

the oil companies would like to have you believe that. Because of the very same weak dollar, U.S. oil reserves are extremely profitable at this time, so it is no surprise they are pushing hard for expanded drilling. I can't imagine a better scenario for them—an outraged public and production costs that keep dropping as the dollar weakens.

Of course we need to conserve and develop alternative forms of energy, but to ignore the role of the dollar in all this will just mean we continue down this road to disaster we've been on the last few years.

This might not be the story of suffering you're looking for (actually just the opposite in my case). But I think it might be more constructive than an inbox full of moaning and groaning about how much it costs to commute to work from Nampa.

Regards,

STAN, *Boise.*

HMONG DETAINEES IN LAOS

MR. COLEMAN. Mr. President, I would like to submit for the RECORD a statement given by Mrs. Sheng Xiong, a spokeswoman for her husband Hakit Yang and other families of Hmong-American citizens from St. Paul, MN, that are being detained by the the Lao Peoples Democratic Republic, LPDR, regime. This statement was given by Mrs. Xiong at a congressional forum on Laos on January 31, 2008, organized by the Center for Public Policy Analysis.

I ask unanimous consent that the Statement to which I referred be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

STATEMENT BY MRS. SHENG XIONG

I want to thank Congressman Dana Rohrabacher, Congressman Frank Wolf, Congressman Patrick Kennedy, Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin and other Members of the U.S. House of Representatives for co-hosting today's U.S. Congressional Forum on Laos in cooperation with Mr. Philip Smith, Executive Director of the Center for Public Policy Analysis, Dr. Jane Hamilton-Merritt, Lao Hmong scholar; Vaughn Vang of the Lao Human Rights Council of Wisconsin and Minnesota; Khamphet Moukdarath of the United League for Democracy in Laos and T. Kumar, Advocacy Director of Amnesty International. I appreciate their leadership on the current human rights crisis in Laos, especially facing the Hmong people, and the serious situation regarding the arrest and imprisonment in Laos of my husband, Hakit Yang, and his two Hmong-American colleagues from St. Paul, Minnesota last year.

The U.S. Government granted Normalized Trade Relations (NTR) to Laos in 2005. Today, it encourages citizens to consider foreign investments in the communist state despite the country's atrocious human rights records and the unjustified arrest, jailing and continued detention of three Hmong-American citizens from St. Paul, Minnesota including my husband Mr. Hakit Yang.

On July 10, 2007, Hakit Yang, Congshineng Yang and Trillion Yuhaison departed the United States for Laos to pursue business investment opportunities. The men were staying at the #5 Guest House in Phousavan, Laos when they were arrested by secret police forces. They were detained in Phonthong Prison and later transferred to an unknown destination. Several unofficial reports suggest they are being detained in the North of Laos near the Vietnam border.

The last phone call and communication was received from Yuhaison on August 26, 2007 at approximately 9:00 am (CST). Yuhaison called Hakit's older brother Xai Yang, and stated that he was calling from a security guard's cell phone and confirmed that all three men had been arrested without warrant. Yuhaison sounded very worried and wanted Xai to contact the U.S. Embassy in Vientiane right away.

A U.S. Embassy staff confirmed with local Lao authorities that three U.S. Citizens were arrested, however, the authorities refused to release any names. According to the U.S. Embassy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs could not confirm the situation over the phone, but it appeared they knew about the cases.

The U.S. Embassy contacted the Lao government who denied having any record of the men entering their country and any U.S. Citizens being detained or arrested. Later, the Lao government changed their previous denials and admitted that the men did indeed enter Laos, but allegedly claimed that they had allegedly departed Laos via the Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge on August 29, 2007. Despite repeated requests from the U.S. Embassy no departure cards have ever been produced as evidence for their departure. Other documents produced are clearly bogus and fabricated allegedly claiming to support the Lao government's false claims that my husband and the other two departed from Laos to Thailand, which is not factual.

It has been many months since the arrest and disappearance of Hakit Yang, Congshineng Yang and Trillion Yuhaison. To this day, our family has not received any concrete answers from the U.S. Embassy in Laos nor the State Department. I have been in contact with the other men's families and they also have not received any answers.

The U.S. Government and U.S. Embassy have a responsibility to inform U.S. Citizens that there are no real protections in place to safeguard their civil and legal rights. The U.S. Government has failed to properly hold the Laos Government accountable for the disappearance of these U.S. investors.

Hakit, Congshineng, and Trillion represent the first of many U.S. investors and tourists to travel to Laos under the new Normalized Trade Relations agreement but their disappearance clearly proves that no U.S. Citizen is safe in Laos and no U.S. citizen should invest in the current Lao regime until proper protections can be put in place, to safeguard the civil, legal and human rights of all U.S. Citizens traveling to Laos.

