[From the Commercial Appeal, Apr. 17, 1997]

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROMOTES ACHIEVEMENT

(By Regina L. Burns)

A 25-year Memphis City Schools educator, John White, is finding that expelled and board-suspended students, along with teen parents, can be motivated to achieve using high expectations instead of the police and corporal punishment.

White, principal at Pyramid Academy for seven years, points to his school's recent championship at the sixth annual African-American Knowledge Bowl as proof of his philosophy.

''It just made me feel so good. I was just bubbling up with joy,'' proclaimed White, 53, who pushed for the alternative school's name change from Comprehensive Pupil Services Educational Center.

The April 7 competition at the National Civil Rights Museum was sponsored by the Memphis City Schools Adolescent Parenting Mental Health Team, said Sherry Hardy, a school social worker in the Adolescent Parenting Program.

''The schools that participated are involved in our Rites of Passage effort,'' explained Hardy. The Rites of Passage program is designed to help young African-American men and women with development and responsibilities as they move toward adulthood.

Dr. Theresa Okwumabus, supervising psychologist for the Adolescent Parenting Mental Health Team, initiated the Knowledge Bowl and the Rites of Passage program. She said, ''The students interacted in a positive way with other children and experienced success in knowing about their culture and their history.''

Five students from Pyramid Academy helped bring home the trophy. They are 11th-grader Edwina Jefferson, ninth-grader Alicia Currie, 12th-grader Mlesha Harris, ninth-grader Cortisa Thomas and 11th-grader Tamika Williams. Their teacher is Erma Sanders, a social studies instructor.

The second-place winner is Chickasaw Junior High. Raineshaven Elementary captured third place. Other finalists were Caldwell Elementary, Ida B. Wells Academy and Whitehaven High school, according to Hardy.

''I'm an advocate for having an alternative school in every school. When I came here, this was a holding tank. We changed the name. We got rid of the police. We don't need the police. I think it sends the wrong message,'' explained White.

He said his school has its share of difficulties but they are minimal. Each morning students and faculty gather at a ''daily briefing.''

''We reiterate our expectations on a daily basis. We ask any student who feels like rappin', tappin', singing or cursing to come down front. If anyone has had any difficulty, we have someone for them to talk to,'' he said.

## IT'S TIME FOR BILLBOARDS TO PAY THEIR FAIR SHARE

### HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 24, 1997*

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Billboard Fair Share Act, legislation that would levy a 15 percent tax on the revenue from billboards and direct that money to help pay for our transportation system.

The billboard industry benefits as much as any other industry from our National Highway System. In fact, the industry even charges customers according to the number of cars that pass by the billboard on a given day. Despite its reliance on taxpayer-funded roads, the billboard industry contributes nothing to the construction and maintenance of our Nation's roads. It is time that the billboard industry paid its fair share.

The Billboard Fair Share Act would levy a tax on each billboard of 15 percent of gross revenues generated from the billboard. This is the same amount that billboard companies usually pay a property-owner for the right to construct and maintain the billboard on the property-owner's land. The revenue generated from this tax would be divided between surface transportation and funding for enhancement projects under ISTEA. In both cases, it would be used to improve our national system of roads.

As Congress works to reauthorize ISTEA while balancing the budget, it is important that we ensure that all road users contribute to providing transportation funding. While the billboard industry may not be a traditional road user, it is equally clear that they directly benefit from road construction. In fact, the billboard industry is entirely dependent upon roads.

All highway users must be willing to help build and maintain our Nation's roads. It is time for billboards to pay their fair share.

## SUPPORT FUNDING FOR SAN PEDRO CREEK WETLANDS RESTORATION AND FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT

### HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 24, 1997*

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the President's 1998 budget request for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. As you know, the Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of important flood control projects around our Nation. I urge continued support for full funding of the Continuing Authorities Program which will ensure that important flood control projects around our Nation can proceed on schedule. Full funding will also ensure that there will be no delays in construction of projects that have already been started.

Mr. Speaker, I recently presented testimony to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development regarding two local issues important to residents of the San Francisco Bay area. I respectfully request that my testimony appear in the RECORD for the benefit of my colleagues in the House.

TESTIMONY OF CONGRESSMAN LANTOS BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT

March 31, 1997

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony to your Subcommittee as you begin to consider the Energy and Water appropriations bill for fiscal year 1998. We in Congress face difficult challenges and painful choices as we work to reduce the federal budget deficit. I applaud your record in this area and you can count on my continued support of serious efforts to cut wasteful spending. I am delighted to present information regarding two projects important to my community which fall under your Subcommittee's jurisdiction and to urge your continued support for these significant projects.

As you know, the Congressional district that I represent is geographically unique and diverse. My Congressional district comprises the San Francisco Peninsula which is home to the residents of the City of San Francisco and northern and central San Mateo County. The Peninsula is flanked by the Pacific Ocean to the West and by the San Francisco Bay to the east. Steep coastal mountains run up the middle of the Peninsula.

