

**Welcome Remarks for Brandon Silveria Assembly
Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-34)
Brandon Silveria Assembly
Roosevelt High School, Boyle Heights
May 28, 2008**

“It is a pleasure to be in Boyle Heights, the community where I was born and raised and now proudly represent in the U.S. House of Representatives as part of California’s 34th Congressional District.

I thank Dr. Sofia Freire, the Principal; Assistant Principal Mario Cantu, and all the teachers and staff who helped organize today’s assembly.

I also want to acknowledge The Century Council, which is an industry-funded nonprofit group dedicated to fighting drunk driving and underage drinking.

I thank the Council for its support and assistance in bringing our guest speakers to Roosevelt High School.

I hope that today’s presentation will give you a better understanding of the horrible consequences of underage drinking.

I gained that understanding, when, prior to being in public office, I worked for non-profit organizations addressing alcohol and drug abuse in our communities.

It was during those years that I saw first hand how the abuse of alcohol and drugs destroys lives and families.

That is why I authored the, “Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act”, a bill better known as the STOP Act.

The STOP Act, among other things, provides for a national media campaign to help you, your friends and your parents learn about the dangers of underage drinking, including the possibility of damage to the brain.

I am very pleased that after eight hard fought years, the STOP Act passed into law in 2006.

We have called today’s assembly because understanding the dangers of underage drinking is especially important to you, who as teenagers, are faced on a daily basis with peer pressures and choices that can impact the rest of your lives.

One of those choices will be whether or not to drink before the legal age of 21, because according to the American Medical Association, underage drinking is a key factor in the two leading causes of teenage deaths: car accidents and fatal injuries.

Our guest speakers today will share with you their personal experience with underage drinking. The wish is that their stories will make a positive difference in your lives by inspiring you to make the right choice.

Brandon Silveria was a typical teenager in Los Gatos, California. He was a football player, who was also active on his high school rowing team. Brandon had a girlfriend, a job and a promising future.

All that changed when Brandon chose to drive home after drinking just a couple of beers at a party. Making the wrong choice caused Brandon to nearly lose his life.

Brandon and his father are here in the hope that their story will save a life, maybe your own.

Please help me welcome Brandon and his father, Mr. Tony Silveria.”

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