

poverty tools in the United States. This is an opportunity to help people get out of poverty. To educate those who are eligible for the EITC, more tax centers have extended their hours of operation. I encourage my colleagues in Congress to inform their constituents of the available resources. To check one's eligibility and identify the nearest IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center one can go to IRS.gov.

CELEBRATING VERMONT'S PARTNERSHIP WITH THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2008

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Madam Speaker, Vermont is proud to welcome General Miroslav Stojanovski, Chief of Staff of the Army of the Republic of Macedonia. General Stojanovski's visit is the latest step in a long history of partnership between Vermont and Macedonia.

Established in 1995 through the State Partnership Program of the U.S.-European Command, the partnership began as primarily a military-to-military relationship between the Macedonian Army and the Vermont National Guard. This military partnership has resulted in over 540 joint events that have included over 6,000 members of the Macedonian Army. In September 2006, Vermont National Guard troops and their Macedonian Army counterparts carried out a major, 2-week-long, small-unit exchange exercise to support the professionalization of the Macedonian military in its transformation to meet NATO interoperability standards.

Vermonters' engagement with Macedonia has expanded into civil affairs as well, including the establishment of university partnerships, economic development discussions, and support for the Macedonian youth baseball organization.

In May 2007, the University of Vermont signed an agreement with the SS *Cyril* and *Methodius* University to promote collaborative scientific research, joint conferences and workshops, and faculty and student exchanges.

Vermonters have also played an important role in bringing baseball, our national pastime, to Macedonia. C.J. Knudsen, the general manager of the Vermont Lake Monsters minor league baseball team traveled to Macedonia to deliver gloves, balls, bats, uniforms, and other equipment to help start the country's first little league.

Macedonia has made incredible strides since its independence in 1991, achieving membership in the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the World Trade Organization, and to NATO's Partnership for Peace and Membership Action Plan. Macedonia is a candidate for European Union membership and may soon be invited as a full member of NATO, hopefully as soon as April of this year. I look forward to the continued strengthening of the United States and especially Vermont's partnership with the Republic of Macedonia.

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL DAY OF THE COWBOY

HON. GABRIELLE GIFFORDS

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2008

Ms. GIFFORDS. Madam Speaker, today I introduced a resolution officially designating July 26, 2008, as the "National Day of the Cowboy." Americans are encouraged to observe the national contribution of Cowboys and Cowgirls with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

This resolution declares Congress support for honoring working Cowboys and their ongoing contributions to our communities. It also recognizes the Cowboy as a central figure in literature, film and music, occupying an important place in the public imagination. The "National Day of the Cowboy" honors the livelihood of the Cowboy as one that spans race, gender and generations.

Our legendary Cowboy is embraced and respected by people the world over as a symbol of rugged individualism. He represents a commitment to get the job done and do it well while depending on his own ingenuity for survival. He is loyal to an honorable code of ethics as well as persistent and tenacious in the face of any challenge.

The Cowboy is indeed the ultimate western icon, reminding us of a special time in the heart of America's history.

I am proud to be introducing this resolution today, and I urge my colleagues to join me in declaring congressional support for the "National Day of the Cowboy."

CONGRATULATING LEE MYUNGBAK ON ELECTION TO PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

SPEECH OF

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 6, 2008

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 947 which welcomes the new President of the Republic of Korea, Lee Myung-Bak, and congratulates him on his upcoming inauguration later this month. I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this important resolution.

Madam Speaker, not a little more than a half century ago—within living memory of several Members of this House, most notably our distinguished Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, my dear friend Mr. RANGEL—the Republic of Korea was an impoverished casualty of imperialism and war. It has since grown to be affluent and productive beyond the wildest dreams of the American and South Korean soldiers who fought shoulder-to-shoulder for freedom and democracy during the Korean War.

There are over two million Americans of Korean descent living throughout the United States, from Hawaii, where the first Korean immigrants landed a little more than a century ago, to New York, which is home to one of the largest and most vibrant Korean American communities in the Nation. It is important to

note that Korean Americans have made significant contributions in New York politically, economically, culturally and through their various civic and religious organizations.

The newly elected President of the Republic of Korea is a distinguished statesman and prominent business leader. President-elect Lee Myung-Bak has served as a Member of the South Korean National Assembly; he was Mayor of Seoul, South Korea's largest city and capital; he has been a visiting scholar at the George Washington University; and he has been the chief executive officer of some of the Republic of Korea's most successful business corporations affiliated with the Hyundai Group. He has distinguished himself over the years in both the public and private sectors.

Madam Speaker, President-elect Lee has indicated, in several statements he has made since his election, a profound desire to strengthen the already strong friendship and partnership between the Republic of Korea and the United States. I applaud President-elect Lee for this commitment and look forward to working with him and administration to this end. I join my colleagues in congratulating and wishing him and his transition team well as they take up their new responsibilities.

HONORING THOMAS BASSANO OF TAMPA, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 13, 2008

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a man dedicated to turning the tragic abduction and murder of Citrus County child Jessica Lunsford into a rallying cause for child advocacy issues. On Saturday, March 1, 2008, Tom will set out from Marina Del Ray, California, on a cross country journey, running 3,000 miles to raise awareness for children's safety and help prevent future children from being harmed by sexual predators.

In the process of planning for his cross-country run, Tom established the Run for the Innocent to gather support for his endeavor. This group is working with Mark Lunsford, the father of Jessica, as well as the Citrus County Child Advocacy Center, Jessie's Place. All of the charity runs scheduled along Tom's path from California to Florida will be coordinated by staff and volunteers from the center, with all charity proceeds going to charity.

Since his daughter was abducted and killed in 2005, Mark Lunsford has led a 50-state effort to strengthen laws targeting sexual offenders and predators. I was proud to work with Mark to pass Federal legislation, the Jessica Lunsford Act, as part of comprehensive child welfare legislation. A man truly dedicated to improving the chances for children affected by abuse, neglect, and sexual predators, Mark established Jessie's Place as a center to serve children affected by child abuse or neglect.

Madam Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring Tom Bassano for making his commitment to American children and running across the United States to fight violence against children. Tom's effort shows the effect that one man can have on the lives of millions, and should be commended by this entire body for