I respectfully ask that the U.S. Government and U.S. Embassy in Laos continue to investigate the arrest and disappearance of Hakit, Congshineng, and Trillion and to press the Lao government for humanitarian access to the three U.S. citizens and their unconditional and immediate release.

The Lao government continues to jail my husband and the two other Americans from St. Paul that he was traveling with in clear violation and contempt of international law. Lao and Hmong Americans should not invest in the current regime in Laos, the Lao Peoples Democratic Republic. NTR Trade Status to Laos should be revoked by the U.S. Congress; and, U.S. foreign aid and assistance to the Lao regime should also be cut by the U.S. Congress and U.S. Government completely, including all de-mining funding, until at least such time as my husband Hakit Yang, Congshineng and Trillion, as Hmong-American citizens, are released from prison in Laos and brought home safely to America and their homes and families in St. Paul, Minnesota.

We will not forget and not give up fighting until we have truthful answers and the Lao regime releases Hakit Yang, Congshineng

and Trillion. We appeal to the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Government and international community for assistance in pressing the Lao regime to release our family members and restore human rights and freedom to them so that we can be reunited and these American citizens can return home once again from this terrible darkness.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN RECOGNITION OF JEANNA HENRY

• Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today I recognize the outstanding contributions of Jeanna Henry, whose dedication to the Environmental Protection Agency earned her the Glen Witmer Award. Jeanna, noted for her dedication, resourcefulness, and sheer joy in her work, is an excellent example of the quality employees who serve us at the EPA.

The Glen Witmer Award is presented each year to the employee whose service is distinguished by concern for our environment, enthusiasm for environmental programs, a logical approach to problem solving, attention to detail, resourcefulness and initiative, and an ability to interact with people in a manner that fosters cooperation, understanding, and resolution of environmental problems. It is the highest award that may be presented to an employee by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Jeanna grew up in Delmar, MD—the town too big for one State—and graduated from Salisbury State University in 1996 with a degree in environmental health and minors in biology and chemistry. Following through on a goal she set her freshman year of college, Jeanna went on to work as an environmental scientist at the EPA upon winning a National Network for Environmental Management Studies Fellowship. Currently an enforcement officer at EPA's Waste and Chemical Management Division in Wilmington, DE, she has managed a multitude of hazardous waste and underground storage tank enforcement cases, all with motivation, professionalism, and extraordinary attention to detail.

Beyond her achievements in her field, Jeanna is most noted for her work ethic, exceptional communication skills, and for the passion that she brings to all of her undertakings. New employees often gravitate towards her because despite her heavy workload, she is never too busy to take time out to help others. She has become a mentor for new employees, a role model for her peers, and an absolute joy to her supervisors.

Jeanna is not only an outstanding employee, but a remarkable person, as well. Her lifelong passion for the environment has enabled her to help shape and enrich the lives of many in her field and the lives of those lucky

enough to call her their friend. I rise today to extend my sincere congratulations to Jeanna on her award. She is a remarkable woman as well as a credit and testament to the community that she represents so well.●

REMEMBERING JUSTICE REVIUS ORTIQUE

● Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. President, on June 22, our Nation lost a great judge and lawyer, civil rights champion, and public servant. Justice Revius Ortique, the first African-American justice elected to the Louisiana Supreme Court, has died at 84.

I met Justice Ortique when we served together in the 1970s on the board of the Legal Services Corporation, and much later in his career. Justice Ortique was appointed by my husband to serve as alternate delegate to the United Nations.

Justice Ortique had an illustrious career. In World War II, he served as an officer in the Pacific Theater and after earning his law degree in 1956, set up a legal practice at the vanguard of the civil rights movement. He helped to successfully win equal pay for Black employees in several cases, to integrate State labor unions, and served five terms as president of the Urban League of Greater New Orleans. Justice Ortique not only worked to achieve racial equality but also to achieve racial harmony and served three terms as president of the New Orleans Community Relations Council. He negotiated for the Black community with White civic leaders helping to bring about the peaceful desegregation of lunch counters, bathrooms, and other public facilities in New Orleans before the passage of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 would guarantee these rights.

Justice Ortique was a courtly figure with a mild manner that belied his courage, convictions, and ability to effect change. I am proud to have known him, and my thoughts and prayers are with his wife Miriam, his daughter Rhesa, and all those whose lives were made better because of his leadership.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF NEW SALEM, NORTH DAKOTA

● Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am pleased to honor a community in North Dakota that is celebrating its 125th anniversary. On July 18 through 20, the residents of New Salem, ND, will celebrate their community's history and founding.

