

I have the pleasure to report that Clarion County, in the Fifth Congressional District, is the selection for the prestigious Community of the Year honor by the Pennsylvania State Chamber of Business and Industry. And this distinction follows on the heels of the Clarion River's selection for tribute during Pennsylvania's River Month last June.

On what grounds, Mr. Speaker, is Clarion County sweeping all honors this year? I have a hunch, and I will share it with you. But I maintain that the best way for you and our colleagues to understand is for each of you to visit for yourselves.

That's because Clarion County is nothing short of a stunning natural treasure. And, importantly, those who call it home recognize its wonders and true value. They share a very real commitment to serve as its stewards not only for today but for all future generations.

And it's paying off. Their dedication to preserving the beauty of northwest Pennsylvania has contributed to the region's flourishing reputation as a tourist's haven. The dividends, cautiously earned, will continue to be paid through the years.

I am especially pleased, Mr. Speaker, to share this honor with my colleagues in the House today. Just hours ago, the Resources Committee reported legislation to designate 51.7 miles of the Clarion River as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System. This legislation is really the product of 4½ years of impassioned public effort, and I ask for the support of the House to enact it in the waning days of the 104th Congress.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity to offer my most sincere congratulations to the people of Clarion County, PA.

HEALTH CARE FOR KIDS

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 18, 1996

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing today a bill to require insurers to offer health insurance policies for kids, coupled with a sliding scale 80 percent refundable tax credit to help families buy such insurance policies.

There are 10 million children in the United States without health insurance. Health insurance equals access to health care. Access to health care equals better health and a better quality of life. It is that simple. As a recent article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA, August 14, 1996, p. 477) so well said:

...access to health care is dramatically increased if one has health insurance, and this increased access has in turn been shown to improve outcomes, such as whether one lives or dies. The most significant action within the health system that we can take to preserve health and improve longevity is to provide health insurance to everyone.

The bill I am introducing is about the life and death—and lifetime productivity—of our Nation's children.

This bill is not a mandate; it does not require any individual to buy health insurance. It does, however, make sure that there is widespread competition in the offering of these health insurance policies and it does help families, even very low income families, buy a policy of their choice.

Health insurance for children in America is getting worse—not better. With the cuts in Medicaid, it may get disastrously worse. We desperately need to reverse the trend of rising uninsured rates for children. The General Accounting Office recently issued report to Senator CHRISTOPHER DODD, dated June 17, 1996, entitled "Health Insurance for Children: Private Insurance Coverage Continues to Deteriorate" (GAO/HEHS-96-129). The report states:

The number of children without health insurance coverage was greater in 1994 than at any time in the last 8 years. In 1994, the percentage of children under 18 years old without any health insurance coverage reached its highest level since 1987—14.2 percent or 10 million children who were uninsured. In addition, the percentage of children with private coverage has decreased every year since 1987, and in 1994 reached its lowest level in the past 8 years—65.6 percent.

To repeat, health insurance can mean the difference between life and death—and between a good quality life and a stunted life. The GAO's report I have just cited provides a concise summary of why the lack of insurance is so important:

Studies have shown that uninsured children are less likely than insured children to get needed health and preventive care. The lack of such care can adversely affect children's health status throughout their lives. Without health insurance, many families face difficulties getting preventive and basic care for their children. Children without health insurance or with gaps in coverage are less likely to have routine doctor visits or have a regular source of medical care. They are also less likely to get care for injuries, see a physician if chronically ill, or get dental care. They are less likely to be appropriately immunized to prevent childhood illness—which is considered by health experts to be one of the most basic elements of preventive care.

My bill is a small, incremental step forward. If it is by no means everything I would like. If I could wave a magic wand, I would make sure that everyone in America had high quality health insurance tomorrow morning. That is not going to happen—but this small step, starting with children, could help millions of children grow up to be healthier, more productive citizens. Like my amendment which started the COBRA Health Continuation Program which has been used by 40 million Americans, this bill could make a world of difference to millions of Americans in the years ahead.

Under the bill, insurance companies would be subject to a tax penalty if they did not offer for sale—so-called guaranteed issue—a policy which provided a Medicare-type package of health benefits, with additions designed for well-baby and well-child care and with a 10 percent—but no more than \$10 per Part B service—rather than Medicare's 20 percent copay. By requiring insurers to offer such a benefit package, consumers will be able to shop widely for a policy they can afford. The competition in this sector should help make affordable policies available.

The key problem is to make this policy affordable to the families of the 10 million uninsured. The basic reason so many children are uninsured is that they are in working families which are not eligible for Medicaid, but the families do not have health insurance offered through the workplace and cannot afford the \$500 to \$700 per child these policies will prob-

ably cost. Therefore, I propose a refundable tax credit to make the policies affordable. The tax credit/payment will be phased out at the rate of 50 cents per dollar of tax liability of the purchaser.

