

phrase taken out of context from a letter written by Thomas Jefferson to the Danbury Baptists on January 1, 1802. In the letter, Jefferson simply reassures the Baptists that the First amendment would preclude an intrusion by the federal government into religious matters between denominations. It is ironic and sad that a letter defending the principle that the federal government must stay out of religious affairs, should be used two hundred years later to justify the Supreme Court telling a child that he cannot pray in school!

The Court completely disregards the original meaning and intent of the First amendment. It has interpreted the establishment clause to preclude prayer and other religious speech in a public place, thereby violating the free exercise clause of the very same First amendment. Therefore, it is incumbent upon Congress to correct this error, and to perform its duty to support and defend the Constitution. My legislation would restore First amendment protections of religion and speech by removing all religious freedom-related cases from federal district court jurisdiction, as well as from federal claims court jurisdiction. The federal government has no constitutional authority to reach its hands in the religious affairs of its citizens or of the several states.

As James Madison said, "There are more instances of the abridgement of the freedom of the people by the gradual and silent encroachment of those in power, than by violent and sudden usurpation." I sincerely hope that my colleagues will fight against the "gradual and silent encroachment" of the courts upon our nation's religious liberties by supporting this bill.

IN PRAISE OF SPECIAL AGENT
GERARD B. ALEXANDER

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 12, 2002

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, Special Agent Gerard B. "Jerry" Alexander recently retired after 26 years of service to the communities of Southwest Michigan. An employee of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and assigned to the Kalamazoo field office, Jerry was an asset to the community that will sorely be missed.

A graduate of American University, Jerry boasts an impressive law enforcement record both in the United States as well as the world at large. Dedicated, intelligent, and responsible, Jerry is a well-rounded law enforcement official with experience working on numerous case genres. Jerry specialized in white-collar crime, an area of law enforcement that he found especially challenging and prevalent in our corner of the state of Michigan. His impressive talents and exemplary work ethic are just two of the qualities that come to mind when recalling Jerry's work with the Bureau.

A strong communitarian, Jerry spent much of his free time as a volunteer in the Kalamazoo area. His service as a coach and manager for the West Portage Little League will not be forgotten by the countless youngsters who enjoyed a rewarding athletic experience. Jerry's love for children also led him to take an active role in the Portage Central High School Band, which he supported in numerous fundraisers.

I would like to take this opportunity to echo the respect and admiration Jerry Alexander has gained within the communities of Southwest Michigan. His personal qualities and numerous skills are certain to facilitate success in all of his future endeavors.

HONORING FRANCES BACA ON
LAND DONATION TO SANTA FE
NATIONAL FOREST

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 12, 2002

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the Santa Fe National Forest has received a donation of approximately 154 acres of private land from Ms. Frances Baca, of Circleville, Ohio. This undeveloped forested land has been in the Baca family for over 50 years. The Baca property was the last remaining private parcel of land in Santa Fe Canyon located within the boundaries of the Santa Fe Municipal watershed, just east of the City of Santa Fe.

Ms. Baca inherited the parcel from her mother, Antoinette Hanna Baca—the first woman commissioned Officer in the National Guard and later appointed Assistant Adjutant General—who owned a larger parcel in the watershed but sold part of it to the renowned artist Randall Davey. Eventually, Randall Davey left his property and houses to the Audubon Society—which uses the facility as a conference and education center.

After this donation, either the City of Santa Fe or the United States of America own all of the lands within the watershed. With the recent release of the Santa Fe Municipal Watershed Management Plan to improve forest conditions through thinning and burning portions of the municipal watershed, having access to this property is considered key to the successful implementation of the project.

Among the most valuable assets in northern New Mexico are its deep-rooted culture and pristine beauty. Together, they are a large part of why generation after generation has chosen to live here and why new neighbors arrive every day. This new land will only add to those treasures.

I know how grateful the Santa Fe National Forest Supervisor Leonard Atencio is for this generous donation. I, too, want to thank Ms. Baca for this unprecedented gift on behalf of all New Mexicans and visitors to the Land of Enchantment. This land will forever serve as a testament to the legacy of your family and symbolizes the special connection that our citizens feel to the land.

TRIBUTE TO VICTOR WAHBY, MD,
DIRECTOR OF THE VA-MEDICAL
MUSICAL GROUP

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 12, 2002

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a distinguished and unique individual—Victor S. Wahby, M.D., Ph.D., founder and director of the VA-National Medical Musical

Group, the largest medical chorale and symphony orchestra in America. The musicians of this award-winning group are healers and medical clinicians, scientists or medical administrators by profession, but they are all also extremely talented and well-trained musicians. They embrace Dr. Wahby's vision of "music that heals."