To the east of these mountains are the densely populated cities of San Mateo County which are located along the San Francisco Bay. The Bay front itself consists of the San Francisco International Airport, Candlestick Park, light industry, salt flats and the Port of Redwood City. Residential neighborhoods and commercial areas lie between the Bay front and the mountain ridges. To the west of the mountains, which follow the San Andreas fault, are the coastal communities of San Mateo County, including Pacifica, which lie on the Pacific Ocean.

The City of Pacifica is located a few miles south of the City of San Francisco. It is surrounded by the Central Coast Ranges and by the Pacific Ocean. City limits include three ridge systems and their adjacent valleys and hillsides, set against a coastline of beaches and rugged headlands. San Pedro Creek has the largest drainage area and flows four miles through the narrow San Pedro Valley and the Linda Mar District to the Pacific Ocean. Linda Mar is the most populous of several seaside communities in Pacifica. This area has experienced numerous floods in recent history with flood damage occurring mostly in the lowest reaches of the creek.

San Pedro Creek has historically flooded on a 10-year cycle. The mountains and hills around San Pedro Valley are steep and rainfall and runoff can be rapid and intense. Currently, the lower reaches of the San Pedro Creek channel can contain within its banks, at maximum, an 8- to 10-year runoff event. The last major flooding occurred there in 1982 when more than 300 homes were flooded and more than $5 million of damage occurred.

The City of Pacifica has been working closely with the US Army Corps of Engineers for more than 15 years in developing a flood control project to provide 100 year flood control protection in the Linda Mar Valley. A number of plans were originally proposed, but were stalled due to lack of funding and environmental concerns. Two alternative projects were considered as possible solutions to the flood problem. However, due to environmental concerns and prohibitive mitigation requirements associated with either alternative, a third alternative was developed by the City and residents in the community. This alternative would consist of a diversion structure, an underground bypass channel, a floodwall, and the creation of a wetland-flood basin.

The City and the Corps now propose to restore the tidally-influenced, freshwater wetlands associated with the lower reach of San Pedro Creek to provide flood control in the Linda Mar District of Pacifica. The restoration design as proposed will restore 10.1 acres of one of the rarest wetland types on the Pacific coast of North America. The project will also enhance a significant fisheries resource, i.e., a steelhead (Oncorhynchus mykiss) run, and restore wildlife habitats for migratory waterfowl and other associated wildlife.

Mr. Chairman, the San Pedro Creek Wetlands Restoration and Flood Control Project

is truly a local and federal government partnership model. As of March 1997, the federal government has invested over $600,000 toward the development of a solution to flooding problems in the Linda Mar district of the City of Pacifica. The City of Pacifica has contributed $537,000. These funds have been used to complete the planning phases of study for the proposed project. In order to complete the project, a final design phase will be required. This will be followed by acquisition of real estate by the City and construction of the project. The City plans to invest $13 million in real estate acquisition and $475,000 in design and construction. The Federal contribution for design and construction is estimated to be only $4.425 million.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to provide you with an update on the future actions that are necessary to complete this very important and much-needed flood control project. The technical analysis is essentially complete for the San Pedro Creek flood Control feasibility study. Completion of the Environmental impact Statement Report (EIS/R) and main report is contingent upon receipt of the US Fish and Wildlife Service biological opinion regarding the potential impact on the recently listed California red-legged frog. Recent communications with the Fish and Wildlife Service indicated no significant changes to the proposed design will be required. The Feasibility Study and EIS/R is expected to be completed in Spring 1997. It is expected that the initial plans and specifications will be completed in the Summer of 1997. Construction is expected to commence in FY 1998.

Mr. Chairman, during the recent series of devastating storms and floods in the West and in California this winter, residents in Linda Mar received alarming warning notices from the City of Pacifica urging them to prepare to evacuate their homes. Fortunately, residents were spared the heaviest and most devastating rains of these storms and San Pedro Creek did not flood. History tells us, however, that it is only a matter of time until the next flood. It is imperative that we provide funding for flood control before the next significant flood. I urge the full funding of the San Pedro Creek Wetlands Restoration and Flood Control Project.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to address another project in my region over which your Subcommittee has jurisdiction. Although the Port of Redwood City is no longer in my Congressional district (due to redistricting in 1992), the continued success of the Port nonetheless does have an impact on the economy of the region.

As you know, due to the shallow nature of San Francisco Bay, maintenance dredging of the Bay is necessary to ensure safe navigation of ocean-going ships. The Port of Redwood City currently has an authorized depth of 30 feet. It is currently on a 3-year dredging cycle to maintain this authorized depth. The most recent maintenance dredging of Redwood City Harbor was completed in September 1996 to 30 feet. The next maintenance dredging is scheduled for March 1999.

