

distorting the facts, by continuing to perpetuate the myth that Turkish Cypriots and Turkey are solely to blame for this incident, I fear that such statements only undermine the good faith efforts of the United States, the European Union and other members of the international community to finally see this conflict resolved; and to see peace and prosperity come to all the people of Cyprus.

Tragically, an historic opportunity to resolve the crisis was lost when the Annan Plan, a UN-brokered proposal to settle the dispute, was soundly defeated by the Greek Cypriots in April 2004. Although the plan had broad support from the international community, and was ratified by the Turkish Cypriots, the Greek Cypriots inexplicably rejected the proposal by a 3 to 1 margin. Those individuals and special interest groups who adhere to the "blame Turkey" school of thought on the status of Cyprus seem to ignore the irony of the fact that when offered the chance to vote for peace, it was the Greek and not the Turkish side that rejected peace.

After the referendum, then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan reported to the Security Council that "the Turkish Cypriot vote has undone any rationale for pressuring and isolating them;" he called for all Security Council members to "give a strong lead to all States to cooperate both bilaterally and in international bodies, to eliminate unnecessary restrictions and barriers that have the effect of isolating the Turkish Cypriots and impeding their development." Unfortunately, while the Greek Cypriots became full members of the European Union, little changed for the Turkish Cypriots and their economic and political isolation continues to this day.

Despite the Greek Cypriots' failure to embrace peace and the international community's failure to end the economic isolation of the Turkish Cypriots; Turkish Cypriots continued to seek a just and a peaceful settlement to this crisis. Unfortunately, the issue was at a virtual standstill until recent elections in southern Cyprus brought a new Greek leadership to the forefront who seems more willing to reach a settlement.

In fact, the two leaders in Cyprus, Greek Cypriot Demetris Christofias and Turkish Cypriot Mehmet Ali Talat, met on July 1, 2008 and achieved a remarkable breakthrough by striking an agreement in principle on the issue of a single sovereignty and citizenship. They also agreed to meet again on July 25th to prepare for the first full-fledged negotiations in four years. United States Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Daniel Fried, who has followed the talks closely, has said that: "There's a chance . . . that we will be moving forward again in a way we haven't in some time." He has also hinted that the Administration is considering appointing a special envoy to Cyprus.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate the Greek and Turkish Cypriot Leaders for their recent courageous steps; and I sincerely hope that when they meet again a few days from today that they will get down to the real work of reshaping Cyprus into a peaceful island that respects human rights and the fundamental freedoms for all Cypriots. I also sincerely hope that all of my colleagues will learn from their example and join with me to end the 'blame game,' and instead advocate for an even handed approach to the thorny issue that is Cyprus, an approach that recognizes the fun-

damental equality of all Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

#### RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE'S GRASS-ROOTS PROGRAM

**HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2008*

Mr. ROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the National Football League, NFL, for its continuing efforts to improve the lives of America's youth both on and off the field.

In 1998, the NFL and NFL Players Association organized the NFL Youth Football Fund, YFF, which is a non-profit foundation that supports the game of football at the youth level and promotes positive youth development. This wonderful organization has provided hundreds of thousands of children with the opportunity to learn the game of football, stay physically active, and get involved in productive after-school activities with positive role models.

One important initiative that the YFF has undertaken is its Grassroots Field Refurbishment Program. This unique program provides funds for communities to revamp local athletic fields so that youth have a safe place for athletic activities. The fields are newly built or significantly renovated, with improvements such as irrigation systems, lights, bleachers, scoreboards, goal posts and turf. The YFF has contributed nearly \$23 million through the Grassroots Program to rebuild 170 fields nationwide in underserved areas.

The NFL recently awarded a \$200,000 grant to the Jersey City public schools to help replace the playing field at Cochrane Stadium in the Caven Point Athletic Complex, which is located in my home state of New Jersey. The field was closed in April 2008 because of concerns about high levels of lead found in the astroturf surface. The sports complex at Caven Point is an integral part of youth athletics in Hudson County and many of my constituents use these facilities. I am extremely pleased that the NFL is assisting the community in this way.

I am honored to have an outstanding NFL franchise such as the Giants, who are the Super Bowl XLII Champions, play in my Congressional district at their home field of Giants Stadium in East Rutherford. Our local community continues to proudly support the Giants and is grateful that the NFL has selected Jersey City to receive a grant to improve their local athletic playing field.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me today in commending the National Football League for its consistent support of our youth across the country. I also ask for unanimous consent to enter an article from the Jersey Journal into the RECORD.