A renaissance man, Dr. Wahby is a physician, scientist, musician, poet, and a leading medical practitioner and administrator at the Veterans' Health Administration in Washington, DC. Dr. Wahby has had an extraordinary career. In his younger years at the Mayo Clinic, he provided critical medical care to such notables as the Rev. Billy Graham, Dr. Charles Malik and Corrie Ten Boom. Subsequently, while on faculty of Yale University, he published research on the hormonal correlates of depression and appetite. In his current position as a leading VA physician-executive, he has received many national recognitions. Just this year he and his team won the prestigious Government Executive Technology Award, the e-gov Pioneer Award, the Knowledge Management World Award, as well as numerous others.

Mr. Speaker, in 1996 Dr. Wahby and the VA-National Medical Musical Group initiated a unique patriotic event that has become an annual tradition here on Capitol Hill—the Congressional Flag Day Concert. This program of word and music is sponsored by the prayer breakfast organizations of the House of Representatives and the Senate. It is held on or around Flag Day (June 14) for the past six years. The seventh in this annual concert series will take place tomorrow, Thursday, June 13, at 1:00 p.m. in the Cannon Caucus Room.

The Congressional Flag Day Concerts have been embraced by members of both houses of the Congress and their staff, and it has enjoyed wide public support and strong media interest. Many leaders from different fields and varied backgrounds have endorsed and participated in this program, which emphasizes national healing and unity. I have personally had the honor of participating in several of these concerts, and I always come away entertained, refreshed and inspired.

The 2002 Concert Honorary Committee is chaired by First Lady Laura Bush, and the vice chairs are my wife, Annette, and Mrs. Patricia Lott, the wife of Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott. Others who serve on the committee include Lynne Cheney, former President Bill Clinton, former Senator Bob Dole, Dr. Henry Kissinger and other distinguished Americans.

Mr. Speaker, these Flag Day Concerts have emphasized the honoring of America's veterans and the men and women serving in our nation's armed forces. This year, the choir and orchestra will perform the "Veterans Hymn"—composed by Dr. Wahby.

It is a tribute to the energy, enthusiasm, patriotism, and showmanship of Dr. Wahby that the VA-National Medical Musical Group has been awarded the 2002 Congressional Medal of Honor Society's Bob Hope Award.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Dr. Victor Wahby for his service to our nation and for his outstanding leadership and dedication to healing through medicine and through music. And, Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues and their staff to join me tomorrow afternoon in the Cannon Caucus Room for the 2002 Annual Flag Day Concert.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
REVEREND ROBERT SOUDERS OF
ST. MATTHEW UNITED METH-
ODIST CHURCH IN BELLEVILLE,
ILLINOIS

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 12, 2002

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the retirement of the Reverend Robert Souders of St. Matthew United Methodist Church in Belleville, Illinois.

Reverend Robert Souders, Senior Pastor, came to serve the congregation of St. Matthew United Methodist Church in Belleville, Illinois in August, 1965, completing almost 37 years at his retirement in June of 2002. Reverend Souders began his 46 years of service as a pastor of Zion, Marlow and Liberty Methodist Churches (1955–1956); Browns Chapel and McHenry United Methodist Churches (1956–1958); Ransom and Blackstone (1958–1961); Steepleville and Percy (1961–1965); and then St. Matthew United Methodist Church. Reverend Souders is a graduate of McKendree College and received his seminary degree from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminar. He was ordained as an Elder in the United Methodist Church in 1961.

St. Matthew UMC has grown physically and spiritually under the leadership of Reverend Souders. For many years the church has had one of the finest youth ministries in the area. The bus and senior citizen's ministry has been exemplary and many churches have sought ideas and information from Reverend Souders to enhance their own programs. The music ministry continues to be one of the most well known in southern Illinois. Since his actual coming, many souls have been won. He began in 1965 with 99 members with the represent church exceeding 1300 members. Reverend Souders has been a leaders in the evangelism work of the United Methodist Church and in June 1990, was a recipient of the prestigious "Harry Denman Evangelism Award".

The New Life Club began in 1972 as an outreach to senior adults in the area. They have traveled many miles from Southern Illinois to Canada, Nova Scotia and Europe. The St. Matthew Day Care was formally established on August 27, 1972 and continues to provide a needed ministry in the community to provide a place of safety where children are cared for and grow in body, mind and spirit. A Thrift Shop was established in 1976 and continues to serve the needs of many through the generous donations of the congregation. In October 1978 and in March 1979, two apartment complexes, each with 17 units, were opened for senior citizens.

The Mission Society for the United Methodist Church was established in 1984 with Reverend Souders as one of the organizers. Over 125 fully funded missionaries now serve on the mission field in various parts of the world.