In the past, refundable tax credits have had integrity problems. I propose to avoid this abuse of the program by requiring that the taxpayer submit a 1099 type form with their tax form, in which the insurance company will certify that a tax-qualified kid's insurance policy has been purchased. The companies will, of course, also submit this documentation directly to the IRS so that a data match can be performed before refunds are issued.

I do not spell out how the 80 percent credit is to be financed, but the money can be found as part of a future reconciliation bill. If additional funds can be found, the credit percentage can be phased out more slowly to help additional families.

To repeat, the bill is not a mandate, but a chance for parents to have affordable private health insurance for their children. It uses the private market exclusively. It is a first step and as additional moneys become available, we can add a maternity and prenatal benefit for mothers-to-be and a slower phaseout of the credit.

I welcome cosponsors of the bill, and comments and suggestions from the public on ways to improve the bill and to help finance the proposal. I am introducing the bill late in this Congress so that the public can review the bill before the start of the 105th Congress and suggest changes and improvements before its reintroduction in the next Congress.

TRIBUTE TO ST. MARK CATHOLIC CHURCH

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKEY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 18, 1996

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate St. Mark Catholic Church, its pastor, the Reverend Robert P. Gehring, and the 421 parish families, on the celebration of St. Mark's 75th anniversary. On September 22, 1996, St. Mark Church, located in Gary IN, will hold a grand banquet at the Hellenic Cultural Center in Merrillville, IN, to proclaim its celebration theme, "Continuing the Mission of Christ." This banquet will be preceded by a jubilee Mass at St. Mark Church celebrated by Bishop Dale J. Melczek.

I would also like to congratulate the current Pastoral Council, which include Maria Azcona, Richard Burgess, Joan Bynum, Pat Corgan, Jesse Covarrubias, Alma Erris, Maria Gutierrez, Marcia Mizen, Roni Opong-Duah, Natalie Ousley, Felicia Flowers Smith, and Carl Terlicher. In 1994, this council, which serves as an advisory body to assist the pastor in decisions concerning the operations of St. Mark Church, replaced the former parish council.

Early in this century, traveling missionaries ministered to the needs of Catholics in the northwest Indiana area, and small parishes were formed in scattered villages and towns to aid the missionaries in their work. However, there was a strong need to establish a permanent parish. Without waiting for church authorities to ease a critical situation, a group of laymen collaborated to begin a Catholic parish in

Glen Park, IN. Members of that group included: J.J. Kelley, Thomas F. Kennedy, Maurice Cox, John B. Rockford, and John P. Churchill. These men purchased a building from the German Evangelical Church of North America on May 19, 1921, and they moved the building from 20th and Grant Street to a site at 39th and Broadway.

In August of that same year, Father John B. DeVille, an assistant at Holy Angels Parish, told the committee and Bishop Herman J. Alerding that he would accept the responsibility of ministering to the spiritual needs of the fledgling St. Mark Parish. Father DeVille celebrated Mass regularly in the church on Broadway, and he taught religious education classes to children.

On February 4, 1922, the first marriage at St. Mark Church took place between Carlo Terlicher and Aurelia Chiabai. Aurelia Terlicher, who is 92 years old this month, is still a member of the St. Mark Parish family. Albert Antonio Sgambelluri was the first to be baptized at St. Mark on October 2, 1921.

It wasn't until June 17, 1923, that Bishop Herman J. Alerding appointed Father Joseph Ryder as the first pastor of St. Mark Church. Within 5 years of its inception, the rapidly growing St. Mark Parish needed newer and larger facilities. As a result, construction of the combination church, school, and convent began in July, 1926, on the selected site at 501 West Ridge Road. The Right Reverend John Francis Noll presided over the dedication ceremony of the new facility in July, 1927.

At first, Sisters of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ gave their time and service to the schoolchildren of St. Mark. However, after the school building was completed, Father Ryder secured the services of the Dominican Sisters and they assumed the role of faculty at the school and resided in the convent on Ridge Road. The Sisters of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ eventually replaced the Dominican Sisters in September 1931. In June 1986, the Sisters reluctantly announced the end of their ministry at the school. A new principal, Ms. Muriel Lennstrum, was hired along with several other lay teachers.

In April, 1951, a new school building was completed to accommodate the evergrowing enrollment of schoolchildren. In the early years of the parish, St. Mark School originated from religious education classes. As St. Mark celebrates its 75th anniversary, Ms. Maria Vazquez serves as principal of St. Mark School, which boasts an enrollment of 149 pupils enrolled in the grade school. Clare Coppinger and Dorothy Pictor have organized an alumni association with over 1,000 members from the classes of 1932–1957.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating the current pastor, the Reverend Robert P. Gehring, and the 421 parish families of St. Mark as they celebrate the church's 75th Anniversary. St. Mark is a multiethnic and multicultural parish known for its caring and welcoming of all people. May they continue to celebrate for many years to come.