[From the Jersey Journal, June 10, 2008]

NFL GIVING \$200G TO HELP REPLACE TURF AT COCHRANE STADIUM

(By Ken Thorbourne)

The National Football League is chipping in to replace an athletic field in Jersey City that was closed in April due to concerns about lead. The National Football League Grassroots Program announced the \$200,000

grant to the Jersey City public schools to help replace the heavily used Cochrane Stadium field at the Caven Point Athletic Complex last week.

"The district is thrilled the NFL is supporting local athletics," said Board of Education spokesman Gerard Crisonino. "We see it as a real commitment to the students of Jersey City."

Cochrane Stadium—along with the field at Frank Sinatra Park in Hoboken—were closed after elevated levels of lead were found in the synthetic fibers. The Hoboken field has already been replaced.

Crisonino said a new field at Caven Point is expected to cost \$1.1 million. In addition to the NFL grant, the district expects to receive city and county money. Specifications are being drawn up to bid the contract, he added.

Elevated lead levels were also found at the College of New Jersey's Lions Stadium Field in Ewing, which also has a synthetic turf field.

"Fields are an integral part of creating viable and healthy communities," NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell said in a statement. "The development and refurbishment of these football fields give youngsters a safe place to play the game, and brings families and neighborhoods together."

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2008*

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, July 22, 2008, I was unavoidably detained in my congressional district and had I been present and voting, I would have voted as follows: (1) rollcall No. 512: "yes" on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H.R. 6493; (2) rollcall No. 513: "yes" on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H. Res. 1311; (3) rollcall No. 514: "yes" on Motion to Suspend the Rules and Pass H. Res. 1202.

#### RECOGNIZING THE 34TH ANNIVERSARY OF TURKEY'S INVASION OF CYPRUS

**HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN**

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2008*

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, as a proud member of the Hellenic Caucus, I rise today to recognize the 34th anniversary of Turkey's invasion of Cyprus. On this occasion, we mourn those who lost their lives and remember the barrier created in 1974 that still exists today. The island remains divided between the Turkish Cypriots and the Greek Cypriots, despite attempts by the international community for a reunification settlement.

I have repeatedly emphasized the need for a peaceful settlement to the ongoing division in Cyprus—a goal that has eluded American and European leaders for more than thirty years. I believe that a strong U.S. commitment to Cyprus should be one of our nation's top foreign policy priorities. As Americans, we must guarantee that our foreign policy reflects our values of justice, equality and responsibility, and promoting a lasting peace and stability in Cyprus illustrates those values.

The United States holds a unique position of trust with both Greece and Turkey, and we must use our influence to work toward a solution that is acceptable and equitable to all of Cyprus's residents. I am pleased that we have made progress in recent years, but we have more to do. We must remain committed to our vision of a Cyprus that is again unified and able to reach its full potential in the international arena.

I also would like to thank my colleagues on the Hellenic Caucus, especially Mrs. MALONEY and Mr. BILIRAKIS, for addressing this important event.

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TRIBUTE TO RANDALL COLLINS

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**HON. JOE COURTNEY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2008*

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding academic leader from my district, Randall Collins, Superintendent of Waterford, Connecticut public schools. On July 24, he will be inducted as the 2008–2009 President of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) in a ceremony to be held in St. Louis, Missouri.

For the past 18 years, Randy has dedicated his personal and professional life to the children, teachers, and faculty of the Waterford public school system in eastern Connecticut. Prior to joining the Waterford public school system, he was Superintendent of Easthampton, Massachusetts public schools. Over the course of his career, Randy has served as the President of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, Co-president of the New England Association of School Superintendents, and has been awarded with numerous accolades including Connecticut's 2002 Superintendent of the Year. Under Randy's leadership, four Waterford schools will also undergo a "green overhaul" to integrate green technologies such as geothermal heating and cooling pumps in the schools' infrastructure.

The AASA is a national association of educational professionals that advocate for improvements in our public education systems as well as for the advancement of children's issues. As President of the AASA, Randy will guide these objectives in a national context. Over the coming year, he will serve as Chairman of the AASA's national convention in San Francisco, travel to Peru to speak with the country's Ministers of Education, and discuss national educational priorities with members of Congress.

Madam Speaker, the success of our education systems relies on the strength and passion of our academic leaders. Mr. Collins has exemplified these traits and I remain confident that he will spark the same passion for children's education in his colleagues at the AASA. I ask my colleagues to join with me and my constituents in recognizing his significant contributions to public education and welcome him as the new AASA President.