There is concern that the new, larger vessels which call on the Port require more than 30 feet of draft. These vessels are forced to light load and top off at other ports—significantly adding to the cost of calling on the Port. There is concern that this will significantly reduce the commercial viability of the Port. I urge you to support a reconnaissance study to determine the federal interests, costs, benefits and environmental impacts of deepening Redwood City Harbor.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your support and for the opportunity to provide you with information concerning these important projects.

## IN HONOR OF LA TRIBUNA NEWSPAPER: CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO NEW JERSEY'S HISPANIC COMMUNITY

### HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 24, 1997*

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a truly special occasion, the 35th anniversary of La Tribuna newspaper. This momentous event in my State's journalism community will be recognized at a gala banquet to be held Friday, April 25, 1997, at the Fiesta Restaurant in Wood-Ridge, NJ.

In 1962, large numbers of Hispanic immigrants began relocating to New Jersey. At that time, few newspapers were being published in their native language. La Tribuna was one of the first news sources committed to keeping the Spanish-speaking community in touch with its government and the rest of the world.

For 35 years, La Tribuna has shone light on daily events affecting the Hispanic community. Part of the foundation of the U.S. Constitution is freedom of the press. La Tribuna brings this ideal to life for the Hispanic community on a weekly basis through the paper's commitment to truth and fairness. Whenever and wherever news happens, La Tribuna is at the forefront of articulating events in a concise, no-nonsense manner.

Under the direction of publisher and editor Ruth Molenaar, La Tribuna has grown to be a well-respected member of New Jersey's news community. The people of my district, and New Jersey are fortunate to have Ms. Molenaar and her staff, including Lionel Rodriguez, providing fair and accurate news coverage. They have been a reliable voice for the Hispanic community for almost two generations.

It is an honor to have La Tribuna operating in my district. Its efforts have helped our Nation's Hispanic community to blossom and flourish. I ask that my colleagues join me in applauding this remarkable organization for all it has done for the Hispanic community.

## TRIBUTE TO DAVID BROWN

### HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 24, 1997*

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor David Brown who this week was named Citizen of the Year by the Las Virgenes Homeowners Association. Mr. Brown has been an outspoken advocate in our community for 25 years, and recognition of his good work is long overdue.

Mr. Brown has used his multitude of talents to work in areas as diverse as teaching, writing, publishing, and as a planning commissioner and citizen activist. Fortunately, he has seen fit to use his talents for the greater good of our local community. Dave brings to his work a rare blend of expertise and a tireless spirit of volunteerism. Although he has given freely of his time and resources to many worthy causes, his top priority has always been protection of the Santa Monica Mountains.

His dedication to protect the Santa Monicas is unparalleled. He has played various roles in his effort to protect the mountains, from serving on the Santa Monica Mountains Comprehensive Planning Commission Advisory Committee, the Sierra Club's Santa Monica Mountains Task Force, and the Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council Board. Dave has done extensive work on monthly newsletters which served to defend the mountains from over development.

Mr. Brown has indeed been a lifelong steward of the Santa Monica Mountains, ensuring that this natural sanctuary will be available for generations to come.

## HELP CLEAN UP OUR HIGHWAYS

### HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 24, 1997*

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Visual Pollution Reduction Act, legislation that would reduce the clutter of billboards along our Nation's roads and highways.

Today, Scenic America released a report entitled ''The Highway Beautification Act—A Broken Law.'' The report detailed how, despite the Highway Beautification Act, the number of billboards along our Nation's highways has continued to grow. Each year 5,000 to 15,000 additional billboards are built. Billboards that do not conform to States and local zoning ordinances continue to clutter our Nation's roads. In addition, State highway departments subsidize the billboard industry by operating permitting programs that lose money and use taxpayer funds to cut down trees to improve billboard visibility.

Billboards destroy the scenic beauty of our countryside and the architectural beauty of our inner cities. Billboards sell liquor and cigarettes to our Nation's children, especially in inner-city neighborhoods and poor communities. Billboards are visual pollution.

For this reason, I am introducing the Visual Pollution Reduction Act. This bill would prohibit new billboards in unzoned, rural areas. It would place a cap, at the current level, on the total number of billboards permitted in a State. And, it would prohibit States from removing trees and other vegetation to make a billboard more visible.

The Highway Beautification Act is broken. We must fix it. I hope that Congress will do the right thing and pass the Visual Pollution Reduction Act. America's highways would be visibly improved.

## WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY

### HON. CURT WELDON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 24, 1997*

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to salute my alma mater, West Chester University, on the occasion of its 125th anniversary. On September 25, 1871, Principal Ezekiel Cook welcomed the first class of students to West Chester University, then known as the West Chester Normal School. Since that first year