round and regardless of which party is in power. Specifically, I would like to pay tribute to Steve and Sharon Rusnak, a truly unique couple who will both be retired within the next few months after serving ''behind the scenes'' in the House of Representatives for a truly remarkable combined service of 70 years.

Most of our colleagues, along with countless numbers of our constituents, have been on the other side of Steve's camera lens and have benefited from the skill, talent, and quiet dignity that he has brought to his work in the Office of Photography for the past 32 years. Steve joined the staff of the House in January of 1977 and has been witness to and chronicled the tremendous changes that have occurred within the Congress and the Nation for more than three decades.

After attending Ohio State University, Steve began his career as a lab technician and just retired from the House as senior photographer, having also served as acting manager for the Office of Photography last year. Through his skill, hard work, and long hours Steve has made an important contribution to the archives of the House, providing a visual recorded history and account of the House's work for these many years.

In addition to being on hand to photograph the annual State of the Union Address and other official events inside and outside of the House chamber, Steve has traveled the four corners of the world to record on film the work of Members of the House. And for so many years he has rushed from office to office and to the steps of the House chamber, in all kinds of weather, to photograph the visits made by our constituents and other groups to Washington.

In addition to the professionalism and ability he brings to his job as an official House photographer, his kind manner and ready smile have put many people at ease and given them a visual reminder of their visit to Capitol Hill which for many is a once in a lifetime opportunity. There is no telling how many people Steve has photographed and touched in such a unique way. Steve worked long hours and missed many lunches to do his job and to do it so well, and he was supported throughout the process by a woman who is no stranger to the long hours and unique workplace that exists here in the ''people's House.''

Sharon Rusnak began her service in the House in 1967, as a summer intern to the late Congressman Carl D. Perkins, D–KY. After graduating from Berea College, she worked in his official office and went on to serve as executive assistant for him, and after his death, for his son Carl C. Perkins until 1993. In addition to maintaining a very full Hill schedule, Sharon earned a master's degree in education from George Washington University.

After serving as office manager to former Representative Lynn Schenk, D–CA, Sharon joined the staff of former Congressman E ''Kika'' de la Garza, D–TX, and served as scheduler for the House Committee on Agriculture until Kika's retirement in 1996. For the next 8 years, she served as office manager for the committee's ranking minority member, former Congressman Charlie Stenholm, D–TX. Sharon is currently serving as chief administrative officer for the Agriculture Committee chaired by Congressman Collin C. Peterson, D–MN, and will remain in that position for the next few months.

Despite the long hours and hectic schedules, Steve and Sharon Rusnak have enjoyed a happy and productive life away from the halls of Congress. They married in 1973 and raised two daughters, Shelley Brooke and Stacey LeeAnn, and took an active hand in helping nurture their children's educational and athletic abilities. Steve served as a youth basketball coach, youth soccer coach, and little league coach. A soccer player in her own right, Sharon also coached youth soccer, worked as a referee, and has experience as a liturgical dancer.

Steve and Sharon's commitment to their children is clear. Shelley graduated from Christopher Newport University and Stacey took her first degree from Virginia Tech, subsequently earning a nursing degree from Marymount University in Arlington, VA.

There is an expression that ''slow and steady wins the race.'' For more than three decades the House of Representatives has benefited from the tireless service of these very capable civil servants. You won't see their names on the election ballot every 2 years, but the work of this body would be impossible without individuals such as Steve and Sharon Rusnak. Their dedication to their jobs, their country and their family are an inspiration to us all and I would like to thank and commend them for their selfless service to this body. And I hasten to wish them a long, happy, and healthy retirement. They have certainly earned it.

VIOLENCE IN ISRAEL AND GAZA

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2009

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that is very much on the minds of my constituents right now—the violence in Israel and Gaza.

This is a difficult time for Israel, and as its ally, I believe we must support its right to self-defense.

Before I joined Congress, I had the privilege of visiting Israel. It was a trip that I will never forget. I have always considered myself a friend of Israel, but that trip made me realize just how much our two nations have in common.

We all want peace, Madam Speaker, but clearly there can be no peace while Hamas continues to launch unprovoked rocket attacks into Israel.

We would not let Hamas launch rockets into the United States, and I do not know how we could expect Israel to permit these attacks either.

I am deeply saddened by the casualties the recent conflict has inflicted, especially the civilian casualties. Each one of these is a tragedy, and I sincerely hope that both sides will do everything possible to avoid them.

I am encouraged by Israel's decision to temporarily pause its military operations to allow delivery of humanitarian aid, and by Hamas's decision to cease rocket launches during these deliveries. While only three hours, this is an important step forward. I hope that a longer lasting peace can be achieved soon.

