

S. 1146, Aviation Drug-Trafficking Control Act

INTRODUCING THE BELARUS FREEDOM ACT OF 2004

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Belarus Freedom Act of 2004. This bill will graduate Belarus from the requirements of the Jackson-Vanik statute and thereby establish permanent normal trade relations with that country.

The Jackson-Vanik amendment was adopted in 1974, during a time when the U.S.S.R. was imposing enormous "education repayment fees" on anyone seeking to emigrate from that country. The statute was designed to prevent temporary restoration of an already suspended "most favored nation" treatment unless its freedom of emigration requirement is complied with. After the break-up of the U.S.S.R., the successor countries found themselves subject to Jackson-Vanik—meaning that they had to prove yearly that they allowed free emigration in order to enjoy normal trade relations with the United States. Several former Soviet republics have already been permanently graduated from Jackson-Vanik, and several others are in the process of being graduated. Belarus has gained a presidential waiver for every year since 1992, indicating its ongoing compliance with the requirements. Therefore it is time to recognize the passing of the Soviet era and move on toward better trade relations with Belarus.

Though some have tried to read additional requirements into the original amendment, Jackson-Vanik is in reality solely about freedom of emigration. And, as I have stated, Belarus has attained a Presidential waiver every year since 1992.

Time and time again we see that peaceful trade and good relations with other countries does much more to foster democratization and liberalization than sanctions, diplomatic expulsions, and accusations. Our Founding Fathers recognized this when they cautioned against foreign entanglements and counseled instead free trade and friendly relations with all countries who seek the same.

I hope my colleagues will join with me as cosponsors of this bill and support further constructive relations with the Republic of Belarus.

HONORING MR. MARK SIMONI

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise before you today on behalf of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary to honor Mr. Mark Simoni, 9th District Rear Commodore of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, for his hard work and dedication to promoting recreational boating safety within the Great Lakes and the Saginaw Bay. On February 21, 2004, the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flint Flotilla 15-02, will

gather to honor Mr. Simoni during the "Change of Watch" awards ceremony to be held in my hometown of Flint, Michigan at Mario's Restaurant.

Mark Simoni was born in Flint, Michigan, on December 19, 1952. He graduated from Grand Blanc High School in 1971, and upon completion he attended the University of Michigan and Northwestern University. In 1991 Mark became a member of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary-Saginaw 15-05. Mark has unselfishly given of his time and resources to ensure the safety of boaters and families. His commitment to the U.S. Coast Guard team mission led him to hold elected offices such as Flotilla Commander-Saginaw 15-05, Division 15 Captain from 2002-2003, and Vice Captain from 2000-2001. Mark has also held staff positions on the Flotilla, Division, District/Region and National level. Recently (2004) Mark was promoted to 9th District Region Rear Commodore of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary. Mark has volunteered countless hours in the areas of Public Education, Vessel Safety Checks, Safety Patrols, Search and Rescue, Maritime Security and Environmental Protection. A fine example of loyalty is when he used his personal watercraft to patrol the Great Lakes along with other auxiliaries to ensure that Michigan waterways were secure after the September 11, 2001 World Trade Center tragedy. Mark has proven himself worthy of his new title as 9th District Region Rear Commodore. This new position will allow him the opportunity to provide administrative and supervisory support to the Flotillas and Divisions within his district.

Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress, I ask my colleagues in the 108th Congress to please join me in congratulating Mr. Mark Simoni on his promotion and also in honoring him for his past deeds. He has and continues to serve his country with enthusiasm and steadfastness. I wish him all the best in the future.

BLACK EAGLE WINS GRAMMY

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Black Eagle, the winner of the 2004 Grammy for Best Native American Music Album. This drum group from Jemez Pueblo draws upon the rich history of the Native American Powwow for musical inspiration. Their fifteen years of performing has developed a deep and broad following across the country. It is my great honor to congratulate them for this win.

Black Eagle formed in 1989 after group leader Malcolm Yepa attended a powwow in Lamé Deer, Montana. He became enamored with the singing and drum playing being performed and upon returning to Jemez Pueblo, Malcolm and his brother David Yepa Jr. formed Black Eagle. Cousins who had heard of Malcolm's experience were eager to join and the group soon consisted of twenty-one members.

After learning popular songs by listening to the recordings from other drum groups, Black Eagle began performing at local powwows. Their music coalesced into a definitive sound

as they gained experience and soon the group was drawing wide recognition. Touring across the country during the next few years brought encounters with several others in the same musical vein, including fellow drum group, Black Lodge of White Swan, Washington.

It was at this time, after speaking with Black Lodge, that Black Eagle began writing and performing original music written by members of the group. Making the music even more exceptional was the fact that it was written, and performed, in the Towa language, the dialect of the Jemez Pueblo. Such a project had never been done before, and release of their freshman album, titled, "Volume I," brought wide praise.

The production of music by Black Eagle continued unabated. "Vol. II," the group's second album, was quickly followed by, "Soaring High" and "Star Child." By 2001, when they released their fifth album, "Life Goes On," Black Eagle had gained a wide following through extensive touring and word-of-mouth. This fifth work however, would be the work that gave Black Eagle national prominence and critical acclaim. A collection of round dance and hand drum songs, "Life Goes On," garnered a Grammy nomination under the "Best Native American Music Album" category.

