

Women Business Owners in Chicago, remains operational 4 years after it stopped receiving Federal money under this program. For mere seed money in the late 1980's, we are still helping women get their economic footing.

Mr. Chairman, this program has since its inception received broad bipartisan support in both houses of Congress. It does what we want most Federal programs to do: runs on a shoestring, produces concrete results, reaches and benefits a wide array of individuals, permits only a finite and brief period of financial aid to any one recipient location, and requires no bureaucracy to run it. This program works and it puts people to work. I urge all Members to support this bill and I look forward to its quick passage.

HONORING AMERICAN WORKING MEN AND WOMEN

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, to commemorate our Nation's Labor Day holiday, and to honor New York's vibrant and diverse work force. Appropriately enough, before Congress adjourns, we will have passed a bill to raise the minimum wage and sent it to the President for his signature. This marks a tremendous victory for those people who have been working tirelessly to ensure that this vital, and long overdue, action be taken. Many people deserve praise for their work on this and other issues, but I would especially like to recognize the New York State AFL-CIO, the Long Island Central Labor Council, the New York Central Labor Council, and the Building and Construction Trades Union of the AFL-CIO, as well as all of you in the labor community who have united to work together against the antilabor sentiment that has pervaded Congress in the last 18 months. Your immeasurable support in this effort has assisted Congress in finally, after 7 years, passing a much-needed raise in our Nation's minimum wage, as well as staving off several vitriolic attacks on our Nation's workers.

In a short time, those workers who have been scraping by on \$4.25 an hour will get some relief for their families by earning a little bit more. Right now, the minimum wage is at 40-year low in terms of purchasing power. The simple fact is that people can no longer raise a family on this kind of wage. Yes, it's a small step, but it's no secret that it's a step that most Americans have desired for a long time. In fact, 80 percent of the American public supports this raise. Additionally, this legislation is the essence of family values—in other words, by enacting this measure, we are truly valuing our families. In my view, it is a simple matter. If we don't assist, nurture, and encourage our families to attain a higher standard of living, how do we expect America as a whole to succeed?

However, this labor-unfriendly majority has, for some time now, been a virtual roadblock in the way of achieving meaningful legislation such as this, as well as other important labor and family related matters. We need to continue to be in the business of improving, not undercutting, the well being, and survival, of our families. Nonetheless, whether its been in

the form of striker-replacement legislation, allowing companies to raid the pensions of its workers, crafting a bill to mandate employer-led organizations to address labor issues, or cutting funding for important agencies such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA] and the National Labor Relations Board [NLRB], the Republican leadership has strived to make it more difficult for American workers to have access to safety and security in their jobs. These actions do not send the right message to hardworking Americans, and I intend to ensure that trend is reversed.

Lastly, through the persistent efforts of those such as my colleague Senator TED KENNEDY, we are also able to pass a serious first step toward meaningful health insurance reform. This bill will affect at least 25 million Americans who either change or lose their jobs, or have preexisting conditions in their family that has, up until now, given insurance companies an excuse not to offer comprehensive health insurance. That is patently unfair and just plain wrong, and I have consistently made sure that these concerns are addressed properly.

Working men and women have been the glue of this country ever since its inception, and I heartily salute them on Labor Day 1996. I strongly urge my colleagues to commemorate with me the workers of New York and their families on this day, and I look forward to a time when all Americans can feel safe in their jobs and financially secure in their lives.

TRIBUTE TO THE EIGHTH BRONX PUERTO RICAN DAY PARADE

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the eighth Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade, which will be held this Sunday in my South Bronx congressional district.

Mr. Speaker, this year, like each of the past 7, Puerto Ricans from all five boroughs of New York City, and from Puerto Rico have come together to march along the Grand Concourse, the South Bronx, in celebration of Puerto Rican traditions, music, and history.

Under the leadership of its President, Adolfo Carrión, Jr., the parade has continued to grow attracting thousands of visitors from New York State and other areas of the United States. This year more than 400,000 participants are expected.

The 1996 Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade will commemorate the centenary of the flag of Puerto Rico. In its honor, participants will march carrying the Puerto Rican flag with pride.

Mr. Speaker, the idea and design of the Puerto Rican flag were conceived in New York City. On December 22, 1895, a group of Puerto Ricans patriots met at Chimney Hall, between 25th Street and 6th Avenue, in Manhattan, to approve a resolution for the adoption of the Puerto Rican flag. The flag which was presented that day was sewn by Ms. Mima Barbosa.

The parade will also honor and recognize the Puerto Rican community for transforming New York City into a bilingual city. It is in their honor that we celebrate Puerto Rican culture and the Spanish language.

The parade will feature the music of "La India," Pete "Conde" Rodriguez, and Ray Sepulveda, among other performers. It will be a day of joyful celebration of Puerto Rican heritage.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the individuals and participants who have made possible the celebration of the Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade—8 years of bringing joy to the community.

IN APPRECIATION OF ROBERT BITZER

HON. GLENN POSHARD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Robert Bitzer of Shelbyville, IL. For half a century, he touched many lives as a selfless community leader and businessman. Mr. Bitzer passed way on July 18, leaving behind a legacy of hard work and dedication.

Mr. Bitzer was born March 30, 1923 in East St. Louis, IL. He graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in business administration. From 1945 to 1947 he assumed the role of Chief Illiniwek and made an appearance in the Rose Bowl. Though such an experience would often lead to a lifetime of storytelling, those who heard the story of this modest man, only heard it from others.

As a World War II veteran, he went on to serve as president of Bitzer-Taggart Motor Co. for 44 years. During this time, his tireless involvement in the community led some to dub him "Mr. Shelbyville." He was an instrumental force in the development of Lake Shelbyville and served as the chairman of the Lake Shelbyville 25th Anniversary Celebration. His numerous leadership positions in the community were rewarded with the Business Ethics and Social Involvement Award and the Outstanding Businessman Award from the city of Shelbyville. Despite his unwavering dedication to the community, his family was always his first priority.

Mr. Speaker, Robert Bitzer was a model citizen whose humble service and dedication were the archetype of "leading by example." His life is an inspiration that we can all look to with pride, and do our best to emulate. It is a privilege to represent him in the United States Congress.

TRIBUTE TO KAREN CLARK

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, as president and CEO of Managed Healthcare Systems, Inc. [MHS], Karen L. Clark has pioneered the concept of community-based managed care in New York City. In leading MHS from its inception 2 years ago to its current position as the fourth largest provider of Medicaid managed care in the city, Ms. Clark has demonstrated that a minority-controlled and operated, for-profit health maintenance organization [HMO] can successfully deliver quality health care to residents of inner-city neighborhoods that