the opportunity to succeed, and to improve America's educational system for the benefit of all students. Doris Alvarez accomplishes this goal every day at Hoover High School. I am pleased to see both her goals realized and her efforts recognized with the National Principal of the Year award.

THE INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO END THE ABUSE OF THE FRANKING PRIVILEGE

HON. RAY LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 1997

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, last year I introduced H.R. 1137, a bill that ends the most pervasive abuse of the frank—sending out unsolicited, self-promotional mass mailings. My bill specifically targets this abuse. it would crack down on mass mailings harder than any other legislation currently under consideration. The current, increased interest in reforming the way campaigns are conducted only increases the relevance and importance of this bill.

Title 39 of the U.S. Code defines the types of mailings that are frankable. Included in this definition are the ''usual and customary'' congressional newsletter, press release, or questionnaire. The legislation I am reintroducing would simply strike mailings of this type from the code, thereby disallowing future use of the frank for these purposes.

Other franking reform proposals have centered around dangerous numbers games that leave open the possibility of abuse. Rather than try to settle on some arbitrary formula, my legislation will get to the heart of the problem. Reducing the definition of mass from 500 to 100, or debating whether the franking allowance should be reduced by 50 percent or 33 percent misses the mark. The problem that needs to be addressed is use of the frank as a campaign tool whose real information purpose is to make constituents aware of how deserving we are of reelection.

I urge my colleagues to consider cosponsoring this important piece of legislation.

THE RIGHT TO LIFE ACT OF 1997

HON. DUNCAN HUNTER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 1997

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on an issue that is of great concern to many Americans, abortion. Mr. Speaker, approximately 1.5 million innocent babies are intentionally killed every year because of abortion. This represents 4,000 times a day that an unborn child is taken from its mother's womb prematurely and denied the opportunity to live. Section 1 of the fourteenth amendment to our Constitution clearly states that no State shall ''deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.'' I wholeheartedly believe that these constitutional rights should include our country's unborn children.

Mr. Speaker, in the landmark case of Roe versus Wade, the Supreme Court refused to determine when human life begins and therefore found nothing to indicate that the unborn are persons protected by the fourteenth amendment. In the decision, however, the Court did concede that, ''If the suggestion of personhood is established, the appellants' case, of course, collapses, for the fetus' right to life would then be guaranteed specifically by the Amendment.'' Considering Congress has the constitutional authority to uphold the fourteenth amendment, coupled with the fact that the Court admitted that if personhood were to be established, the unborn would be protected, it can be determined that we have the authority to determine when life begins.

It is for this reason that today I am introducing the Right to Life Act of 1997. This legislation does what the Supreme Court refused to do and recognizes the personhood of the unborn for the purpose of enforcing four important provisions in the Constitution: First, the due process clause, section 1 of the fourteenth amendment, which prohibits States from depriving any person of life; second, section 5 of the fourteenth amendment, which gives Congress the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this amendment; third, the due process clause of the fifth amendment, which concurrently prohibits the Federal Government from depriving any person of life; and fourth, article 1, section 8, which gives Congress the power to make laws necessary and proper to enforce all powers in the Constitution.

The Right to Life Act of 1997 will protect millions of future unborn children by prohibiting any State or Federal law that denies the personhood of the unborn, thereby effectively overturning Roe versus Wade. I urge my colleagues to join me in this very important endeavor.

H.R. 624, THE ARMORED CAR RECIPROCITY AMENDMENTS OF 1997

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 6, 1997

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to reintroduce the armored car reciprocity amendments, legislation that I sponsored in the 104th Congress amending the Armored Car Industry Reciprocity Act of 1993 to better reflect Congress' original intent when it enacted that law.

Armored cars and their crews annually transport billions of dollars in currency, bonds, food stamps, and other negotiable documents. Even though most armored car shipments are local, many of the larger and more valuable shipments can include stops in anywhere from 5 to 10 States. Since the value of a typical armored car shipment in interstate commerce can range from $100,000 to $40 million, these vehicles are ripe targets for thieves and the lives of armored car crews are often placed in grave danger.

Recent crime statistics bear out this reality. According to the FBI's violent crime section, during fiscal year 1995 there were 68 robbery attempts against armored vehicles. This statistic, combined with the fact that several crew members have lost their lives in recent years defending their cargo and themselves, demonstrates the continuing need for these crew members to be armed.

Despite the fact that there is a demonstrated need for armored car crew members to be armed, in the past there was no uniform method of ensuring that armored car crews were licensed to carry their weapons in each State in which they operated. Often crew members would have to go through different licensing procedures for each State in which they operated, or worse, travel through the States without the proper licenses in the hopes that they wouldn't get caught.

In order to address this burden on interstate commerce, in 1993 the Congress enacted the Armored Car Industry Reciprocity Act. The purpose of the bill was simple: It permitted armored car crew members, when licensed to carry a weapon by a State that required criminal background checks and regular weapons training, to operate as an armored car crew member in any State, much like a driver's license works today. It did not allow anyone to carry a gun who was otherwise prohibited from doing so under existing Federal statutes. It was a narrowly drafted statute with a narrow purpose: to allow armored car crews to operate easily in interstate commerce.

In the time since the act was implemented, a number of parties, primarily the States charged with enforcing the statute, have come forward and identified technical concerns with how the statute operates. Last year, the Commerce Committee, on which I sit, heard testimony from representatives of the armored car industry and the States about the necessity of these changes. As a result, the House passed my bill, H.R. 3431, with overwhelming bipartisan support. Unfortunately, due to the crush of last minute business, the Senate was unable to act on my legislation in the 104th Congress.

The armored car reciprocity amendments of 1997 make some simple and straightforward changes to the Armored Car Industry Reciprocity Act:

First, it grants reciprocity for both weapons licenses and any other permits or licenses required in a particular State so long as the crew member has met all of the requirements in the State in which he or she is primarily employed.

Second, it makes clear that it is the State which should conduct criminal background checks and permits the States to do so in whatever manner they deem appropriate; and,

Third, it eliminates the requirement in the original act that renewed permits be reissued annually, and instead conforms the statute to the vast majority of States which have 2-year renewal periods. The bill also provides a grandfather clause for the two States which have longer renewal periods, Alaska and Pennsylvania.

These changes represent a major step forward in achieving the objectives of the original act and differ only in technical respects from the bill that the House passed last session. Under the act as originally signed into law, only Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, North Carolina, and Virginia met the requirements for reciprocity. With the changes under this bill, 28 other States will qualify, truly easing the flow of these valuable goods in interstate commerce.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.