While the 2002 awards ceremony did not bring a win for the group, Black Eagle was bolstered by the nomination and in March of 2003, they released, "Flying Free." This sixth work utilized new technology to create a "live" recording sound in the studio and also bridged Native American music history when bells used on legendary group XIT's albums were played by Black Eagle.

"Flying Free" was nominated, and won, the 2004 Grammy for "Best Native American Music Album." Black Eagle's roots, which reside deep within the Jemez culture, are reflected on the album. Jemez Pueblo has a very long history in the great State of New Mexico, and continues to this day to preserve its cultural, spiritual and traditional customs. Events at the Pueblo, including feast days, dances, and arts and crafts shows, are still the primary responsibility of several members of the group.

Going from a single teenager captivated by the music of his people to a familial, rooted award-winning group, Malcolm Yepa and Black Eagle are to be applauded for their musical achievements, commended for their loyalty to the history of the powwow, and wished the very best in their future aspirations.

KOOTENAI VALLEY RESOURCE INITIATIVE

HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of the House a shining example of our great experiment in democracy. The Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative came to life in 2001, the result of collaboration between the Boundary County Board of Commissioners, the City of Bonners Ferry, and the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho. The mission of the KVRI is to act as a locally based effort to improve coordination, integration, and implementation of existing local, state, and federal programs that can effectively maintain, enhance,

and restore the social, cultural, economic, and natural resource bases in their community. Mr. Speaker, after personally viewing this group in action, I am happy to report this is a successful endeavor.

The KVRI membership consists of private citizens and landowners, local governments, federal and state agencies, an environmental advocacy group, and Indian Nation, and representatives of business and industry within the lower Kootenai basin of Idaho. The Initiative is a sign of tremendous change in Boundary County. It signals a move from combat to collaboration and should serve as a model for other communities around the country with severe contention over natural resource issues. The members of the KVRI work hard to find areas of common concern with which they, as a community, can pursue solutions to challenges such as fisheries recovery, flood flow elevations, TMDL planning, and the development of a wetland conservation strategy.

Mr. Speaker, the collaborative spirit of the KVRI, and its members' determination to find common sense solutions that move the community forward, should serve as an inspiration to us all. I would like to thank the Kootenai Valley Resource Initiative for demonstrating how this great experiment in democracy is supposed to function.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR JOHN
BENNETT

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to pay tribute to the life and memory of former Grand Junction Mayor John Bennett, who after a long battle with an illness, passed away at the age of sixty-six. John was a true American patriot, and a beloved friend and colleague to many in his Colorado community. In his years spent in public

service, John embodied the ideals of integrity and courage that we, as Americans, have come to expect. As his family and community mourn his passing, I believe it is appropriate to recognize the life of this exceptional man, and his many contributions to his community, state and country.

Mayor Bennett lived an immensely rich and full life, always holding firm to his beliefs in serving his community and country. He spent over twenty years defending this Nation, serving in the Air Force and the Army, where he earned a reputation as a solid and dependable leader. After his retirement, John continued to feel a call to service and dedicated his efforts toward improving the lives of his Grand Junction community. He served as a member of the Grand Junction City Council, and was elected mayor in 1988, where he was known for his judiciousness and problem-solving skills.

Mr. Speaker, we are all at a great loss because of Mayor Bennett's passing, but can be comforted in knowing he helped make Grand Junction a better place for future generations. I would like to extend my heartfelt sorrow to his wife of over twenty years, Barbara, and his loving children, Tammy, Vicki, and William. Mayor Bennett's selfless dedication to Grand Junction, the State of Colorado, and the United States has helped ensure a promising future for our great country and I am deeply honored to bring his life to the attention of this body of Congress. I am proud to have known such a great man who enriched the lives of his family, community, and Nation.

HONORING BERNICE FELDMAN
MAYERS

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the contributions of Bernice

Feldman Mayers of Dallas, Texas, and am pleased to be joined in this tribute by my colleague, Representative WEXLER of Florida. Mrs. Mayers was not only a dedicated teacher of special-needs students, but shares the distinction of being related to two members of the South Florida delegation—Congressman WEXLER and myself. She leaves behind a wonderful legacy of warmth, dedication and caring.

Born in the Bronx, New York, Mrs. Mayers moved with her family to Dallas, Texas, at the age of five. She graduated from Forest Avenue High School at the age of 15 and received her bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Oklahoma at the age of 19. Following graduation, Mrs. Mayers began to volunteer for a number of organizations including the City of Hope, a cancer research center. Mrs. Mayers also served as the president of the Dallas Chapter, where she coordinated the first ever cancer research study in the Dallas area.

After receiving her master's degree in special education from Texas Women's University in 1967, Mrs. Mayers began her teaching career with Sam Houston Junior High School. She served as the head of the school's special education department, well-known as a fierce advocate for students with special needs. Mrs. Mayers retired in 1992, but she continued to work as both a substitute teacher and as a Hebrew teacher at Congregation Beth Torah. She also committed her energies to Forest Avenue Alumni Association and the Tom C. Gooch Elementary School in Dallas.

Mrs. Mayers is survived by her husband, two sons, four grandchildren and numerous friends and extended family, all who will miss her greatly.