POW-MIA RECOGNITION DAY

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 18, 1996

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind my colleagues of the importance of National POW-MIA Recognition Day on September 20, 1996. I urge my colleagues to participate in recognizing America's heroes, those who are presumed missing in action.

Our Nation has fought six major conflicts in its history. In those wars, over 500,000 Americans have been taken prisoner of war. Those servicemen and women experienced numerous hardships and treatment which could often be described only as barbaric during the course of captivity. Those Americans imprisoned by the Japanese during World War II faced the worst possible conditions in captivity and were firsthand witnesses to the utter depravity of their fellowmen.

I have been a strong advocate of an accounting of our POW-MIA's since I first came to the Congress in 1973. I proudly supported the creation of the Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia, the National POW-MIA Recognition days, and POW-MIA legislation because I believe the families of those who are missing in action deserve no less. Hopefully 1996 will be the last year that such an occasion will be necessary. My hope is that by this time next year, our Government will have obtained a full accounting of those brave American's whose fates, at this time, are still unknown.

Permit me to focus special recognition on those POW-MIA's from Korea and Vietnam. Despite the administration's best assurances to the contrary, many of us remain unconvinced that the Governments of North Korea and Vietnam have been fully cooperating with the United States on this issue. Regrettably, by normalizing relations with Vietnam, I believe that we have withdrawn our leverage over the Vietnamese government on this issue.

On September 18, 1996, the Washington Times ran a front page story about the latest POW-MIA hearing held by Chairman DORNAN's Subcommittee on Military Personnel. This hearing, on September 17, 1996, consisted of several key witnesses, including a former aide to President Eisenhower, and a high ranking Czech defector who was a member of Czechoslovakia's Defense Ministry.

The defector, former Gen. Jan Sejna, testified that Soviet and Czech military doctors performed ghastly medical experiments on U.S. POW's in North Korea during the Korean war. Those experiments were used to test the psychological endurance of American GI's, as well as their resistance to chemical, biological, and radioactive agents. Moreover, Mr. Sejna also stated that he helped organize shipments of POW's to the U.S.S.R. during the Vietnam war, and that at least 200 were sent there between 1961 and 1968.

Hopefully this information will lead to a further investigation regarding the safe return of any living POW's who may still be in captivity in Korea or elsewhere.

Americans should always bear in mind the love of country that America's veterans have shown as well as their personal sacrifices, courage, convictions, and dedication to freedom that these individuals have exhibited.

Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman BOB STUMP recently quoted a portion of President Abraham Lincoln's letter to a mother who lost five sons on the battlefield: "I cannot refrain from tendering to you the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."

May it be of some solace to the families and loved ones of our missing and POW's that there are many of us in the Congress committed to a full and final accounting of our missing.

A GREAT AMERICAN RETIRES AFTER 40 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 18, 1996

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, today our Nation salutes the career of a distinguished Naval officer, Adm. Bruce DeMars, who will retire from the Navy this fall after more than 40 years of dedicated service to our country. For the last 8 years, Admiral DeMars held the position of Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, and faced the task of strengthening the capability and quality of our Nation's nuclear powered warships despite ever-tightening budget constraints in the post-cold war era.

Admiral DeMars was appointed Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program after compiling an impressive record of accomplishments, including tours as the Commanding Officer, U.S.S. *Cavalla* (SSN 684), Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Marianas/U.S. Naval Base Guam, and as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Submarine Warfare. At the time of his appointment, the Navy had plans for substantial nuclear powered warship construction—the product of a continuing Soviet threat. The sudden and dramatic collapse of the Soviet Union during the next few years called for a comprehensive review of our defense requirements. The *Seawolf* attack submarine program was terminated, and Admiral DeMars faced the difficult challenge of adjusting to drastically changing defense requirements while maintaining the program's long established reputation for technical excellence and uncompromising safety. The program's reputation had been established by Adm. Hyman G. Rickover, the program's founder, and later commended by President Reagan as recognized worldwide for excellence in all phases of its work.

Admiral DeMars met this challenge headon, continuing the superb performance, safety, and environmental record of nuclear powered warships. Our nuclear powered warships benefit from acceptance in foreign ports worldwide, which reflects the emphasis placed on safety—not only for the sailors who must work and live on these warships, but for preserving the environment which affects all of us. Over the past 8 years, these warships safely steamed over 40 million miles, and over 20,000 sailors and officers were trained to operate their nuclear propulsion plants. In 1994, nuclear powered warships reached the significant milestone of over 100 million miles safely