RECOGNIZING SFC QUINTON  
EDWARD COURSON, JR.

**HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2008*

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Sergeant First Class Quinton Edward Courson, Jr.

At an awards ceremony held May 16, 2008 at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Sergeant First Class Quinton Edward Courson, Jr., a 1990 graduate of Bartow High School, was awarded the Bronze Star medal for his actions during a recent fifteen month tour of duty with the United States Army in Tikrit, Iraq. The medal is added to those previously earned by SFC Courson, which include the Combat Action Badge, Parachute Qualifications Badge, four Army Commendation medals, six Army Achievement medals and numerous service medals awarded for service in Korea, the Sinai Peninsula and two deployments to Iraq while serving with the 75th Ranger Regiment and the 82nd Airborne Division.

SFC Courson has served seventeen years in the U.S. Army, four years of which have been outside the United States. Quinn and his two daughters, Whitney and Kortney currently live in Springhill, North Carolina until July 2008, when he is reassigned as an instructor at the Advanced Individual Training School at Fort Lee, Virginia.

The ceremony was attended by his Mother, Debbie Parrish of Alturas, Florida and other family members.

I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring not only the contributions and accomplishments of SFC Courson, but all the men and women serving in the Armed Forces. America is truly a great place because of those who proudly serve this great Nation.

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INTRODUCTION OF HONOR FLIGHT  
MICHIGAN RESOLUTION

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**HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2008*

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution which honors David and Carole Cameron and the organization they started in Michigan, Honor Flight Michigan.

Sadly our greatest generation is growing older and passing on. Many of those who fought in World War II never have had the chance to see the World War II Memorial erected in their honor. Madam Speaker, approximately two years ago David and his wife Carole Cameron, founded Honor Flight Michigan in order to remedy that.

This non-profit organization seeks to provide an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C. for World War II veterans, in order for the veterans to see the World War II Memorial on the National Mall. The Cameron's built up the organization by private donations and since its inception it has paid for hundreds of veterans from our greatest generation to see the Memorial erected in their honor.

David and Carole Cameron, and everyone associated with Honor Flight Michigan rep-

resent the very definition of patriots. Each year, between April and October, Honor Flight Michigan flies a group of veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit the World War II memorial and lay a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It is truly a remarkable experience for not only the veterans but also the volunteers who assist the veterans on the trips.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, David Cameron passed away earlier this year. While I and the organization he founded certainly miss him, his legacy lives on through his family and Honor Flight Michigan. The resolution I am introducing today honors the life of David Cameron and the work he and Carole did to found Honor Flight Michigan. I ask all my colleagues to cosponsor this resolution as a way to pay tribute to the veterans of World War II.

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TRIBUTE TO MR. JOHN P.  
SHAFFER

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**HON. TIM RYAN**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 23, 2008*

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay respect and tribute to Mr. John P. Shaffer, who passed away July 21 at the age of 84.

Mr. Shaffer was born April 25, 1924 in Youngstown, the son of John H. and Genevieve Perry Shaffer. A U.S. Army veteran of World War II, Mr. Shaffer proudly served his country with honor. Following the war, he returned home to Niles and soon married Ann M. Bancroft, his wife of 62 years.

Mr. Shaffer retired in 1984 after working 31 years as a supervisor at National Gypsum Co. A lifelong public servant in the city of Niles, he was a city councilman at large for 12 years, and safety director for the city from 1976 to 1980. In 1984 he was elected mayor, a position he held until 1988.

Mr. Shaffer's tenure as mayor is best remembered for aiding the city in its time of need. In 1985, his second year in office, a devastating tornado swept through the city leaving a path of destruction in its wake. Mr. Shaffer's strong leadership helped the city rise from the rubble, providing hope in the face of devastation.

A patriotic American family man, Mr. Shaffer cherished time spent with his daughters, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. An avid fisherman and outdoorsman, he enjoyed his retirement to the fullest extent, often retreating to the Florida sunshine during harsh Midwestern winters.

He was a member of the Niles Men's Democratic Club, Loyal Order of Moose, and the Niles American Legion. A man of faith, Mr. Shaffer was a member of St. Stephen Church in Niles, often devoting time to those less fortunate. For much of his life, he was a Eucharistic minister for homebound parishioners.

A man of the highest character, Mr. Shaffer's legacy in the Mahoning Valley will live on through his work, public contributions, and family. John P. Shaffer touched many lives in his lifetime, and he will be greatly missed. I am honored to have represented him.