CONGRATULATING RIVERHEAD BLUE WAVES FOOTBALL TEAM

HON. TIMOTHY H. BISHOP

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2009

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize the exceptional achievements of the Riverhead Blue Waves Football Team: 2008 Long Island Class II Champions and the first Long Island squad in history to compile a record of 12–0. The Blue Waves also earned the overall championship for Suffolk County and the Rutgers Award as the county's consensus best team.

As always, Riverhead's success was built on strong teamwork, solid coaching, and the contributions of talented individuals. Anchoring a potent offense that averaged 35 points per game, senior running back Miguel Maysonet was voted the top offensive player in Suffolk County by opposing coaches. The same group recognized one of their own, Riverhead Coach Leif Shay, as coach of the year.

Madam Speaker, the success of Riverhead's football team has brought great pride to their school and the community. I am pleased to join all residents of Riverhead in congratulating the Blue Waves on their accomplishments, and wish the departing seniors the best of luck in their future endeavors.

IN MEMORY OF PAUL WEYRICH

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2009

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, on December 18, Paul Weyrich, one of the founders of the modern conservative movement, died. He successfully worked to evolve conservatism from a status of negativism to a dynamic movement promoting creative and meaningful reforms. I personally saw his success firsthand with the American Legislative Exchange Council developing State legislative reforms. And with Dr. Robert Krieble, I served on the delegation in August 1991 of the Krieble Institute to Sofia, Bulgaria, where Paul Weyrich gave presentations to the newly elected democrats of the National Assembly who helped Bulgaria emerge from the darkness of totalitarian Communism. Bulgaria today is a model free market democracy as a valued member of NATO and the European Union. His service to our nation will always be appreciated.

John Gizzi, columnist for Human Events professionally penned the following thoughtful tribute to Mr. Weyrich on the day of his passing.

[From Human Events, Dec. 18, 2008]

PAUL WEYRICH: RIP

(By John Gizzi)

Paul Weyrich—''The midwife of the New Right''. . . ''Pope Paul''. . . ''The Man Who Taught Conservatives to Network''—passed away this morning after a long illness.

Weyrich was called a lot of things—and some of them that originated on the left are unprintable—but one thing admirers and enemies of Paul Weyrich found inarguable: that in 66 years of life, the man who

launched the Heritage Foundation and Free Congress Foundation and played a key role in mobilizing cultural conservatives into political battle was someone who left postwar conservatism and the world a different place than it was before he came on the political scene. In short, he was a man of consequence.

Born in Racine, Wisconsin, Weyrich had a passion for politics almost since childhood. Active in Young Republicans at the University of Wisconsin (Madison), the young Weyrich quit college to become a political reporter for the Milwaukee Sentinel and later became a television reporter in Kenosha, Wisconsin and then in Denver, Colorado.

In 1967, Weyrich came to Washington as press secretary to conservative Sen. Gordon Allot (R.–Col.). At one point, Weyrich later recalled to me, he had received an invitation by mistake to a luncheon of liberal staffers on Capitol Hill Weyrich attended anyway and, in his words, ''I saw all the liberal groups and staffers going through issues, giving assignments to people, and agreeing to meet again. Conservatives needed to be doing the same thing and I decided to do something about it.''

Beginning with staffers from conservative House and Senate offices, and later with leaders of national right-of-center groups, Weyrich began regular lunches and meetings that are today a staple of the modern conservative movement. With the financial support of Colorado beer baron Joseph Coors, Weyrich and fellow Hill staffer Ed Feulner launched the Heritage Foundation in 1973. A counterforce to the liberal Brookings Institute, Heritage would grow into one of the most respected ''think tanks'' and provide the intellectual firepower in the Reagan Administration in 1980 and to Congress after Republicans won control of both Houses in 1994.

In the 1970s, Weyrich helped launch the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress (which later became the Free Congress Foundation) and the Moral Majority. Both groups were pivotal in mobilizing religious conservatives into political activity for candidates and, in 1978, played critical roles in the elections of such conservative titans as Sens. Bill Armstrong (R.–Col.) and Gordon Humphrey (R.–NH) and Reps. Newt Gingrich (R.–GA) and Dan Lungren (R.–CA).

Quoting Napoleon's celebrated question ''How many legions does the Pope have?'' Weyrich once told me, ''Believing Christians now have many legions—and they're voting.'' (Raised a Roman Catholic, Weyrich himself became angry when a priest attacked something his then-boss Allott was supporting in the Senate; he thereupon joined the Eastern Rite Orthodox Church and later became a deacon.)

Weyrich attempted to bring change and fresh activity to every aspect of politics. As more and more countries became democratic and elected their leaders, Weyrich became president of the Krieble Institute from 1989–96 and trained political activists in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. (At one point, he and fellow Krieble trainer Gary Hoffmeister performed a vaudeville skit to demonstrate campaigning to budding Russian politicians.) The former TV newsman founded the satellite television station National Empowerment Television and later hosted a talk show on satellite radio.