New Salem began on an April day in 1882 when young John Christiansen hopped off a westbound freight train. The only sign of civilization he saw were the train tracks behind him and the belongings he brought. Soon after his arrival a Colonization Bureau out of Chicago sent settlers to the area and gave the colony its independence for \$600. A church, land office, lumber yard, drugstore, and general store were

soon built, and by the end of 1883, the town was ready for great plains living.

Known nationally as the home of the world's largest Holstein cow, New Salem is a community filled with pride and energy. "Salem Sue" stands 38 feet high, weighs over 6 tons, and was erected by the New Salem Lions Club in 1974 to honor the dairymen of North Dakota. New Salem also has a nine-hole golf course, public swimming pool, and numerous parks to entertain residents and tourists.

To celebrate its 125th anniversary, the community of New Salem is organizing a celebration that will include a parade, demolition derby, mixed golf scramble, pitchfork fondue, and numerous outdoor activities. A street dance down New Salem's Main Street will also be held. It promises to be a wonderful event.

Mr. President, I ask the U.S. Senate to join me in congratulating New Salem, ND, and its residents on their first 125 years and in wishing them well in the future. By honoring New Salem and all the other historic small towns of North Dakota, we keep the pioneering frontier spirit alive for future generations. It is places such as New Salem that have helped to shape this country into what it is today, which is why this fine community is deserving of our recognition.

New Salem has a proud past and a bright future.●

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF RICHARDTON, NORTH DAKOTA

● Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I am pleased today to recognize a community in North Dakota that will be celebrating its 125th anniversary. On July 11 through 13, the residents of Richardton will gather to celebrate their community's history and founding.

Richardton is located in Stark County in the southwest part of the State. Oscar L. Richard named the town in 1882 after his relative, C.B. Richard, who was an agent for the Hamburg-American Steamship Co., which promoted German-Russian settlement in this area. The post office was established a year later by Adolph Norberg. In 1906, the village was incorporated, and Richardton was officially recognized as a city in 1935.

Richardton has a prominent Roman Catholic monastery, which was founded by Bishop Vincent DePaul Wehrle in 1899. Vincent was the first Abbot of the monastery, which was named St. Mary's Priory, from 1903-1910. Under his leadership, the great twin-tower cathedral was built in 1906.

St. Mary's faced significant challenges after its completion in 1910 which eventually led to its closure. Abbot Alcuin Deutsch of St. John's Abbey in Minnesota wanted to revive the Richardton community because it was still struggling financially. In 1926, Abbot Deutsch and other monks around North Dakota helped reopen

the monastery with the name Assumption Abbey. Assumption Abbey remains in operation today.

Richardton's attractions also include a golf course, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, motels and much more. Residents of Richardton take great pride in their community. To celebrate their 125th centennial anniversary, the community will be holding a 5k walk/run, a parade, games, an antique car show, a Rough Rider Rodeo, a dance, and a fireworks show.

Mr. President, I ask the U.S. Senate to join me in congratulating Richardton, ND, and its residents on their first 125 years and in wishing them well in the future. By honoring Richardton and all other historic small towns of North Dakota, we keep the great pioneering frontier spirit alive for future generations. It is places such as Richardton that have helped shape this country into what it is today, which is why this fine community is deserving of our recognition.

Richardton has a proud past and a bright future.●

HONORING KENWAY CORPORATION

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I wish today to recognize the Kenway Corporation, an outstanding small business from my home State of Maine that recently earned the distinguished recognition of Manufacturer of the Year by the Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership, or Maine MEP. A fiberglass manufacturer located in Maine's capital city of Augusta, the Kenway Corporation has for over 60 years been known for its high-quality products. The MEP's Manufacturer of the Year award is presented every year to a company that has achieved world-class status and has applied the best manufacturing practices necessary to succeed in the marketplace.

The Kenway Corporation formally began operations as Kenway Boats in 1947 in the rural community of Palermo, ME. Originally focused on building wooden crafts, the firm switched its concentration to composites in the 1960s and has since grown into a tremendously successful manufacturing company. Today, Kenway manufactures corrosion-resistant fiberglass for a variety of industries, including marine, pulp and paper, and power. Notably, in 1991, Kenway moved its venture to Augusta and increased its manufacturing facilities to more than 10,000 square feet. The firm is expanding again this year by doubling its current size while consolidating its operations. Additionally, since 2003, the company has increased its staff more than two-fold, to nearly 80 employees, and Kenway is seeking to provide even more jobs in the near future. Kenway has attracted a loyal customer base ranging from coast to coast and even to Puerto Rico.

The Kenway Corporation's products are highly advanced and heavily sought after by numerous companies. Kenway