

of 1996, legislation to ensure the availability of implantable medical devices, which include: pacemakers, heart valves, artificial blood vessels, angioplasty catheters, left ventricular assist devices, and hip and knee joints. This bill is almost identical to H.R. 753, which I introduced last year, and is the same language that was included as title II of the Product Liability Fairness Act conference report which passed both Houses of Congress.

The measure that I, along with a bipartisan group of 23 cosponsors, introduce today will provide for expedited dismissal from lawsuit of suppliers of raw materials used in the manufacture of lifesaving and lifeenhancing medical devices—biomaterials. The Biomaterials Access Assurance Act of 1996 will not limit recovery from a biomaterials supplier where the supplier is also the manufacturer or seller of the device, or where the supplier failed to provide the biomaterials described in an applicable contract or specifications.

A looming crisis exists which necessitates adoption of the Biomaterials Access Assurance Act. Biomaterials suppliers have stopped selling raw materials to medical device manufacturers. The suppliers, named in lawsuits involving medical implants because they are considered deep pockets, have been forced to pay millions to defend themselves. Although these suppliers are rarely found liable, the litigation costs are not offset by the profits realized by selling to the device market. Sales to the device market make up only a small percentage of the overall sales of these materials to alternative markets. Raw materials used in the manufacture of these devices—polyester yarn, resins, polyurethane—have other commercial applications. For example, polyester fibers used in medical implants account for less than \$200,000 of sales in a \$9 billion worldwide polyester yarn market.

Twelve suppliers have withdrawn from the biomaterials market in the past 2 years. Device manufacturers have been forced to seek overseas suppliers, many of whom refuse to sell raw materials to U.S. manufacturers. The result is a critical shortage of biomaterials. The ultimate losers are the people who depend on medical devices to extend and improve their lives.

The Product Liability Fairness Act, which contained the exact language that I introduce today, passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 259 to 158, and the Senate by a vote of 59 to 40. Despite the President's veto of the Product Liability Fairness Act, he stated that this provision in particular was "a laudable attempt to ensure the supply of materials needed to make lifesaving medical devices." Although the President went on to express certain reservations that he has concerning this legislation, I intend to work closely with the cosponsors and the administration to ensure enactment of this lifesaving measure.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DAVID
GUETZKOW

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA
OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, May 16, 1996

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my most sincere congratulations to David Guetzkow, who was named the Wisconsin

Boys & Girls Clubs' "1996 Youth of the Year." David is an exemplary young man very deserving of this distinguished award.

David has been an active member of the Irving J. Seher Boys & Girls Club for 11 years. He has demonstrated his leadership and commitment through activities sponsored by the Seher Club, as well as the Milwaukee Trade and Technical High School which he attends. Club projects like Adopt-A-Highway on South 27th Street in Milwaukee and the graffiti removal project instilled a sense of community pride in David.

At Milwaukee Trade and Technical High, David has excelled in both academic and extracurricular areas. While maintaining a 3.5 grade point average, he has made time to tutor other students, serve as captain of the volleyball and basketball teams, and quarterback of the football team, and will be inducted into the National Honor Society this fall.

In receiving this honor, David performed exceptionally in all eight categories judged: service to the club, community service, home and family, school performance, spirituality, essay writing, interview skills, and public speaking. He speaks highly of the values and direction the Boys and Girls Club has provided throughout his youth.

So, I send my best wishes to David Guetzkow as he heads to the midwest regional competition in June. His parents, Jeanne and Joel, are no doubt proud of their son. I share in their pride and believe that with young people like David, our society indeed has a very bright future.

BOSSSES' DAY 1996

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 1996

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, in the Tenth Congressional District of Michigan, the personnel at Selfridge Air National Guard Base have served in the defense of the United States for over 78 years. Currently, Selfridge personnel are helping bring peace to the former Yugoslavia. I am proud to say that members of the Air Force Reserve's 927 Air Refueling Wing—927 ARW—which is stationed at Selfridge, were the first reservists to volunteer this past December for the "Joint Endeavor Express" from the United States to Germany.

Selfridge Air National Guard Base is one of the Nation's oldest and most historic military installations. It is named after Lt. Thomas Etholen Selfridge. Lieutenant Selfridge was the first military officer to pilot a heavier-than-air, engine-driven aircraft. While flying with Orville Wright on September 17, 1908, Lieutenant Selfridge, unfortunately, became the first officer to meet his death in powered flight. Wright survived only after a lengthy stay in the hospital.

Selfridge Field was activated as a military installation in 1917, 3 months after the United States entered World War I. In 1947, when the Air Force became a separate service, Selfridge Field became Selfridge Air Force Base and had grown from a 640-acre leased parcel of land to a permanent 3,600-acre base.

In 1971, the base was transferred to the Michigan Air National Guard and received its

current name. As the home of many diversified units, "Team Selfridge" takes pride in being the only Reserve Forces base to have permanently assigned units from all five of the uniformed services: the Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and the Coast Guard. The Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard also have units at the base.

This Saturday, May 18, 1996, the 927th is recognizing the employers who support its Reserve and Guard employees. Even though the deployment of these employees may cause financial and organizational strain, in times of need, their employers have subordinated company interests to those of the Nation. I applaud these employers for their sacrifice and commitment.

National Guard and Reserve Forces comprise almost half of our Nation's defense capability and are essential to national security. And, as is being demonstrated in Bosnia-Herzegovina, they are also essential to peace. "The mission of the 927th ARW is to extend the Global Reach of United States air power through trained personnel and mission ready equipment." As the first to volunteer in support of "Joint Endeavor," the 927th moved more than 6 tons of supplies in their first three missions—not only extending air power but offering a hand in peace.

These citizen-soldiers and airmen train vigorously and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with their active duty counterparts in order to be ready to meet the Nation's call at a moment's notice. And, their civilian bosses must also be ready, in a moment's notice, to see some of their best employees answer that call.

Civilian bosses and supervisors of Reserve component soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines have continued to pledge their active support. Thanks to their commitment, our National Guard and Reserve members have been able to fulfill their military missions.

Our National Guard and Reserve Forces, as demonstrated in operation "Joint Endeavor," are playing a greater and more diverse role than probably ever imagined by Lieutenant Selfridge. And with the vital support of America's employers, the National Guard and Reserves will be able to fulfill their ultimate mission of maintaining peace.

As a measure of our thanks, we should celebrate the significant contributions of our National Guard and Reserve employers. I urge my colleagues and all Americans to join me in honoring employers of National Guard and Reserve members by remembering May 18, 1996, as Bosses' Day. And I encourage the American people to express their gratitude to these employers for their extraordinary sacrifices on behalf of our Nation.

HONORING THE CENTRAL
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 16, 1996

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I am taking this opportunity to applaud the invaluable services provided by the Central Volunteer Fire Department. These brave, civic-minded people give freely of their time so that we may all feel safer at night.

Few realize the depth of training and hard work that goes into being a volunteer firefighter. To quote one of my local volunteers,