Reverend Souders has served on the Belleville Memorial Hospital Board of Directors since December 20, 1983. During this time, he also served on the following committees; Buildings and Grounds, Hospital Human Resources, Planning and Convalescent Home Care.

Reverend Souders and his wife, Beverly will be married 47 years on December 17, 2002. They have three children; Michelle, Gregory and Shauna. Michelle and Jerry Haynes live in Tennessee with their four children; Joshua, Courtney, Jonathan and Tucker. Greg and Brenda Souders reside in Belleville, Illinois with their three daughters; Cara, Kimberly and Jessica. Shauna and Tony call Arizona home with their sons, Nicholas and Jared and daughters Renae, Lauren and Neaville.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the service of Reverend Robert Souders to the community and to congratulate him upon the occasion of his retirement and to wish him and his family the very best for the future.

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF LEWIS &
CLARK: A STUDENT EXPLORA-
TION OF ECOLOGY, HISTORY &
GEOGRAPHY OF THE EXPEDI-
TION

HON. RAY LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 12, 2002

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, June 16, 2002, a group of nineteen students and five teachers from Jacksonville High School in Jacksonville, Illinois are embarking on a journey that will follow the footsteps of Lewis & Clark. The students will be focusing on environmental ethics, ecology, geography and historical issues. Throughout their seventeen-day journey through the Dakotas and Montana, the students will meet with historians and biologists to discuss the impact of humans on this land since the early 1800's. Following their trip, the students and teachers will be presenting their historic environmental journey to schools and community groups. The group plans on presenting their findings during the following year leading up to the bicentennial commemoration. These young people are to be commended for embarking on this educational venture that will help them immeasurably in their understanding of the scientific and geographic research done by Lewis and Clark, as well as challenging them to use the skills they have acquired during their studies. I am proud to name these young adventurers among my constituents: Michael Meyer, Kelsey Mason, James Million, David Mosley, LeAnn Shearburn, Sam Dimmick, Aaron Evans, Jaclyn Verticchio, Cailean Bailey, Thomas Baulos, Toni Brooks, Jamey Davidsmeyer, Andrew Massey, Bridgett Hubbart, Adam Phillips, James Rice, Janet Clayton, Erica Kemple, and Jonathan Fox. The teachers accompanying these fine students are as follows: Jim Herget, Jim Chelsvig, Heather Beavers, Travis Brockschmidt, and John Lawless.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB RILEY

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 12, 2002

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained for Rollcall No. 220, H. Res. 438, ex-

pressing the sense of the House of Representatives that improving men's health through fitness and the reduction of obesity should be a priority. Had I been present I would have voted yea.

I was also unavoidably detained for Rollcall No. 221, H. Con. Res. 394, expressing the Sense of the Congress Concerning the 2002 World Cup and Co-Hosts Republic of Korea and Japan. Had I been present I would have voted yea.

I was also unavoidably detained for Rollcall No. 222, H. Con. Res. 213, expressing the Sense of Congress Regarding North Korea Refugees who are Detained in China and Returned to North Korea Where they Face Torture, Imprisonment, and Execution. Had I been present I would have voted yea.

TANF REAUTHORIZATION 2002

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 12, 2002

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, well before the Republican majority forced passage of the 1996 "Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act" (PRWORA)—the so-called welfare reform package—Oregon pioneered several welfare and poverty alleviation initiatives and landmark education and training programs. The 1996 welfare bill allowed states, like Oregon, a waiver to continue their successful social assistance programs with minimal federal interference.

Oregon was able to offer such programs as the JOBS welfare-to-work program and the JOBS Plus program that assists in job placements in fields with opportunities for real career advancement and makes an impact not just in the caseloads, but in poverty alleviation. Oregon was also one of the first states to include innovations like incentives for employers to train and hire welfare recipients.

There are a number of proposed changes to the Temporary Assistance to Need Families (TANF) reauthorization that will end up costing Oregon more and reduce its flexibility in delivering innovative, individualized programs.

Under current law, adults have two years to find a job before losing their welfare benefits. One of the most important factors in finding a stable job at a living wage is education. That's why I've advocated that any reforms allow recipients to enroll in two-year college or four-year university programs, job training or professional development programs, or rehabilitation programs for mental health, substance abuse, or domestic violence, without hurting their eligibility for benefits. Over 50 percent of the poor in Oregon have, for one reason or another, not completed high school. Over 35 percent of the poor in Oregon have only an eighth-grade education or less. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, of the 30 fastest growing, well-compensated occupations, only five can be accomplished with short-term training.

With Oregon suffering from the highest unemployment rate in the nation at nearly 8 percent, and many Oregon counties at double-digit unemployment, education becomes even more important during these tough economic times to ensure living wage jobs. The facts are shocking. A single mom with two children will