Occasionally, Weyrich critics on both the right and left would bring up his penchant for abrupt replies and gruffness. His response to me was ''I never wanted everyone to like me—just enough people so we can get political change.''

In September of this year, more than 400 friends, Members of Congress and other political leaders packed the Four Seasons Hotel to pay tribute to the activist, who had been in failing health from a spinal injury in '01. In thanking his friends, Weyrich recalled how, in spite of his health problems, life had been good to him: an only child, he had had a strong marriage to wife Joyce that produced five children; interested in the U.S. Senate all his life, he got to work there; a lover of trains, he served on the national board of Amtrak and the Amtrak Reform Council; a lifelong conservative, he played a major role in shaping its modern form.

And, even when we disagreed or he took issue with Human Events, Weyrich was a faithful reader who would frequently cite columns in our publication. I already miss Paul Weyrich very much. We all will in the future.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ENERGY SUSTAINABILITY ACT OF 2009

HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2009

Mr. BUYER. Madam Speaker, today, my distinguished colleague Mr. MICHAUD and I, along with several of our other colleagues, are introducing the bipartisan Department of Veterans Affairs, VA, Energy Sustainability Act of 2009. This legislation would establish strategic and long-term plans for energy sustainability and conservation within the VA.

Addressing our Nation's energy problem calls for Congress to adopt a multi-faceted approach to include the use of alternative fuels, restructuring building systems, and encouraging the use of energy efficient systems and vehicles. Our bill would require a report on the installation of alternative fuel stations at VA facilities, as funded in P.L. 110–329, and require a feasibility study regarding the installation of energy efficient and renewable energy systems in Department buildings. Such systems include solar technologies, energy efficient roof and building envelope systems, wind technology, and wood-based bio-fuels.

As our country adapts to the increased global demand for energy resources, it is imperative that we effectively implement wise consumption policies and take real steps to mitigate the impact of increased costs. This bill would create a VA Office of Energy Management, and an Energy Advisory Committee consisting of VA officials and private sector experts on energy management. The Office of Energy Management, with the advice and recommendations of the Energy Advisory Committee and national laboratories such as those at Lawrence Livermore and Oak Ridge, would be responsible for helping VA meet a number of specific energy sustainability goals. This includes compliance with Presidential Order 13423, VA Directive 0055, and the long term sustainable energy plans in this legislation. The office would also establish a database to track VA's energy and water consumption.

In an effort to assist our Nation's veterans in their individual efforts to become more energy efficient, our bill would provide an additional amount of up to $10,000 for high efficiency systems for veterans who qualify for specially adaptive housing grants under section 2101(a)(2) of title 38, United States Code. Additionally, it would provide veterans who qualify for a specially adapted auto grant, under section 3902(a) of title 38, United States Code, the additional amount necessary to purchase alternative fuel vehicles.

Finally, VA would be authorized to conduct a pilot program for the sale of air pollution emission reduction incentives, also known as emission reduction credits, and VA would be authorized to retain proceeds from the sales. America's veterans should benefit from the VA's efforts to produce cleaner energy.

Madam Speaker, as the cost of fossil fuels rises and resources become scarcer, our nation must provide services for our veterans in an energy efficient manner. A sustainable energy program at VA will conserve energy and financial resources that can be used to provide care for our veterans. I encourage my colleagues to support the bipartisan Department of Veterans Affairs Energy Sustainability Act of 2009.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTION HONORING ''GO FOR BROKE'' REGIMENTS WITH CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 8, 2009

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation recognizing the Japanese-American 100th Infantry Battalion and 442nd Regimental Combat Team, commonly known as the ''Go For Broke'' regiments, for their dedicated service to our Nation during World War II.

These brave men served with pride, courage and conviction, waging a war on two fronts—abroad against a forceful and oppressive fascism, and at home against the intolerance of racial injustice. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor incited doubts about the loyalty of Japanese-Americans, these brave men who enlisted to fight to protect our Nation were faced with segregated training conditions, families and friends relocated to internment camps, and repeated questions about their combat abilities. At a time when they could have easily turned their backs on a country which had seemingly turned its back on them, these men chose the nobler, bolder, and more difficult route.

The ''Go For Broke'' regiments went on to earn several awards for their distinctive service in combat, including: 7 Presidential Unit Citations, 21 Medals of Honor, 29 Distinguished Service Crosses, 560 Silver Stars, 4,000 Bronze Stars, 22 Legion of Merit Medals, 15 Soldier's Medals, and over 4,000 Purple Hearts, among numerous additional distinctions. For their size and length of service, the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team were the most decorated U.S. military units of the war. However, these regiments have yet to be honored with a Congressional Gold Medal.

To answer the call of duty requires exceptional courage and sacrifice, but to respond with a vigor and persistence unaffected by those who sought to malign and impede their every achievement reveals an incredible spirit and admirable will. Please join me in honoring these courageous men by supporting the granting of a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the U.S. Army's 100th Infantry