginger will be missed and treasured by the Beaver County veterans' community for years to come. I want to commend them for their long and distinguished commitment to helping America's heroes. I wish them a wonderful retirement in their new home of Sarasota County, Florida and thank them for the tremendous service that they have provided to our community.

CONGRATULATIONS TO BASF
FREEPORT ON THEIR 50TH ANNI-
VERSARY

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2008

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, 2008 marks the 50th anniversary of the opening of the BASF Corporation's Freeport, Texas facility. Freeport

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

is located in Brazoria County in my congressional district. I am pleased to take this opportunity to congratulate the management and employees of BASF Freeport on 50 great years, and thank the people of BASF Freeport for their contributions to Freeport's economy.

The story of the BASF Freeport began when the owners of BASF Overzee N.V., a subsidiary of Badische Anilin- & Soda Fabrik A. G. (BASF), Ludwigshafen, Germany, and the Dow Chemical Company, Midland, Michigan, agreed to form Dow Badische Chemical Company. Dow Badische was endowed with the chemical process technology of the European parent as well as the managerial and marketing knowledge of their U.S. parent.

The new company chose a site adjacent to Dow Chemical's Texas Division of Freeport, Texas for its initial production. In December of 1959 the plant began producing Acrylic Acid and Acrylic Esters. In 1960 and 1961 the plants added production units for butanol and caprolactam.

Through the years, the BASF facility experienced tremendous increases in its capacity as well as in the number of production plants and employees that comprise the BASF Freeport workforce. For example, in 1967 BASF built a continuous butyl acrylate plant, while a new caprolactam complex was completed in 1968; and a new oxo alcohol facility was completed in 1970, adding 2-Ethylhexanol to the product line.

BASF acquired 100 percent ownership of Dow Badische in 1978. Soon after the change in ownership took place, two new chemical plants were constructed in Freeport, one an acrylic acid facility and the other a neopentyl glycol facility. Further significant expansions have included two acrylic monomers plants, an expansion to the polycaprolactam unit and most recently a new superabsorbent polymer plant.

In addition to its contributions to Brazoria County's economy, BASF has improved the life of the residents of Brazoria County through its steadfast support of numerous civic organizations. BASF has also earned the trust of its neighbors by making every effort to observe basic principles of safety and environmental performance in all its operations.

BASF Freeport's success is due to the commitment, hard work and innovative ability of its employees. I am certain that these same attributes will ensure a continued healthy growth for the company, which will, in turn, continue to benefit all of Brazoria County. It is therefore my pleasure to congratulate BASF Freeport on their 50th anniversary.

RECOGNIZING JOHN AND BONNIE ENSTROM FOR CREATING VETERANS LAKE PARK IN HONOR OF AMERICA'S VETERANS

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2008

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor two of my constituents, true community servants, Mr. John and Bonnie Enstrom.

The Enstrom's built the Veterans Lake Park in Ramsey, Minnesota to honor our fallen heroes. The park hosts the only monument in State dedicated to all Minnesotans who lost

their lives as a result of the global War on Terror. The monument also contains a list of veterans who died in the Iraq war to protect our Nation's freedom.

Over \$1 million has been personally invested by the Enstrom's to ensure that the park is well-kept and beautiful. Veterans visit the park and enjoy its quiet, relaxing environment. It has been seen as a safe haven to help the Vets mentally and emotionally recover.

Our Nation's heroes sacrificed their comforts and safety so that Americans can enjoy their continued freedoms. For their great efforts, veterans deserve much from the American people. Its efforts like those of the Enstrom's that truly show our appreciation for these heroes.

Madam Speaker, it is my honor to recognize and congratulate Mr. and Mrs. John Enstrom for their exemplary service to our Nation's heroes. The time and work that they both have sacrificed to serve the military men and women of our great State of Minnesota will not be forgotten.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2008

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, on July 8, 2008, I was avoidably detained and missed three votes: H.R. 3981, H.R. 1423, and H.R. 4199.

Had I been present I would have voted "yes" on H.R. 3981, "yes" on H.R. 1423 and "yes" on H.R. 4199. (vote Nos. 471, 472, 473)

HONORING COLONEL PAUL J. KENNEDY OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HON. DAVID E. PRICE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2008

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor COL Paul J. Kennedy of the United States Marine Corps. Colonel Kennedy is finishing his tenure as the Marine Corps liaison to the House of Representatives, and will soon head to my home State to take command of the Second Marine Regiment, Second Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

During the last 2 years, Colonel Kennedy has led the small contingent of Marines that serve as the direct interface between the Marine Corps and the members and staff of the House. Under his leadership, Colonel Kennedy and his colleagues have established strong professional relationships throughout this body, building trust, confidence, and mutual commitment between the Marine Corps and congressional leaders. His integrity, knowledge, and personal attention to the needs and interests of members have garnered great respect and appreciation throughout this Chamber.

I have particularly benefited from Colonel Kennedy's leadership as he has become an integral part of the efforts of the House De-

mocracy Assistance Commission (HDAC), which I lead along with Representative DAVID DREIER. During the last 2 years, our Commission has traveled to numerous far-flung destinations in the service of our mission to strengthen the capabilities of legislatures in developing democracies. Not only has Colonel Kennedy organized and escorted every single HDAC delegation, he has jumped at the chance to do so, foregoing travel to more luxurious destinations in favor of our trips to developing nations like Liberia, Afghanistan, and Haiti. He has strongly supported the mission of our Commission, and has moved mountains to ensure that we can carry out our work, no matter what complications arise.

As I have gotten to know Colonel Kennedy, I have been tremendously impressed, not just by his professionalism and integrity, but also by his commitment to the United States Marine Corps. He treats the men and women under his direction in the Marine Liaison office with great respect and has taken particularly seriously his duty to mentor young Marines of lower rank. As he leaves to take command of a 5,000-Marine unit, his attention to the development of younger Marines will no doubt be greatly valued.

Colonel Kennedy has also been able to share with members of Congress detailed and valuable insights into the war in Iraq. Having served as a Battalion Commander in Anbar Province in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom II, Colonel Kennedy gained first hand experience in helping our nation confront the new and complex challenges that war has highlighted.

While Colonel Kennedy will be sorely missed by this institution, we can take comfort in the knowledge that a man of such tremendous personal character and ability will continue to serve and strengthen the United States Marine Corps and the 5,000 Marines under his command at Camp Lejeune. Let me offer my heartfelt appreciation and best wishes to Colonel Kennedy as he embarks on this new assignment.

IN SUPPORT OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COMPLEX

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2008

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today with my colleagues GEORGE MILLER (CA-7) and SAM FARR (CA-17) to introduce the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex Establishment Act. As its title indicates, this bill would unite the Bay Area's seven separate national wildlife refuges into a single wildlife complex in order to leverage greater federal funding for these unique habitats.

The Antioch Dunes, Don Edwards San Francisco Bay, Ellicott Slough, Farallon, Marin Islands, Salinas River, and San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuges together constitute our nation's largest collection of urban wildlife refuges, totaling more than 46,000 acres. Together, they are home to hundreds of wildlife species—including over 128 threatened or endangered animals and marine mammals that depend on these refuges to survive. Because they support endangered wildlife in close proximity to millions of people, these refuges face unique and growing challenges.